

# The Meadows School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

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## **1. Rationale**

This policy has been adopted and written in relation to The Anti Bullying Policy at the Meadows School and should be read in conjunction with the LAs Policies and Procedures and any DfE Policy, Statements and Guidelines.

This policy will be reviewed when required and at least three-yearly and following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” and its latest revisions (2023 at time of review). The school has read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools” which can be found here: [Cyberbullying Guidance | Childnet](#)  
In addition we have taken into account the following DfE advice: [Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

## **2. Policy objectives:**

2.1 This policy outlines what The Meadows School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. The Meadows School is committed to taking a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of bullying. In addition, the school are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form and is instead, actively tackled.

## **3. Links with other school policies and practices**

3.1 This policy links with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour written statement and policy.
- Complaints policy
- Safeguarding and Child protection policy
- Online safety and Acceptable Use policies (AUP)
- Curriculum policies, such as: PSHE/RSHE

## **4. Links to legislation**

4.1 There are a number of pieces of legislation, which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986

## **5. Responsibilities**

5.1 It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching, and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

## **6. Definition of bullying**

6.1 Bullying is defined as the “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

6.2 Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful,
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

6.3 Bullying can be direct or indirect, including name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

6.4 This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos and 'sexting'.

6.5 Children and young people will have disagreements, which is normal, age-appropriate behaviour. They will also have upsets and squabbles, which, if necessary, can be dealt with by the Behaviour policy. Bullying therefore needs to be differentiated from other forms of behaviour or friendship difficulties. The following examples should NOT be considered examples of bullying behaviour:

- Two friends who fall out.
- Not liking someone
- Being excluded (unintentionally)
- Disagreeing with someone
- Accidentally bumping into someone
- Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feeling towards others – unless targeted and repeated.
- Making other children play games in a certain way or trying to 'lead' the play.
- Single incidents should not generally be classed as bullying unless the same child repeats the behaviour with someone else.

Bullying, by definition, is defined by the acronym STOP:

Several  
Times  
On  
Purpose

Please note: Due to the nature of the additional needs of the students at The Meadows, some individuals may have additional challenges regarding the following:

- Sensory-seeking behaviour, which can lead to touching other students.
- Impulse control which could lead to inappropriate comments.
- Difficulty having empathy for others or understanding how their behaviour could be interpreted.
- Control of limb movements leading to increased accidental touching.

Therefore, these behaviours are taken into account when completing class and personal risk assessments, behaviour plans and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Additionally, staff are trained to form relationships with their student, so they are able to get to know them and ascertain whether behaviour is deliberate and

targeted. Staff will also know the best way to address this behaviour depending upon the child's needs.

## **7. Child-on-Child Abuse**

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). This is called child-on-child abuse, which is a form of abuse whereby a child or group of children abuses another child or group of children.

The victim/s and perpetrator/s may be any age, under 18 years old and it should not be assumed that a perpetrator is always older than the victim/s.

You can read more about Child-on-Child abuse in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, notably parts 2 and 5. You can also read about our approach to child-on-child abuse in our safeguarding and child protection policy.

Although bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse, not every incident of bullying should be viewed as child-on-child abuse.

When analysing risk, we may complete a risk assessment, taking into account relevant information including whether the child bullying is in or has been in a romantic/sexual relationship with the child they are bullying, and any power imbalances that are present (you can read some further examples of power imbalances elsewhere in this policy).

## **8. Forms of bullying covered by this policy.**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, nationality, or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual, and transphobic bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying

## **9. School ethos**

9.1 The Meadows School community recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.

We believe that all children and young people have the right to be taught in a positive learning environment where everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve socially, emotionally and academically. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we can create a safe, disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

## 9.2 Our School Community:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships, to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

## 10. Cyber-bullying

According to UNICEF, Cyberbullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies.

It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones.

It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering, or shaming those who are targeted.

Examples include:

- spreading lies about or posting embarrassing photos or videos of someone on social media.
- sending hurtful, abusive, or threatening messages, images or videos via messaging platforms

- impersonating someone and sending mean messages to others on their behalf or through fake accounts.

Face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying can often happen alongside each other. But cyberbullying leaves a digital footprint – a record that can prove useful and provide evidence to help stop the abuse.

Cyber-bullying is just as serious as face-to-face bullying and staff are aware not to minimise it in any way. In fact, the 24/7 nature of being online can leave victims of cyber-bullying feeling helpless.

Despite our students not having access to their own devices at The Meadows, we encourage them and their families to report any form of cyber-bullying to us so it can be addressed.

