ABBEY VIEW SCHOOL

Policy: Anti Bullying Policy

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1. Aims and Ethos

Abbey View School is committed to creating a calm, safe and supportive environment where all students feel respected, valued and able to learn without fear of bullying.

The school recognises that bullying can have a significant and long-term impact on a young person's emotional wellbeing, relationships and ability to engage in education. Many of the students at Abbey View have experienced disrupted educational journeys, trauma or difficulties in forming positive relationships. As such, the school understands that behaviour is a form of communication and must be viewed within the context of individual need.

Abbey View adopts a relational and restorative approach, where the focus is on:

- building positive relationships
- preventing harm before it occurs
- supporting students to reflect on their behaviour
- creating a culture of respect and responsibility

This policy aims to:

- Provide a clear and consistent approach to preventing and responding to bullying
- Define what constitutes bullying behaviour
- Outline how concerns are reported and managed
- Ensure all students feel safe, supported and protected

This policy supports the school's duties under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Equality Act 2010 and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another, where there is a clear imbalance of power.

Bullying differs from one-off incidents or peer conflict. While all inappropriate behaviour is addressed, bullying involves:

- repeated behaviour over time
- deliberate intent to cause harm
- an imbalance of power between those involved

3. Forms of Bullying

Bullying can take a variety of forms. Staff are aware that students may experience more than one type simultaneously.

This may include:

- **Verbal bullying**, such as name-calling, insults, threats or offensive language
- **Physical bullying**, including hitting, pushing or damaging belongings

- **Social or relational bullying**, such as exclusion, manipulation or spreading rumours
- **Online (cyber) bullying**, including harmful messaging, social media abuse or sharing content intended to cause harm
- **Prejudice-based bullying**, including behaviour targeting protected characteristics such as race, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation

All prejudice-based incidents are treated with particular seriousness and recorded in line with Equality Act responsibilities.

Bullying relating to protected characteristics, including race, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender reassignment, will always be treated seriously. This includes transphobic bullying. The school also recognises the additional vulnerabilities experienced by some minority groups, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

4. Anti-Bullying Strategy

Abbey View School implements a clear anti-bullying strategy based on prevention, early identification and intervention.

Prevention is achieved through a strong focus on relationships, consistent expectations and a behaviour curriculum which develops emotional literacy, empathy and social skills. Staff model respectful behaviour and actively recognise positive choices.

Early identification is supported through daily systems, including the RAG behaviour monitoring process, end-of-day reviews and strong communication between staff. Pastoral support and key worker relationships ensure that concerns are identified quickly.

Intervention is proportionate and relational. The school seeks to address the root cause of behaviour, repair relationships and ensure that harm is reduced and does not continue.

The school recognises that pupils experiencing trauma, mental ill health, SEND or emotional vulnerability may be at increased risk of bullying, peer conflict or exploitation. Staff adopt a trauma-informed and contextual safeguarding approach when identifying and addressing concerns.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that the school has effective measures in place to prevent bullying and for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented consistently across the school and that staff are supported through appropriate training and guidance.

The Behaviour Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Behaviour Lead and the DSL oversee all cases where bullying may present a safeguarding concern and ensures that appropriate action is taken in line with safeguarding procedures.

Staff

All staff are responsible for promoting a positive environment. Staff will:

- model respectful behaviour
- challenge bullying immediately
- record and report concerns
- support students involved

Students and Parents

Students are expected to treat others with respect and report concerns. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school and raise any issues promptly. Staff receive regular safeguarding and behaviour training relating to bullying, online safety, protected characteristics, trauma-informed practice, contextual safeguarding and child-on-child abuse.

6. Reporting Concerns

Students are encouraged to report any concerns about bullying to a trusted member of staff. This may include their key worker, pastoral staff or any adult within the school.

All reports are taken seriously. Staff will respond calmly, listen carefully and ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Parents and carers may also report concerns directly to the school.

7. Responding to Bullying

The school follows a clear and consistent process when responding to suspected bullying.

In the first instance, the safety of all students is prioritised. Where necessary, students will be separated and supported.

All incidents are recorded on the school's safeguarding or behaviour system on the same day. Records must be clear, factual and accurate.

The concern will be reviewed by a member of staff, and where appropriate, escalated to senior leadership or the DSL. An investigation will take place within an appropriate timeframe, typically within 48 hours, and will involve gathering information from all parties.

Parents and carers will be informed where appropriate.

Outcomes may include restorative conversations, pastoral support, targeted intervention or sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy. Following the incident, staff will monitor the situation to ensure that the behaviour does not continue. Whilst the school adopts a restorative and relational approach, repeated or serious bullying behaviour will result in clear sanctions and escalation in line with the Behaviour Policy.

8. Safeguarding and Escalation

Bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern where it presents a risk of harm or aligns with child-on-child abuse. This includes child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, online sexual harassment and behaviour presenting a contextual safeguarding concern.

This includes behaviour that:

- is persistent or severe
- involves a significant power imbalance
- is prejudiced in nature
- includes sexual harassment or violence

In these cases, the DSL will take a lead role and may involve external agencies such as children's social care or the police.

9. Student Support

The school recognises the importance of supporting all students involved in bullying incidents.

Students who have experienced bullying will receive pastoral support, including regular check-ins and access to a trusted adult. Where appropriate, additional intervention may be provided to support their wellbeing and safety.

Students who have displayed bullying behaviour will be supported to reflect on their actions and develop more positive behaviours. This may include restorative work, emotional literacy support and behaviour targets.

10. Sanctions

Sanctions will be applied where appropriate and in line with the Behaviour Policy. Responses will always be proportionate and consider the individual context of the student.

In more serious cases, sanctions may include:

- structured reflection
- parental meetings
- fixed-term suspension

11. Online Behaviour

The school recognises that bullying may occur outside of school through online platforms. Where this behaviour impacts the safety or wellbeing of students or disrupts the school environment, the school will take appropriate action.
This may include behaviour sanctions, safeguarding intervention, and communication with parents.

Safeguarding expectations within this policy apply equally during transport arrangements, educational visits, off-site activities, and online environments beyond the school day.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

The school will monitor bullying incidents to ensure effective practice.

This includes:

- recording all incidents
- reviewing concerns on a regular basis
- identifying patterns and trends

This monitoring takes place:

- weekly at a pastoral and safeguarding level
- termly at a senior leadership level
- through oversight by the Trust Board

Monitoring will include student voice and pupil perception to ensure students feel safe and understand how bullying concerns are managed. Analysis will also include review of patterns, trends and experiences over time.

Analysis includes consideration of protected characteristics to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

13. Training

Staff receive regular training on behaviour, safeguarding and supporting students with social and emotional needs. This ensures a consistent and informed approach to preventing and responding to bullying.

14. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct