



Anti-Bullying Policy

We are 'seeds sown in the good soil'
(Matthew 13:23)

Adopted: October 2025

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This policy was updated to incorporate the Local Authority Advice and Guidance on Dealing with Prejudice Related Incidents in Schools.

This policy incorporates the Dealing with Racist Incidents in Schools Advice and Guidance and should be read and used in conjunction with the above Advice and Guidance Documents.

Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- To work towards ensuring an environment where all children feel safe, happy and secure in school.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff, parents and governors have an understanding of what bullying and prejudice mean and their impact on the victim's emotional well-being.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff and parents have guidance and strategies to deal with and resolve bullying and prejudice related incidents when they occur.
- To eliminate racism and sexism in our school. To encourage children to behave in a responsible manner toward each other, taking responsibility for their own behaviour in accordance with our behaviour policy.
- To ensure that the curriculum teaches why bullying/prejudice is unacceptable and how it can be dealt with.

Underlying Principles

Each prejudice related incident holds unique and distinctive features, which need to be considered; schools' responses must be informed by the principles below. These principles need to be adopted if schools are to challenge and counter prejudice related incidents and ensure the wellbeing and achievement of all children and young people within the school community.

- All pupils are entitled to an education, which respects and values their identity, individuality and background and is free from prejudice, harassment and adverse discrimination.
- Prejudice related bullying could prevent children from learning and be a significant barrier to their achievement.
- Prejudice related bullying impacts on a child's social and emotional wellbeing.
- Strategies for dealing with discrimination need to be linked to the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policy.
- All staff, children, parents, carers and governors must be aware of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with prejudice related incidents.
- All allegations of prejudice related bullying must be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Schools must keep parents, carers and children informed during an investigation and advise them of any action that is taken. This must be discussed sensitively with the child or young person beforehand.
- Schools and the local authority will be open and honest in their dealings with pupils, parents, carers and members of local communities about prejudice related incidents and will value their help and support in tackling these issues.

Definition of Bullying

We consider that bullying is repeated, deliberate behaviour that makes another person feel threatened, distressed, hurt or upset and where there is an imbalance of power. Occasionally the distress caused may not be consciously intended by the perpetrator, this will depend upon the perpetrator's age and ability to understand the consequences of their behaviour.

Normal Peer Conflict or Bullying?

The harm caused by bullying/prejudice must not be underestimated. It can cause considerable stress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development.

Normal Peer Conflict or Bullying?

Normal Peer Conflict	Bullying
Equal power or friends aside from this incident.	Repeated unwelcome actions.
Happens occasionally.	Deliberate harm or the threat of physical or emotional harm.
Accidental or not pre-meditated harm.	Seeking power, control of material things.
Not seeking power or attention.	May attempt to get material things or power.
Generally not trying to get something.	No remorse – may blame the victim.
Remorse – will take responsibility.	Imbalance of power – not friends.

Action we can take to prevent bullying/prejudice related incidents

It is important that we create an atmosphere in school where victims of bullying/prejudice feel able to tell an adult what is happening; put their side of the argument; and know that they will be listened to.

Also children accused of bullying/prejudice behaviour must feel able to tell their side of the story and be listened to.

How this can be achieved:

- Raise the awareness of what bullying and prejudice are through direct teaching – PSHE, RSE and incidental discussions, collective worship and no outsiders work.
- All members of the school community creating a caring, calm, ordered and friendly atmosphere in school.
- Parents are informed of incidents of bullying/prejudice by the child's class teacher and offered advice on how to support their child, be they victim or perpetrator.
- Children feel valued, by means of teaching through the curriculum and displays; recognition of achievement; rewards and celebrating varied heritages.
- Ensure that consistent behaviour management and high quality activities are available at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- All members of the school community follow policy and are consistent when handling incidents.
- The promotion of anti-bullying/prejudice campaigns, eg Anti-Bullying Week.
- Canvass pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.

Definition of Prejudice Related Incidents

A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

A disability related incident is any incident which is perceived to be so by the victim or any other person.

A homophobic related incident is any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person. Furthermore, the victim does not have to be lesbian, gay or bisexual to experience homophobic bullying, but may be targeted because they are perceived to be gay, or because a member of their family is gay, for example.

Forms of Bullying and Prejudice Related Incidents

Verbal (Name-Calling, Taunting, Mocking)

This covers name-calling, insults, threats and prejudice related 'jokes'; and incitement of others to behave in a prejudiced way. It also includes ridicule of a person's appearance, speech/accents, background, religion, culture; the regular use, consciously or unconsciously of offensive and discriminatory language.

Written

This includes offensive writing, drawings, emails and text messages as well as items posted on the web, including social networking sites.

Graffiti

This includes offensive writing and drawings in public places and anywhere in the school such as walls, desks, and toilets.

