

Court Schools Anti-Bullying Policy and Strategy



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Court Schools Anti-Bullying Policy and Strategy

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Court Schools Anti-Bullying Policy and Strategy

Rationale

At Court schools, we believe everyone in our school community has the right to feel safe, heard and treated as an individual and their needs met.

Our anti-bullying policy reflects the importance of social and emotional learning and ensuring that an individual's learning and development needs are fully met so they can engage in their learning. All learners at Court schools have an Education Health and Care Plan.

Court Schools are communities where all learners are encouraged to behave in a safe and respectful way, showing kindness and tolerance. We recognise that a consistent approach to behaviour management is key to supporting learners feeling safe. Addressing any instances of bullying is a key element of behaving in a respectful way, showing tolerance and kindness. It is also key to stakeholders feeling safe. Court Schools is committed to continue to build on our culture of anti-bullying. At Court Schools the bullying of anyone, adult or child, is not accepted in any form. In our school, we strive to create a happy, safe, and caring learning environment where everyone feels safe.

All cases of bullying are serious, and any behaviour that adversely affects the wellbeing of another will not be tolerated.

This policy will be applied equally to all members of the school community regardless of race, religion, sexuality or disability. We are a community committed to tolerance and inclusion.

We strive to establish a whole school approach building a strong culture that promotes excellent behaviour, trusting relationships within an environment of support and safety, stimulation, respect and learning. Underpinning this, are our school values:

Values

At Court Schools, we develop the understanding, interests, and aspirations of our learner through the following values:

- Respect and Resilience
- Kindness and Independence
- Health and Happiness

We teach Respect and build Resilience, through Kindness and being part of our community. Our curriculum has a clear focus on personal development which supports developing Independence and preparation for their future filled with Health and Happiness.

We promote a positive learning environment, culture and ethos, providing our learners with the knowledge, skills, and experiences to develop independence and reach their potential.

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Respect and the importance of relationships are two of the first values we learn and develop when we are at school. We learn to respect people around us and the spaces we are in because respect means that you accept people for who they are, even when they are different from you.

At school, we also learn kindness, to ourselves and our community. Acts of kindness to those around us makes the world a happier place and can boost feelings of confidence, happiness, and optimism. Being kind to others contributes to a positive community environment and enables us to build connections within and outside of school. When we are happy, we are healthier, and our health is one of the biggest factors in determining happiness. Besides feeling good, positive emotions do good things for our brains and bodies. They lower stress hormones, help ease anxiety and improve our immune system. Experiencing positive emotions every day has a big impact on our happiness and wellbeing, which in turn makes us healthier.

Aim

We believe that the best way to ensure that everyone behaves in a positive way is through the development of strong, trusting relationships within an environment of safety, stimulation, respect and learning.

Key Principles

Underpinning this, are our key principles which focus on a positive culture:

- That promotes excellent behaviour. *Learners can learn in a calm, safe and supportive environment.*
- Where everyone is responsible for promoting positive relationships and good communication with others; actively building trust and rapport. Adults must act as positive role models in their own behaviour and relationships. *Learners learn by example.*
- Where expressing feelings is encouraged, being kind and promoting happiness. *Learners develop their empathy and understanding of feelings.*
- Where there is a focus on building strong relationships and fostering respect. *Learners develop their friendship skills.*
- Where mutual support and encouragement are focused upon. *Learners are supported to develop tolerance and build resilience, make good choices, and take responsibility in readiness for them taking their place in society.*
- Where there is a commitment to inclusion, which means including all our learners in the life of the school. *Learners have a sense of belonging to our school community.*

We have clear school behaviour standards (see behaviour policy)

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Behaviour Standards

At Court schools we strive to establish a whole school approach, building a strong culture that promotes excellent behaviour and trusting relationships within an environment of support and safety, stimulation, respect and learning. Underpinning this are our key principles and school values which include:

- Everyone is responsible for promoting kindness, good communication, actively building trust and connection.
- Learners are supported to develop respect and build resilience, make good choices and take responsibility in readiness for them taking their place in society.

These relate directly to our School Community Behaviour Standards, where there is a clear expectation of positive interactions.

School Community Behaviour Standards

All learners are expected to:

- Be in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing.
- Try your best in everything you do
- Work hard, let others work too.
- Be Respectful: self-respect, respect for our school community – people and property
- Treat others as you would like to be treated
- Practice the school values.
- Wear school uniform – show you are a member of our school community
- Respect other's personal space – no physical interactions

Bullying (including Cyber-bullying)

Bullying is behaviour that is repeated, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally and often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexuality (DfE, 2023).

Court Schools recognises bullying as a form of child-on-child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and cause severe and adverse effects on children's and young people's emotional development.

Bullying is, therefore:

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

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** – Being unfriendly, threatening, excluding, tormenting
- **Physical** – Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence

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- **Sexual** – Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
- **Racial** – focusing on race, religion or culture
- **Verbal** – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber-bullying** – Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites, devices or via images, audio, video, or written content generated by artificial intelligence (AI)
- **Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including Racial, Faith-based, gendered (sexist), Homophobic/biphobia, Transphobic, Disability-based** - Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)

Court Schools recognises that some pupils may experience considerable difficulties with communication, social interaction and empathy. These difficulties can affect a learner's ability to reflect on the impact their behaviour has on others or to self-manage their behaviour. While actions may lack the typical degree of intention found in bullying, the resulting effect on the targeted individual is the same and must be addressed using strategies that account for individual needs.

Anti-Bullying Strategy

1. To prevent, de-escalate, and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
2. To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and trigger sources of support.
3. To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate, and consistent way.
4. To apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- Approve and maintain a review of the behaviour policy in conjunction with the headteacher
- Monitor the policy's effectiveness

The Headteacher & SLT

- Review this policy in conjunction with the governors
- Give due consideration to the school's statement of behaviour principles
- Ensuring that the school environment encourages positive behaviour
- Ensuring that staff deal effectively with incidents of bullying

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- Monitoring that the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders within the policy are implemented consistently
- Provide new staff with a clear induction into the school's behavioural culture to ensure they understand its rules and routines, and how best to support all learners to participate fully, providing a positive culture that promotes
- Staff training on anti-bullying practice will be given as part of their induction package to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities.
- Offer appropriate training in behaviour management, and the impact of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and mental health needs on behaviour, to any staff who require it, so they can fulfil their duties set out in this policy
- Ensure this policy works alongside other relevant policies including the safeguarding and anti-bullying policy to offer learners both consequences and support as necessary
- Analyse of significant behaviour weekly as presented to the SLT. This enables learner of concern to be discussed, and relational support plans initiated to address negative behaviours and offer additional support. Analysis also includes identifying patterns, ensuring no groups of learners are being disproportionately impacted. If a learners' culture or race is a factor in an occurrence of bullying, staff will refer to procedures for dealing with and reporting racial incidents.
- Ensuring that the data from the behaviour log (Arbor) is reviewed regularly, to make sure that no groups of learners are being disproportionately impacted by this policy
- Supporting staff in responding to bullying

Staff

- Create a calm and safe environment for learners, building and maintaining positive relationships
- Use and follow our school values
- Establish and maintain clear boundaries of acceptable learner behaviour
- Consistently implement the Anti-Bullying policy and Strategy
- Communicate the school's expectations, routines, values and standards through modelling and teaching appropriate behaviour and in every interaction with learners
- Provide a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of learners
- Consider the impact of their own behaviour on the school culture and how they can uphold school rules and expectations
- Record bullying incidents promptly on the school's recording system
- Build positive relationships with parents and carers by keeping them up to date about their learner including incidents of bullying, whether victim or perpetrator

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Parents and Carers

- Familiarise themselves with the Anti-Bullying policy and Strategy and reinforce it at home where appropriate
- If relevant, take part in any pastoral work following any incidents of bullying (for example, attending reviews of specific behaviour interventions or discussion of the provision of pastoral support)
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly using Dojo messaging, phone calls and sharing of relational support plans
- Familiarise themselves with the behaviour policy and reinforce it at home where appropriate
- Work in collaboration with staff to support their learner in adhering to the school's behaviour policy
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly using Dojo messaging, phone calls and sharing of relational support plans

Learners

- Learners will be made aware of the following during their induction into school and its culture:
- The expected standard of behaviour they should be displaying at school and why we have these standards
- That they have a duty to follow the behaviour policy
- The school's key rules and routines
- The rewards they can earn for meeting the behaviour standards, and the consequences they will face if they don't meet the standards
- The pastoral and sensory support that is available to them to help them meet the behaviour standards
- They will be encouraged to report bullying

Recognition and Intervention

Recognising Indicators of Bullying:

Staff are trained to recognise that changes in a learner's behaviour may indicate they are experiencing bullying or are in need of help or protection. Where changes in known individual behaviour patterns occur, staff must always consider the possibility of bullying.

Indicators may include:

- Becoming shy and nervous.
- Appetite irregularities

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- Feigning illness.
- Refusing to attend school
- Clinging to adults.
- Changes in personal habits, lacking concentration, or high levels of distractible behaviour.
- Becoming super-vigilant.

Understanding Why Bullying Occurs

Bullying often involves an **imbalance of power**—physical, psychological, intellectual, or through group support/social isolation—which makes it difficult for the person being bullied to defend themselves.

Reasons for bullying often include prejudice related to race, religion, culture, SEND, appearance, health conditions, sexual orientation, or home circumstances.

Court Schools carefully reviews the reasons why bullying occurs on a case-by-case basis.

Prevention Strategies

Court Schools employs comprehensive preventative strategies based on a whole-school approach.

- **Relationship-Based Culture:** Use extensive knowledge of learners and strong relationships with home to recognise any changes that might result in 'bullying' behaviours. The school culture prioritises building trust, safety, respect, and learning.
- **Curriculum Offer:** Teaching learners about bullying and its impact is embedded throughout the curriculum offer. The PSHCE curriculum focuses on emotional literacy, building positive relationships, resilience, and promoting our school core values.
- **Targeted Support:** To understand the motivation underpinning behaviour change, including changes to Relational Support Plans (RSPs).
- **Promoting Inclusion:** Through positive relationships with all learners, enables learners to access and learn about issues of difference through a program of International and National events, assemblies the curriculum, and school visits. To promote appreciation and respect for all cultures.
- **Staff Consistency and Training:** Ensure all members of staff are familiar with this policy. Staff receive training in positive behavioural strategies, de-escalation techniques, and emotional literacy modelling.
- **Online Safety:** Ensure that monitoring and filtering software is effective in protecting learners from cyber-based bullying. Teaching pupils how to manage risk and stay safe online is core to the Prevent Strategy and is taught using resources like Project Evolve.
- **Supervision:** Ensure that all learners are appropriately supervised.

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Incident Management and Procedures

Bullying behaviour or threats must be dealt with immediately.

1. **Immediate Response:** If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
2. **Recording:** A clear account of the incident will be recorded on to Arbor and/or CPOMS.
3. **SLT/DSL Involvement:** The incident is shared with the appropriate member of SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead). If the concern meets the harm threshold or involves staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and potentially the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be informed immediately.
4. **Information Gathering:** The SLT member will interview all concerned (both the pupil suspected of 'bullying' and the 'victim') and keep a record of their finding. Review of previous behaviour incidents to see if there have been previous incidents. Information is gathered before any conclusion is made about whether the incidents constituted bullying behaviour.
5. **External Authorities:** In cases where a **crime has been committed** or a learner is believed to be in **imminent danger or risk**, the appropriate authorities (police, LA) will be informed immediately prior to any internal investigation. Safeguarding procedures will be followed at this point.
6. **Staff Allegations:** If it is suspected that the bullying is staff on learner, the disciplinary procedure will be acted upon, and a safeguarding concern raised.
7. **Cyberbullying Review:** If internet/social media-based bullying is suspected, steps **MUST** be taken to check if the filtering and monitoring software protection can be improved.
8. **Communication:** Relevant staff and parents/carers will be kept informed. If the issue persists, further support meetings (with parents and staff) will be held.

Supporting Affected Parties

Support for Pupils Who Have Been Bullied: Victims

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Immediate support and reassurance.
- Support to repair self-esteem and confidence.
- Participating in a restorative justice conversation, where appropriate.
- Providing pastoral support, intervention for example mentoring, as determined by individual circumstances.

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- Ensuring the victim is protected from further bullying or harassment.

