

# Applecroft School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

<b>Person Responsible:</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Annually</b>
<b>Date of Issue:</b>	<b>January 2026</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>January 2027</b>

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## **1) Introduction:**

### **School Vision**

'To create a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

### **School Mission Statement:**

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

### **School Values:**

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience.

This policy applies to all pupils in the school. For staff, please refer to the 'Staff Bullying and Harassment policy'.

## **2) Links to Other Policies:**

The Applecroft School Anti-Bullying Policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy.

The following national guidelines should also be read when working with this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education - DfE 2025,
- Working Together to Safeguard Children - DfE 2023,
- The Prevent Duty - DfE 2023.

## **3) Applecroft School's aims on tackling bullying:**

- We believe that bullying is wrong and can damage individual children. Therefore, we do everything we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable
- We aim to produce and maintain a safe and secure environment where all pupils can learn without worry or anxiety
- This policy aims to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents which may occur.

## **4) Defining Bullying:**

While there is no single definition of bullying, the Department for Education provides the following guidance:

*"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual*

*orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case."*

'Preventing and Tackling Bullying', DfE 2011

Most definitions include the following dimensions:

1. The behaviour is intended to cause distress
2. The behaviour is repeated
3. There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator of bullying and the target.

However, there are important issues to consider within these broad factors including:

The first element, '**the behaviour is intended to cause distress**', should not be taken to excuse behaviour which individuals or groups claim was intended in fun. It is reasonable for schools to expect that young people will develop age-appropriate skills of empathy and will not be drawn into behaviour that for the perpetrators amounts to teasing but for the target becomes seriously distressing. Behaviour that impacts to damage the emotional wellbeing of others should be taken to be a matter of serious concern and individuals should be made to understand their culpability, regardless of their intention. The effect of the behaviour on the recipient - not just the intention of the perpetrator - is significant in deciding whether to treat an incident as bullying.

The second element, '**the behaviour is repeated**', should be understood in terms of the number and degree of impacts on the target. A single posting of hurtful material on the internet has the potential to be seen by hundreds if not thousands of people and is therefore a very serious matter. A single act of physical assault, mental abuse or threat of the same can lead a child to be in a state of on-going fear. Any incidents of deliberately hurtful behaviour that lead to fear of recurrence should be designated as bullying incidents.

The final element, '**an imbalance of power**', can be subtle and complex. It should not be assumed that a larger child cannot be a victim or a smaller child a perpetrator. It is also often important to recognise the role of popularity as a factor that pertains to the balance of power. Equalities and issues of prejudice also need to be considered carefully within this dimension. A great deal of bullying is linked to difference, perceived difference, or discriminatory attitudes towards certain groups regardless of whether the target is actually a member of these groups. For example, many children and young people who are not lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) may be targeted for homophobic bullying while others may be the targets of racist bullying based on inaccurate presumptions about their culture. These dimensions should always be recorded and monitored.

Applecroft School adopts Hertfordshire County Council's recommendation that schools reflect the following more complex aspects in defining and responding to behaviour:

Bullying is behaviour that impacts negatively on others in the following ways:

1. The behaviour is either intended to cause distress or results in significant distress
2. The behaviour is repeated or results in multiple impacts on the target

3. There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the target/s whether as a result of the prior context or the content or the experience of the hurtful behaviour.

It is very important that there is a shared understanding of the strength of the school's stance against bullying and understanding definitions is an important part of this. It is important that young people and their parents know the definition that the school is working with.

Applecroft School will use the following definition of bullying:

*Others hurting or upsetting you repeatedly and on purpose by doing unkind things.*

Bullying behaviour can include the following hurtful behaviours:

- name-calling, taunting, teasing, mocking and making offensive comments
- offensive, threatening or personalised graffiti or other written material
- excluding people from groups
- gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- kicking, hitting, pushing
- taking belongings
- cyber-bullying - including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages, setting up websites or contributing content to social networking sites that is designed to embarrass or upset individuals or collective exclusion of individuals from social networking sites.