Physical

This includes a range of violent actions involving hitting, kicking, and the use of weapons, pushing, shoving or tripping someone.

Intimidation/coercion

This includes making fun of children and adults, offensive gestures, mimicry, intimidating body language and obstruction, for example when entering a school classroom or within the school environment, as well as making someone do or say something against their will.

Extortion

Extortion specifically relates to forcing someone to give up something they own, or have in their custody, such as money, personal possessions or school property.

Personal possessions taken or damaged

This includes deliberately damaging or breaking a person's property, spoiling or destroying a piece of work, hiding a pupil's bag, pens, shoes and other personal property or the school's property that is in the possession of or being used by the victim.

Isolation, being ignored or left out

This includes a refusal to sit next to or work with another child, for example, in working groups, lunchtime queues, and playground activities.

Spreading rumours

The deliberate spreading of rumours and/or malicious gossip, particularly with the intention of causing hurt those named in the rumours.

Cyber (Email, Internet, text)

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. As such, technology is often the vehicle for the bullying, and therefore spreading rumours, for example, may be done via the internet, and would therefore be both 'Spreading rumours' and 'Cyber.'

Other prejudice related incidents

This includes the wearing of specific badges, T-shirts carrying slogans or bringing discriminatory literature into school; attempting to recruit others to organisations and groups that promote any form of prejudice.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults must be aware of these possible signs and that they must investigate if a child:

- refuses to go outside at break times or refuses to stay at school for school dinners
- requests to change classes or school
- behaves immaturely, i.e. the child reverts to a previous behaviour such as thumb-sucking
- becomes withdrawn, clingy, moody, uncooperative or non-communicative
- finds it difficult to concentrate or school performance deteriorates
- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine – time leaving or route taken to/from school
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- self-harms (eg scratches themselves)
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous or jumpy when a message or email is received
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems but bullying must be considered a possibility and must be investigated.

[Responding to Bullying or Prejudice Related Incidents](#)

All prejudiced behaviour must be treated as a serious matter. It is crucially important that the member of staff who first encounters the incident shows firm disapproval and takes positive action to deal with the situation. A failure to respond could be seen as condoning prejudiced behaviour and could discourage pupils and parents / carers from reporting incidents and sharing their concerns with staff.

Prompt, appropriate and consistent responses from all members of staff can encourage pupils who might otherwise suffer in silence to report incidents and share their concerns and worries. In dealing with the perpetrators of prejudice related bullying or other discriminatory incidents, it is important that it is the behaviour that is disapproved of and not the pupils themselves.

Effective action could include:

- drawing the perpetrator to one side and explaining clearly and calmly why the behaviour was wrong and hurtful or offensive;
- seeking an assurance that the pupil understands why the behaviour was wrong and that it will not be repeated;
- correcting any misinformation that was used as part of the prejudice related behaviour;
- where an assurance is forthcoming, asking the pupil to apologise for his or her action, where possible mediate between the children or young people;
- investigating the background or particular circumstances which led up to the incident – witnesses must be sought to verify the account;
- referring the matter, where appropriate, to a senior member of staff for disciplinary action;
- arranging a meeting or informing the parents / carers in order to make it clear to them that such behaviour is unacceptable and that further disciplinary action will be taken if there is any repetition (if such behaviour appears to be condoned or encouraged by the parents, staff must refer the parents to the headteacher)
- in appropriate cases, considering the use of positive strategies other than sanctions and punishment that might help and encourage the pupil to overcome his or her prejudices and to desist from engaging in similar behaviour in the future
- checking the recording and reporting data to see if the pupil has been involved in any earlier incidents. If this is the case, a senior member of staff must meet with the parents / carers of the perpetrator. The meeting must enlist the support of these parents and carers to stop such behaviour and to stress that a similar incident in the future could have serious consequences for the child. In some cases, this could lead to a fixed-term or permanent exclusion and possible action by the police if the aggrieved victim took action against the perpetrator.
- Safe to Learn: Homophobic Bullying, (DCSF-00668-2007) contains detailed, step-by-step approaches for dealing with homophobic incidents, including scripted responses for how to support a pupil who has been the victim of homophobic bullying as well as ideas for how to address homophobic bullying at Key Stage 1, 2, 3, 4 and 16+.

Recording and Reporting Procedures

Members of school staff may not be sure when they must record an incident as prejudice-related following remarks made by children related to ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or homophobia. The following questions may be helpful to assist this decision.

- If the answer to any of the following 3 questions is 'Yes' then the incident must be recorded:
 - a) Was anyone offended/hurt/upset by the remark?
 - b) Would a representative of the community concerned have been offended? (If in doubt record)
 - c) Was the way the remark was formulated or delivered derogatory, mocking or negative about the group or individual or character concerned? (if in doubt record)

Every incident that is perceived to be based on prejudice must be reported and recorded, however minor it may appear at the time.

