

OVERTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

“Excellence for All”

Approved by	Full Governing Body
Policy Lead	Head Teacher
Adopted	September 2026
Review Frequency	Annual
Next Review	September 2027

Introduction

At Overton Church of England Primary School, we are committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive environment where every child feels valued, respected and able to flourish. Guided by our Christian vision of **Excellence for All**, we believe every member of our school community has the right to learn and work in an environment free from bullying, discrimination and harassment.

Our behaviour expectations of **Be Ready, Respectful and Safe** underpin everything we do and help create a culture where kindness, compassion and mutual respect are at the heart of school life.

Bullying is never acceptable. We are committed to preventing bullying through positive relationships, high-quality teaching, clear expectations and early intervention. Where concerns arise, they will always be taken seriously, investigated fairly and responded to promptly.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, RSHE Policy, Online Safety Policy and Equality Information and Objectives.

Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify ways in which we aim to:

- provide a safe and welcoming environment where all children feel confident to share concerns, knowing they will be listened to, supported and given help;
- promote a culture where kindness, inclusion and respect are valued;
- reduce the likelihood of bullying through education, positive relationships and clear expectations;
- recognise as a community that bullying is unacceptable in any form and action will be taken to ensure bullying is recognised, investigated and addressed consistently;
- support both the child experiencing bullying and the child displaying bullying behaviour;
- work in close partnership with parents and carers to promote positive behaviour and wellbeing.

What is Bullying?

At Overton CE Primary School we define bullying to be any repeated physical or verbal/emotional act of aggression, by an individual or group, which is a wilful or considered desire to intentionally hurt, threaten, intimidate or frighten someone singled out. It can occur in the real or online world.

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.

Some bullying behaviours may also constitute child-on-child abuse. The school recognises that bullying, harassment, prejudice-based incidents, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and abusive online behaviours may require a safeguarding response in addition to behaviour management procedures. All such concerns will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying is different from the everyday disagreements, friendship difficulties and occasional conflict that naturally occur as children develop socially. Whilst these behaviours are not usually classified as bullying, they are still taken seriously and addressed through the school's Behaviour Policy to prevent them from becoming repeated or more serious.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

Characteristic	Description
Repetition	Behaviour happens more than once or forms part of an ongoing pattern.
Intent	Behaviour is intended to hurt, intimidate or upset another person.
Power Imbalance	One person or group has, or is perceived to have, more power than another. This may be due to age, size, popularity, confidence, ability or another factor.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms.

Type of Bullying	Examples
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, damaging belongings, threatening physical harm or intimidating behaviour.
Verbal	Name-calling, insults, teasing, offensive language, intimidation or threatening comments.
Emotional	Deliberately excluding others, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships, embarrassing or humiliating someone.
Cyberbullying	Bullying through social media, messaging apps, online gaming, websites, emails, mobile phones or AI-generated content intended to cause harm or distress. This may include the sharing of manipulated or AI-generated images, harmful online content, fake social media profiles, online harassment, exclusion from online groups, misinformation, disinformation or other digital behaviours that negatively affect wellbeing, safety or relationships.

Prejudice-based	Bullying motivated by prejudice or discrimination towards a person's protected characteristic or perceived difference.
Sexual Harassment	Unwanted sexual comments, sexualised language, sexist remarks, sharing sexual images, inappropriate touching, online sexual harassment, comments about appearance or body image intended to cause distress.
Medical Condition-Related	Bullying targeted at a child because of a medical condition or health need, including food allergies, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or the need to use medication or medical equipment.

Bullying may be related to:

- race, ethnicity or culture;
- religion or belief;
- disability or special educational needs;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- misogyny, sexism or harmful gender stereotypes;
- appearance
- a medical condition or health need, including food allergies, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or the use of medication or medical equipment;
- family circumstances, including young carers, looked after children or socio-economic disadvantage;
- any other actual or perceived difference.

The school will not tolerate prejudice-based bullying in any form. All incidents will be investigated appropriately and recorded in line with school procedures.

What Bullying Is Not

It is important to distinguish bullying from other behaviours that can occur as children learn to build relationships.

The following are **not normally considered bullying**, although they will still be addressed appropriately through the Behaviour Policy:

- a one-off disagreement or argument;
- a single act of unkindness;
- children falling out or friendship difficulties;
- occasional teasing where there is no intention to cause harm and no imbalance of power;
- situations where children of equal power disagree or argue.

Repeated unkind behaviour that causes distress will always be monitored carefully. Where a pattern develops or an imbalance of power becomes evident, the behaviour may be considered bullying.