It should be noted that not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all reported hurtful behaviour should be taken seriously and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's report on the effectiveness of responses to 'Identity-based' (or 'Prejudice-based') bullying (Research report 64 2010) states that it:

***"is widespread and continues to blight the lives of many young people, affecting educational attainment and having a long-term impact on their life chances."***

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist:** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic:** because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal:** name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber:** All areas of Internet, such as e-mail and Internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e., camera and video facilities.

### **5) Signs and Symptoms:**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. It is important for adults to be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- is unwilling to go to school
- begs to be driven to school
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged on more than one occasion
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- has unexplained cuts and bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

These signs and behaviours could also indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and be investigated. Please refer to the school's 'Child Protection Policy', 'Safeguarding Policy' and the 'Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy'.

## **6) Roles & Responsibilities:**

The role of the Headteacher:

- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to Trustees on request about the effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Policy and reports on the number of incidents within the termly Headteacher report
- The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour at Applecroft. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong and what the consequences are for the perpetrator(s). All alleged incidents will be investigated (see appendices 1-3)
- The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying
- The Headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. Where children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of a child's behaviour
- The Headteacher ensures that children are reminded periodically of the school's Vision, Mission Statement, Values and Behavioural Expectations. Anti-Bullying is an integral part of the assembly programme.

#### The role of the Staff:

- Staff at Applecroft School take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. The children are reminded frequently of the school's Vision, Mission Statement, Values and Behavioural Expectations. Anti-Bullying is an integral part of the school's PSHE, Leader in Me and Computing curriculums, which alongside the assembly programme, are used to promote relationships between children
- If a member of staff witnesses an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, after consultation with the Class Teacher and Headteacher, the Class Teacher will inform the child's parents/carers.
- We log all incidents of bullying on CPOMS. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, they should inform the Headteacher and record the event on CPOMS.
- If, as staff, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we will deal with the issue(s) immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim and consequences for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time investigating the incident fully, talking to the child who has been bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in the future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, the Senior Leadership Team are always informed. We then invite the child's parents/carers into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, the Headteacher may contact external agencies such as social services
- Staff attend training enabling them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management
- Staff support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

#### The role of Parents/Carers:

- Parents/carers who are concerned that their child might be bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's Class Teacher immediately
- Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school community.

#### The role of Trustees:

- The Board of Trustees supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying. This policy enforces that any incidents of bullying that occur at Applecroft School are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately
- The Board of Trustees monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The Trustees require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and report to Trustees on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies

- The Board of Trustees responds within ten days to any request from a parent or carer to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Board of Trustees notifies the Headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the Board of Trustees.

### **7) Monitoring and Review:**

- This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to Trustees about the effectiveness of the policy on request
- This Anti-Bullying Policy is the Trustees' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness at least annually. They do this by examining the school's data provided in termly Headteacher reports
- The school sends a questionnaire annually to the children, parents and carers and staff asking for their views on their safety in school which gives them the opportunity to discuss any bullying issues and how the school deals with this
- As a school, we support Anti-Bullying Week in November, which culminates in focused activities for pupils focused on anti-bullying messages.

### **8) For Further Information & guidance please see the following Organisations:**

Childline	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>
NSPCC	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>
Antibullying Alliance	<a href="http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk">www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</a>
Kidscape	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>
National Bullying Helpline	<a href="http://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.org.uk">www.nationalbullyinghelpline.org.uk</a>
Young Minds	<a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk">www.youngminds.org.uk</a>
Young Carers	<a href="http://www.youngcarers.org.uk">www.youngcarers.org.uk</a>
Family Lives	<a href="http://www.familylives.org.uk">www.familylives.org.uk</a>
ChildNet International	<a href="http://www.childnet.org">www.childnet.org</a>
UK Internet Centre	<a href="http://www.saferinternet.org.uk">www.saferinternet.org.uk</a>
Cybersmile	<a href="http://www.cybersmile.org">www.cybersmile.org</a>

**Applecroft School****Initial investigation into hurtful incident or allegation of bullying**

Completed by (name and role):

Date:

Name and role of individual(s) making the allegation e.g., pupil, parent/carer, staff member:

Form of referral e.g., verbal report, letter, email, phone call:

Details gathered to date:

Action taken to date:

Date:

Signed:

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### Factors to help determine if incident constitutes bullying

- Incident **was** bullying (all 3 amber warnings confirmed)
- Hurt has been deliberately/knowingly caused (physically or emotionally)
  - It is a repeated incident or experience e.g., multiple incidents, cyber bullying or the involvement of a group
  - Involves an imbalance of power:
    - Target feels s/he cannot defend her/himself, or
    - Perpetrator/s exploiting their power (size, age, popularity, coolness, abusive language, labelling/name calling, etc.)

- Incident **was not** bullying on this occasion because it was
- The first hurtful incident between these children
  - Teasing/banter between friends without intention to cause hurt (should not happen again)
  - Falling out between friends after a quarrel, disagreement or misunderstanding
  - Conflict that got out of hand (should not happen again)
  - Activities that all parties have consented to and enjoyed (check for subtle coercion)
    - Got out of hand
    - Parental concern
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Resolution process agreed:**

**Support and/or sanction for those causing hurt or offence:**

**Support needed for the hurt party:**

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### Focus of Hurtful/Bullying Behaviour

Please tick all elements, which apply in your understanding of the incident(s) and record specific language:

	Definitely applies	Possibly applies
Age/ Maturity		
Appearance		
Size/weight		
Class/Socio-economic		
Family circumstance (e.g., caring role)		
Ethnicity/Race		
Religion/Belief		
Gender		
Transphobia/Gender identity		
Homophobia/sexuality		
Sexualised		
SEN and Disability		
Ability/application		

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### Bullying Report and Monitoring Form

For each incident, please complete one form and return to the Headteacher for collation and monitoring.

1. Focus of Bullying:

Please tick all elements, which apply in your understanding of the incident(s):

	Definitely applies	Possibly applies
Age/ Maturity		
Appearance		
Size/weight		
Class/Socio-economic		
Family circumstance (e.g., caring role)		
Ethnicity/Race		
Religion/Belief		
Gender		
Transphobia/Gender identity		
Homophobia/sexuality		
Sexualised		
SEN and Disability		
Ability/application		

2. Manifestations of Bullying (indicate those that apply)

Perception of individual: feelings of being bullied / harassed	
Isolation/ignoring	
Teasing	
General expressions of prejudice/stereotype	
Racist literature, graffiti or insignia	
Verbal abuse or name calling (specify below)	
Targeted graffiti or hurtful note writing	
Threats including threatened physical assault	
Mobile phone/text message bullying/harassment	
Internet related bullying/harassment	
Camera phone bullying/harassment	
Actual physical assault	
Other:	

3. Those involved - please also record where appropriate:

- adults as targets or perpetrators (A)
- perpetrators from outside the school community (O)
- children/young people who are Children Looked After (CLA) or who have Learning Difficulties/Disabilities (LDD)

Targeted/wronged/distressed person/s (Including ethnicity and other relevant diversity issues)	Person/s giving offence (Including ethnicity and other relevant diversity issues)
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4. Description of incident(s)

Please give a precise account including places, date, times and any witnesses.

Attach any further information (e.g., pupils' accounts, witness accounts, notes of meetings).

N.B. Indicate if it is a repeat incident.

N.B. Indicate if a serious incident referral should be made to the Local Authority.

5. Action taken:  
Please record all steps (including meetings, letters, investigations, sanctions)
6. Summary of those notified and/or involved

(Delete italic options where applicable)	✓	Any details (e.g., dates)
Headteacher		
Chair of Trustees		
Class Teacher		
Year Group Leader		
'Target' parents/carers notified by <i>letter/telephone/in person</i>		
'Target' parents/carers invited to the school		
'Offending person/s' parents/carers notified by <i>letter/telephone/in person</i>		
'Offending person/s' parents/carers invited to the school		
FFA initiated for <i>target/offending person</i>		
Police		
Others (specify):		

7. Date for monitoring progress of those involved. Follow up on the incident and check that all parties are progressing well academically and socially

Date.....

8. Member of staff:

Name ..... Date .....

9. Outcomes/actions from follow up.