We provide online safety information to families, so they know how to block and report any malicious behaviour online.

For more information on our approach to cyber-bullying, please read our Online Safety policy.

10.1. When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online.

## **11. Supporting students**

'Due to the nature of our students' special educational needs, disabilities and health concerns, they may be at additional risk of bullying compared with students who do not have SEND.



For example:

- Some of our students may not be immediately aware that they are being mistreated
- Many of our students have communication difficulties which can make it more challenging for them to disclose bullying behaviour
- Students with SEND can be more socially isolated so there may be a fear of rejection and therefore loneliness, if they report bullying behaviour
- For some of our students, they may display people-pleasing behaviour and not wish, to 'make a fuss' by reporting this behaviour; instead keeping it to themselves.

In order to address these obstacles, staff at The Meadows School will:

1. Ensure students are supported to communicate about their needs, wants, likes and dislikes, in order to grow in confidence in their communication and know that their voice will be heard.
2. Regularly seek student feedback through a variety of methods
3. Check in with students about their emotional wellbeing every day.
4. Communicate regularly with parents/carers so any concerns can be shared.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, The Meadows School takes a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discriminatory comments and behaviour.

This includes: racism, sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia as well as sexual violence/harassment.

This means that any discriminatory behaviour or comments will be addressed and challenged immediately. It will not be downplayed, minimised or put down to 'banter', even if said in a joking tone.

Due to the nature of our students' additional needs, it is possible that comments have been made without full understanding of their meaning. Therefore, our first priority will be further education for the student about the meaning of their words, their potential impact and the fact that this behaviour is not acceptable.

We will also ensure all other students who have witnessed this behaviour are offered support and informed that this behaviour is unacceptable.

The student on the receiving end of the comments or behaviour will also be offered emotional support and parents/carers may be updated so support can be provided at home.'

11.1 Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the student and providing continuous support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, a member of the pastoral team, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.

11.2. Students who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child (including increased supervision online if the bullying is online).
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions. This may take the form of 1-1 support, social stories, individualised lesson plans for instance.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy

'Staff at The Meadows are aware that in some circumstances, a child displaying bullying behaviour may be a 'cry for help' or an indicator that they themselves are being abused, neglected or exploited.

Any significant change in behaviour can be a sign that a child requires safeguarding and support, and staff should therefore use their professional curiosity to look at what may be behind the behaviour.

While this does NOT excuse the bullying behaviour, nor does it negate our zero-tolerance approach to abusive or discriminatory behaviour; this does mean that support may be offered to the child who is bullying in order to ensure their needs are met.

This support may take the form of:

- additional support with a member of staff
- a referral to counselling or another form of therapy.

*a referral to a mentoring service*

*1-1 support with staff looking at how to express our needs and emotions.*

## **12. Supporting adults**

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by students, parents, or other staff members, is unacceptable.

12.1 Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

12.2 Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

### **13. Discriminatory bullying and Hate Crimes.**

The Meadows School upholds a zero-tolerance approach to any discriminatory behaviour (as outlined elsewhere in this policy). We will use this policy and our behaviour policy to respond to any incidences.

However, if this behaviour is extreme enough to constitute a hate crime, we will use the NPCC document 'When to Call the Police: Guidance for Schools and Colleges' to help us, when deciding whether it is appropriate to report to police: [when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf](https://www.npcc.police.uk/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf) (npcc.police.uk)

Staff are aware that they can report being a victim of a hate crime to police at any point including if the crime has been perpetrated by a student, family member or other professional.

#### **14. Staff reporting bullying amongst students**

Staff should take into account the considerations outlined in Appendix A when responding to an incident or report of bullying.

If bullying is reported or witnessed, staff should take the following actions:

- Any incidents of bullying towards another peer should be recorded on SLEUTH and shared on CPOMS
- The member of staff who has that information should promptly report it to a DSL or DDSL via CPOMS. The DSL and DDSLs will ascertain the facts and decide on appropriate actions.
- Incidents should be recorded on CPOMS selecting the 'Child on Child' category followed by the subcategory 'Bullying'.
- Follow up actions will be devised, recorded and aimed at addressing bullying behaviours.
- In the event that bullying behaviour is not successfully changed or prevented; and those agreed strategies do not show indications of being successful; then the DSL/Headteacher will action further support from outside agencies.