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties in relation to safeguarding, equality and behaviour.

Governors will:

- support the Head Teacher in promoting a culture where bullying is not tolerated;
- ensure the school has an effective Anti-Bullying Policy that is reviewed annually;
- monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the policy through information provided by the Head Teacher;
- ensure appropriate procedures are in place to investigate and respond to bullying concerns fairly and consistently.

The Governing Body maintains strategic oversight of the school's approach to bullying prevention and response. Governors receive anonymised information regarding bullying incidents, prejudice-based incidents and emerging trends to evaluate the effectiveness of school policies, safeguarding practice and preventative work.

Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring that bullying is addressed promptly and effectively.

The Head Teacher will:

- ensure all staff understand and implement this policy consistently;
- ensure all concerns are investigated appropriately;
- ensure incidents are recorded using the school's recording system (CPOMS);
- work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve concerns;
- monitor incidents to identify patterns or emerging concerns;
- ensure children receive appropriate pastoral support;
- report to Governors on the effectiveness of the school's approach where appropriate.

Role of All Staff

All staff have a responsibility to promote a safe, inclusive and respectful school environment where bullying is not tolerated. They are expected to act promptly, consistently and in line with this policy whenever concerns arise.

Staff will:

- Take all reports and concerns about bullying seriously and intervene promptly to prevent incidents from escalating.
- Respond calmly, fairly and consistently, ensuring all children involved are listened to and treated with respect.
- Provide a safe environment where children feel confident to report concerns, whilst making it clear that confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed where safeguarding or welfare concerns exist.
- Listen carefully to all parties, establish the facts and record concerns promptly on CPOMS, informing the class teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Head Teacher as appropriate.

- Ensure the child experiencing bullying feels safe, supported and reassured throughout the investigation and any follow-up actions.
- Investigate incidents thoroughly, recognising that bullying is often repeated behaviour and should not be treated as an isolated event.
- Recognise that bullying related to a child's medical condition, including food allergies, may present a significant safeguarding risk. Staff will respond immediately to any behaviour that deliberately places a child at risk, including interference with prescribed medication or emergency medical equipment, or intentional exposure to a known allergen.
- Inform parents/carers of children involved where appropriate and work in partnership with families to resolve concerns.
- Put appropriate support in place for children who have experienced bullying. This may include restorative conversations, regular check-ins, pastoral support, Thrive or ELSA intervention, friendship support or referral to external agencies where necessary.
- Work with the child displaying bullying behaviour to help them understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility, repair relationships where appropriate and develop more positive behaviours. Consequences will be applied in line with the Behaviour Policy and, in serious or persistent cases, further sanctions, including suspension, may be considered.
- Monitor all incidents carefully to ensure bullying has stopped and continue to review the wellbeing of all children involved.
- Promote positive relationships, celebrate diversity and reinforce respectful behaviour through everyday teaching, collective worship, the curriculum and positive behaviour strategies.
- Teach children how to recognise, prevent and report bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and cyberbullying, through the RSHE, Computing and wider curriculum.
- Support and actively promote Anti-Bullying Week and other opportunities throughout the year to reinforce key messages and remind children how to seek help, including speaking to a trusted adult or using established reporting systems.

We expect all staff to:

- Model respectful, inclusive and compassionate behaviour at all times.
- Be approachable, available and willing to listen without judgement.
- Take every concern seriously, however minor it may initially appear.
- Ask open questions to establish what has happened and how those involved are feeling.
- Respond in a calm, restorative and non-confrontational manner.
- Record concerns accurately on CPOMS and ensure relevant staff are informed.
- Make it clear that bullying behaviour is unacceptable and explain the consequences of repeated behaviour.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues, parents and external agencies where appropriate to secure positive outcomes for children.

Role of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in helping the school prevent and address bullying.

Parents and carers should:

- contact the school if they believe their child is experiencing bullying or displaying bullying behaviour;
- work positively with the school to resolve concerns;
- encourage respectful behaviour and responsible use of technology;

- support the school's Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

The school values open communication with families and will work collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes for all children.

Working with Children

Developing positive relationships is central to preventing bullying. Children are taught about respectful relationships, diversity, inclusion and keeping themselves safe through the RSHE curriculum, HeartSmart, collective worship, online safety education and everyday classroom practice. Learning about bullying is delivered through class teaching, pastoral support, ELSA intervention where appropriate and pupil leadership opportunities, including Worship Leaders.