- All bullying or prejudice related incidents (except racist) must be recorded on Myconcern with the appropriate category selected).
- Racist related incidents must be recorded on MyConcern with Racism category selected.
- The headteacher will be responsible for overseeing the reporting procedure and monitoring the incidence of prejudice related incidents on a regular basis.
- The information provided by these records will be reported annually to governors by the Headteacher. It is a legal requirement for racist incidents to be reported and it is recommended as best practice for disablist and homophobic incidents also to be reported to the local authority.

All members of staff have access to MyConcern to report incidents.

Following up an incident

It is often helpful, once the immediate situation has been dealt with, for staff to reflect on the incident, to consider what further action may be necessary in respect of the perpetrator and victim and to see if there are any lessons to be learned from the experience.

Effective action could include:

- Considering the actions of the perpetrator to see if there were any underlying causes which may have prompted this behaviour;
- Checking data records to see if the pupil has been involved in any previous incidents. If this is the case, a senior member of staff must meet with the parents of the perpetrator, seek their support in stopping such behaviour and make them aware that a similar incident in the future could have serious consequences for their child;
- Monitoring the perpetrator's future behaviour;
- Checking to see if there are any times in the school day, or any places in the school, where pupils feel particularly vulnerable. If so, try to find ways of overcoming this. For example, if incidents have occurred in the playground, check that staff are on the alert for such behaviour at lunch and break times;
- Considering if it would be beneficial to discuss the issues further in a school assembly or class discussion. This requires careful judgement. It may expose the victim in an embarrassing and uncomfortable way and could be treated inappropriately by other

pupils. On the other hand, it may be an opportunity to develop positive attitudes towards diversity. This will help pupils to understand the damaging effects of prejudice and the determination of the school to combat this.

- Asking all members of staff to keep a protective eye on a known victim(s) of prejudice and taking positive steps over time to build up their trust and to encourage them to report any further incidents;
- Making sure all members of staff are alert for other pupils who may be suffering in silence;
- Asking all members of staff to keep a watchful eye on known perpetrators to prevent further prejudiced incidents.

Consequences & Support

Consequences for the inappropriate actions of the perpetrator are important but may not prevent further incidents of bullying. It is, therefore, essential that the perpetrator is helped to understand the impact of their actions; the reasons for their actions and then given strategies and support to prevent recurrence. This may require long-term in-school support and the involvement of external agencies. Any consequences used will be in line with the Level 1, 2 and 3 chart in the school's behaviour policy.

At Orford, we use a restorative approach to deal with bullying incidents. Effective Restorative Approaches foster awareness of how others have been affected by inappropriate behaviour. This is done by actively engaging pupils in a process which separates the action from the person, allowing the perpetrator to make amends for the harm caused.

A Restorative Approach:

- Improves behaviour and attitudes
- Provides guidance within a defined framework to challenge unacceptable behaviour, resolve conflict and repair harm
- Improves relationships; establish rights, accountabilities and responsibilities to the community
- Provides a safe, philosophical basis for staff, pupils and parents to share ideas and discuss issues.

Stage 1: have restorative conversations with the perpetrator first, and then the victim separately.

Stage 2: to host a mediation with the perpetrator, victim and any other persons involved to explore the thoughts and feelings of everyone.

Stage 3: mediation with perpetrator and victim to work towards an agreed future solution.

Restorative Questions

For the perpetrator:

What happened?

What were you thinking about at the time?

Who has been affected by what you did?

What do you think you need to do to make things right?

For the victim:

What did you think when you realised what had happened?

What have your thoughts been since?
How has this affected you and others?
What has been the hardest thing for you?
What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Other questions that may be used to scaffold the conversation:

What happened? – followed by:
What were you thinking about when you did that?
How did your actions affect?
How do you think felt about what you did?
How do you feel about what you did?
How do you feel about what you did and the affect it had on me?

In discussion with the pupils, parents/carers and the headteacher, it may be decided that additional support is required.

Additional support for the victim may include: 1:1 time with an adult to help build self-esteem; peer support; a “trusted” adult at lunchtime who is fully aware of the issues and can offer protection; regular home-school contact between parents and teachers; “open-door” policy for parents with class teacher and senior leaders; access to nurture group facilities.

Additional support for the perpetrator may include: 1:1 time with an adult to help build self-esteem and social skills; social skills group work, peer support; a “trusted” adult at lunchtime who is fully aware of the issues and is able to rapidly intervene in any incident; regular home-school contact between parents and teachers; “open-door” policy for parents with class teacher and senior leaders; access to nurture group facilities; pastoral support programme if a risk of permanent exclusion.