Support and Consequences for Pupils Who Have Bullied: Perpetrators

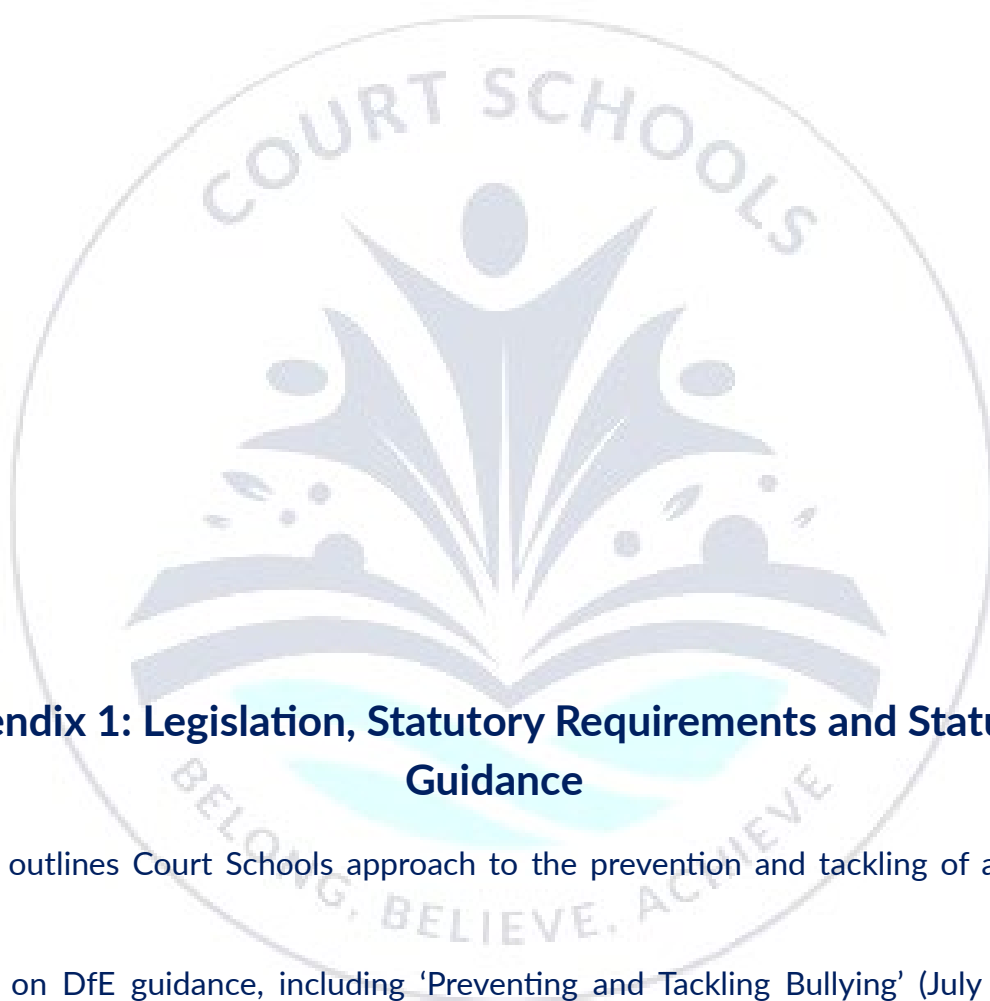
Court Schools uses positive methods to create and restore appropriate behaviours, aligning with the school's behaviour standards. There is a personalised approach to support the individual to reflect and to understand the impact of their behaviour on others.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Informing the perpetrator in a suitable way that their behaviour is inappropriate and must stop.
- Discovering more about the situation to help restore positive behaviours.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the behaviour of the pupil.
- **Restorative Practice:** Participating in a restorative justice conversation, where appropriate, to build understanding and allow learners to make more informed choices, focusing on reflection, recognition, and repair.
- **Sanctions:** Implementing proportionate and reasonable consequences for poor choices, in line with the Behaviour Policy.
- **Underlying Needs:** Reviewing the motivations and circumstances behind the bullying, considering whether the behaviour reveals concerns for the safety of the perpetrator, who may need support themselves (e.g., if displaying Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)). This involves reviewing the Relational Support Plan (RSP).

Monitoring this Policy

This Anti-Bullying policy and strategy will be reviewed by the headteacher and members of the SLT, annually, or more frequently if needed, to address findings from the regular monitoring of the incident logs and behaviour data as well as feedback from stakeholders. At each review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher and governors.



Appendix 1: Legislation, Statutory Requirements and Statutory Guidance

This policy outlines Court Schools approach to the prevention and tackling of all forms of bullying.

It is based on DfE guidance, including 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017), the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023' (KCSIE 2025 version cited), and draws on resources from the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA).

This policy adheres to relevant legislation, including:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, requiring the proprietor to ensure bullying is prevented insofar as reasonably practicable through an effective anti-bullying strategy.
- The Equality Act 2010, which requires the school to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations across protected characteristics.

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- The Education and Inspection Act 2006.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, and the Communications Act 2003, as bullying behaviour may constitute a criminal offense.
- The DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023”.

Appendix 2: Links to Other Policies and Legislation

This Anti-Bullying Policy must be read alongside the following Court Schools organisational policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Adult at Risk Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Procedures
- E-Safety Policy