Children are encouraged and supported to:

- treat everyone with kindness, respect and compassion;
- celebrate difference, value diversity and challenge prejudice;
- recognise and challenge stereotypes, sexism, misogyny and discriminatory attitudes;
- understand how healthy, respectful relationships are built on kindness, trust, equality and mutual respect;
- understand and respect the medical needs of others, recognising that allergies and other medical conditions can be life-threatening and that everyone has a responsibility to help keep others safe.
- understand the school's behaviour expectations and recognise the difference between respectful behaviour, conflict and bullying;
- speak to a trusted adult if they are worried about themselves or someone else, knowing that reporting concerns is a positive action that helps keep everyone safe;
- develop the confidence and strategies to resolve friendship difficulties appropriately and seek support when needed;
- understand how to stay safe online and recognise, prevent and report cyberbullying.

Throughout the school, children are regularly reminded that bullying is never acceptable through assemblies, collective worship, RSHE (HeartSmart), class discussions, circle time and other planned and responsive opportunities. Staff consistently model respectful and caring relationships, speak to children with respect, ensure every child feels noticed, valued and included, celebrate both effort and achievement, and provide all children with opportunities to experience success.

Children are reminded that everyone has a responsibility to contribute to a safe, welcoming and inclusive school community, living out our Christian vision and values of **Love, Hope and Faith**.

Bullying and Safeguarding

While most incidents of bullying are managed through this policy and the school's Behaviour Policy, some incidents may also constitute a safeguarding concern.

Bullying involving any of the following will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy:

- child-on-child abuse;
- sexual harassment or sexual violence;

- prejudice-based abuse or hate incidents;
- online abuse or exploitation;
- behaviour that places a child at risk of significant harm.

Where appropriate, concerns will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will determine whether further safeguarding procedures or referrals to external agencies are required.

The safety and wellbeing of all children involved will remain the school's priority throughout any investigation. Particular consideration will be given to incidents involving sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour, discriminatory abuse, misogyny or incidents motivated by a protected characteristic.

Bullying Related to Medical Conditions

The school recognises that some children may be more vulnerable to bullying because of a medical condition or health need, including food allergies, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, disabilities or the need to use medication or medical equipment. Bullying related to a medical condition can have a significant impact on a child's physical safety, emotional wellbeing and ability to participate fully in school life.

Bullying of this nature may include:

- teasing, name-calling or making jokes about a medical condition;
- excluding a child because of their medical needs or treatment;
- intimidating or threatening a child because of their condition;
- interfering with, hiding or damaging prescribed medication or emergency medical equipment;
- deliberately exposing a child to a known allergen or other trigger;
- preventing or discouraging a child from accessing medication or seeking adult help;
- sharing inaccurate information or encouraging others to make light of a child's medical condition.

The school will treat any behaviour that deliberately places a child with a medical condition at risk of harm as a serious matter. Such incidents will be investigated immediately, recorded on CPOMS and responded to in line with the Behaviour Policy and, where appropriate, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Parents and carers will be informed, and appropriate support will be provided for all children involved.

Where relevant, the school will review the child's Individual Healthcare Plan and work in partnership with parents, healthcare professionals and other agencies to ensure appropriate protective measures are in place. Staff receive appropriate training to support pupils with medical conditions, including allergy awareness, and the school promotes understanding and respect for medical needs through its curriculum, collective worship and wider school life.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, which sets out the school's arrangements for meeting its statutory duties in relation to pupils with medical conditions.

Managing Substantiated Bullying

Every report of bullying will be listened to carefully and investigated fairly.

Where bullying is substantiated, the school will:

- ensure the child experiencing bullying feels safe and supported;
- investigate by speaking to all children involved and any witnesses;
- inform parents and carers where appropriate;
- record incidents on CPOMS;
- apply appropriate consequences in line with the Behaviour Policy;
- use restorative approaches where appropriate to rebuild relationships;
- provide support for both the child experiencing bullying and the child displaying bullying behaviour;
- review the situation to ensure the bullying has stopped.

There are no automatic sanctions for bullying. Responses will take account of the seriousness, frequency and impact of the behaviour whilst balancing accountability, education and support.

Support may include pastoral support, Thrive, ELSA, friendship work, check-in arrangements, increased supervision or referrals to external agencies where appropriate.

Signs of Bullying

Children who are experiencing bullying may not always tell an adult directly. Changes in behaviour or wellbeing may indicate that they need additional support.