Staff should remember the same best practice when it comes to recording a bullying concern; as they would record a safeguarding concern. For example:

- Use the child's own words as much as possible.
- Record what you know and stick to the facts.
- Avoid 'filling in the gaps' or surmising about what you THINK might have happened.
- Refer to staff by their name and job role.
- Refer to other students who witnessed the bullying behaviour or may have been affected by it.
- Use bullet points and keep it simple.
- Include detail such as time, date and location.
- Explain what actions you have already taken (e.g., speaking with the child and/or phoning parents/carers)

#### **15. Parents reporting bullying**

If as a parent/carer you are concerned about your child/young person being bullied, you should:

- Contact the school by emailing or requesting to speak to the Pastoral team.

- If you don't hear back from the email by the end of the school day.

- please phone the school and ask to speak to Kevin Hurcombe Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour and Attitudes.

- If they are not available, please request to speak to the DSL or a DDSL

Parents and Carers should contact the school via the main office number (0121 569 7080) if the bullying is taking place on home to school transport. You should also contact the designated person (Aleathia Benjamin or Jas Mahal) for home to school transport so they can also report to transport and carry out an investigation.

## **16. Preventing bullying**

### *16.1. Environment*

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people including for children who are LGBTQ+ to seek support and make disclosures.
- Challenge sexual content within verbal abuse especially challenging the misuse of the word 'gay' and other homophobic language.
- Celebrate diversity, success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

### *16.2. Policy and Support*

The whole school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the school's attention, which involves or affects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

### *16.3. Education and Training*

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g., administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

## **17. Involvement of students**

*We will:*

- Involve students to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they have to play to prevent bullying.
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

## **18. Involvement and liaison with parents and carers**

*We will:*

- Take steps to involve parents and carers to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats.
- Involve parents/carers (of the victim as well as that of the child displaying the bullying behaviour) where possible, in the review of risk assessments following a bullying incident.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of the complaints policy so any grievances with staff can be appropriately reported and addressed.

### **19. Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice**

The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.

This includes taking into account any learning from risk assessments and case reviews following bullying incidents.

Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action-planning.

The Head Teacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.

The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

## 20. Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- The BIG Award: [www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php](http://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php)
- PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)
- Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)
- The Diana Award: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)
- Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Young Carers: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)
- The Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools)

### SEND

- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)
- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities:  
[www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying\\_and\\_send\\_-\\_module\\_final.pdf](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf)
- DfE: SEND code of practice: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)

### Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)
- Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)  
[www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis)

### Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)
- Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)



- Tell Mama: [www.tellmamauk.org](http://www.tellmamauk.org)
- Educate against Hate: [www.educateagainsthate.com/](http://www.educateagainsthate.com/)
- Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srtrc.org/educational](http://www.srtrc.org/educational)

## **LGBT**

- Barnardos LGBT Hub: [www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/lgbtq.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm)
- Metro Charity: [www.metrocentreonline.org](http://www.metrocentreonline.org)
- EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)
- Proud Trust: [www.theproudtrust.org](http://www.theproudtrust.org)
- Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)
- Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

## **Sexual harassment and sexual bullying**

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) [www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk)
- A Guide for Schools: [www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf)
- Disrespect No Body: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters)
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related)

**Note:** Additional links can be found in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) [www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying)

## **Appendix A – Considerations for Staff when responding to suspected bullying.**

Before reporting an incident, it may be useful for staff to consider the following:

- Has the incident with the same person/people occurred several times within a relatively short space of time (e.g., within the same half term?)
  
- Is it a disagreement or a result of play that has got out of hand?
  
- Is there a power imbalance between the victim/s of the bullying behaviour and the child displaying the bullying behaviour?  
Examples include:
  - A significant age difference.
  - A significant disparity in physical strength and ability
  - A child who is verbal bullying a non-verbal child
  - A child who has EAL being bullied by a child for whom English is their mother tongue.
  - A child who is independently mobile bullying a child who requires mobility support.
  
- Is it a 'falling out of friendship' matter?
  
- Are you sure that the child who is reporting bullying does not have at least partial responsibility in the matter. Examples include:
  - A child starting an argument or physical altercation that they believe they have now 'lost'.
  - Two children trading insults, which then escalates.
  
- Can you recognise a pattern to the incidents?
  
- Has there been a change in behaviour in either child/ren?
  
- What was the nature of their relationships previously?

Please note: If two children were previously in a romantic and/or sexual relationship and one is now bullying the other; this could be an indicator of Teenage Relationship Abuse (TRA).

TRA is a form of child-on-child abuse and thus, must be responded to in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

All bullying incidents are to be dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner. The child being bullied should be reassured that:

- Their concerns have been listened to and taken seriously.
- The school takes a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and therefore they do not have to 'put up with' the bullying.
- The incident/s will be looked into as a matter of urgency.
- They should continue to report any further incidents.

- It is not their fault that they have been bullied.
- They have done the right thing in reporting.