



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



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Next review: Autumn 2025

Our Aims

At the Skylark Federation (which is referred to as the Federation in the rest of this document) we take all forms of conflict, friendship problems, and bullying behaviour seriously. Our aims are:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for all children in our care in which they feel positive about themselves and in which they are cherished and valued.
- To uphold and nurture our ethos by encouraging the values of friendship, thankfulness, forgiveness and trust.
- To develop children's self-esteem and sense of worth by creating a happy atmosphere in which both parents and members of staff work together for the welfare of the children.
- To provide an environment in which everyone is mutually valued and respected regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, age, beliefs and ability.
- To encourage children to adopt agreed standards of behaviour and values in order to develop a sense of self-discipline and to take responsibility for their own actions.

Definition of Bullying Behaviour

We acknowledge that both friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting and unpleasant but it is important to distinguish between the two; responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Friendship problems may be an occasional incident where children disagree and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental; children may be able to resolve the problem. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour is defined as **"behaviour by an individual or group-usually repeated over time-that intentionally hurts another individual or group"**.

Bullying can take many forms:

- **Physical bullying** (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, damaging or taking property)
- **Verbal bullying** (name calling, put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, name calling, excessive criticism or sarcasm)
- **Indirect bullying** (rumours or stories, exclusions from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass, withholding friendship or affection)
- **Cyber bullying** (inappropriate phone calls including prank calls, inappropriate text messaging including through websites, social networking sites, instant messaging, chat rooms or emails, sending inappropriate or offensive images by phone, email or via the internet)
- **Religious** (religious taunts, verbal abuse, Prevent-related concerns)
- **Racist** (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- **Sexual** (unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments)
- **Homophobic or biophobic** (bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality)
- **Transphobic** (because of gender identity or perceived gender identity)

This policy will refer to 'the person bullying' and 'the person being bullied' rather than 'bully' and 'victim', both of which can be defined as negative labelling.

Whole Federation Approach

- Issues surrounding friendships and bullying behaviour are taught through the Personal, Social and Health Education Curriculum. Pupils are taught to explore some of the ups and downs of relationships, including the positive aspects and benefits of friendships and the negative aspects of relational conflict. Through circle time, pupils discuss the many ways of dealing with sometimes difficult situations and the ways in which they can seek help.

- Within the Federation, whole school assemblies are used to discuss bullying and raise pupils' awareness of what bullying looks like, and how they can respond.
- Pupils will be involved in appropriate anti-bullying campaigns.
- Circle times in classes will provide opportunities for more detailed discussions and role play activities to explore the nature of bullying.
- Class and School Councils will provide a forum for discussing bullying issues and for the children to decide ways of preventing it and supporting those who are bullied.
- Members of staff on playground duty will inform Class Teachers of any incidents.
- All members of staff will be trained to identify bullying and to follow the Federation's Policy and Procedures on bullying. Staff are expected to intervene when behaviour becomes inappropriate in order to prevent bullying from developing.
- Ensure pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied.
- Work with pupils who have been bullying in order to address the problems they may have.

Strategies for Responding to Bullying Behaviour

The Federation will ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying.

Where bullying does occur this will be followed by an immediate and appropriate response, including the use of disciplinary sanctions where necessary.

Early identification is the most effective way to minimise bullying behaviour and the effects on the person being bullied. The Federation also acknowledges that the person doing the bullying needs to understand that their behaviour is unacceptable and must

stop. They may also need support to change their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for bullying.

Pupils are encouraged to report any negative behaviour, even if they are not sure whether it is bullying. They can do this through:

- Speaking to their Teacher/Teaching Assistant or any member of staff
- Speaking to a parent/carer/other adult who then may contact their school within the Federation in any of the normal ways
- Speaking to their School Council Representative or a playground buddy
- Email the School within the Federation or a letter to any member of staff

When Bullying is known to have happened or be ongoing

- The Class Teacher will discuss the incident(s) with the pupil being bullied. It is important that they are listened to and believed.
- The incident will then be discussed with the pupil(s) engaging in bullying.
- Information will be gathered from witnesses to explain what they saw.
- The relevant Head of School will be informed.
- Sanctions in line with the Federation's Behaviour Policy will be used where appropriate. These might include: behaviour charts; involvement of parents/carers or other agencies; loss of privileges; withdrawal from lunchtimes/playtimes; fixed or permanent exclusion from their school (in extreme cases); records will be kept on pupils' files. Parents of those involved will be informed of any action taken.

Monitoring Behaviour

Where a pupil or group of pupils deny involvement in bullying behaviour, the pupil(s) concerned will be observed and monitored. The pupil being bullied may be asked to record and report any incidents that cause them concern. A group of friends will be asked to support the pupil being bullied through class work and play. The matter may

be discussed in circle time (keeping names anonymous) in order to raise awareness of how a group can tackle bullying.

If the bullying continues, the pupil doing the bullying will be referred to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. This may then lead to an external referral. Within the Federation a programme of social skills work will be set up to promote positive relationships and behaviour. Good behaviour will always be praised and encouraged. If the behaviour complained about is not within the definition of bullying but is a friendship issue the school will work with the pupil claiming to be bullied and with the other pupil(s) involved to help them to achieve a resolution.

Liaison with Parents and Carers

The Federation will:

- Ensure that parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Ensure parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.
- Ensure parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
- Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Policy will be monitored and evaluated regularly by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that it is effective in handling issues of conflict between pupils at schools within the Federation.

Complaints

The Federation Governing Board has established a Formal Complaints Procedure and this may be used by a parent/carer if necessary.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, but no less frequently than every two years. The policy review will be undertaken by the Executive Head Teacher and the Governing Board.