Some possible signs include:

- reluctance or refusal to attend school;
- becoming withdrawn, anxious or lacking confidence;
- changes in friendships or increased isolation;
- unexplained injuries or damaged belongings;
- regularly losing possessions;
- changes in behaviour, mood or emotional wellbeing;
- a decline in engagement with learning or attendance;
- reluctance to use online devices or becoming distressed after using them.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being bullied; however, they should always be taken seriously and explored sensitively.

Prevention

At Overton CE Primary School, we believe that creating a positive school culture is the most effective way to prevent bullying.

We achieve this by:

- promoting our Christian vision and values through all aspects of school life;
- maintaining high expectations through our behaviour principles of **Be Ready, Respectful and Safe**;
- teaching respectful relationships, diversity, inclusion, online safety and digital citizenship through the RSHE curriculum;
- helping children recognise harmful online influences, stereotypes, discriminatory attitudes and abusive behaviour;

- promoting healthy, respectful and equitable relationships where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect;
- celebrating difference and promoting equality throughout the curriculum;
- promoting understanding and respect for medical conditions, including food allergies, through age-appropriate learning and whole-school awareness, helping children understand how their actions can affect the safety and wellbeing of others;
- encouraging children to speak to trusted adults about any worries or concerns;
- participating in Anti-Bullying Week and other awareness events;
- using restorative approaches to develop empathy, responsibility and positive relationships;
- ensuring staff provide effective supervision during breaktimes, lunchtimes and other less structured parts of the school day.

Children are regularly reminded that everyone has a responsibility to contribute to a safe, respectful and inclusive school community.

Harmful Online Influences

The school recognises that children may encounter harmful attitudes, behaviours and content online, including cyberbullying, misogyny, discriminatory narratives, misinformation, disinformation, manipulated content and inappropriate use of artificial intelligence.

Through RSHE, Computing, collective worship and wider curriculum opportunities, children are taught to:

- critically evaluate online information;
- identify trusted sources of information;
- recognise harmful online behaviour and influence;
- report concerns to a trusted adult;
- use technology safely, responsibly and respectfully.

Staff will remain alert to concerns arising from online activity which may impact relationships, wellbeing, behaviour or safeguarding.

Prejudice-Based Incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour motivated by prejudice or negative attitudes towards a person's protected characteristic, perceived difference or membership of a minority group. It may be directed towards an individual or a group and can have a significant emotional impact. Although a single incident may not meet the definition of bullying, it is always taken seriously.

All prejudice-based incidents will:

- be investigated promptly and appropriately;
- be recorded on CPOMS and monitored by the Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Leads to identify any emerging patterns or repeated behaviour;
- be addressed in line with the Behaviour Policy, with appropriate support provided for those affected and educational interventions implemented where required;
- involve parents/carers where appropriate and, where necessary, external agencies to support positive outcomes;

- contribute to the school's monitoring of equality, safeguarding and behaviour, with anonymised trends reported to governors as appropriate.

The school seeks to prevent prejudice-based incidents through a proactive whole-school approach. Children are regularly taught about equality, diversity, respect and protected characteristics through RSHE, collective worship, RE, Computing, the wider curriculum and enrichment opportunities. They are encouraged to celebrate difference, challenge stereotypes, demonstrate rights-respecting behaviour and report any concerns to a trusted adult. Staff consistently model respectful relationships and use planned and responsive opportunities, including class discussions, circle time and assemblies, to reinforce an inclusive culture where everyone feels safe, valued and belongs.

This approach enables the school to provide appropriate support, prevent future incidents and fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Recording and Monitoring

All confirmed bullying incidents and significant concerns will be recorded using the school's recording system (CPOMS).

The Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will regularly monitor records to identify:

Monitoring Focus	Purpose
Repeated incidents	Identify patterns of behaviour.
Vulnerable pupils	Ensure appropriate support is in place.
Prejudice-based incidents	Meet statutory equality duties and inform preventative work.
Times and locations	Improve supervision and reduce opportunities for bullying.
Trends over time	Evaluate the effectiveness of the school's preventative strategies.

Monitoring information may be shared with Governors to support the evaluation of this policy and inform future school improvement.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body, or sooner if changes in legislation or statutory guidance require it.

The Head Teacher will monitor the day-to-day implementation of this policy and evaluate its effectiveness through behaviour records, safeguarding information, pupil voice and feedback from parents, staff and governors.

Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- RSHE Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Legislative Guidance

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2025)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- **Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE)**
- **Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Head Teachers and School Staff (DfE)**
- **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE)**
- Revised Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (DfE 2025, implementation September 2026)
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Education and Inspections Act 2006**
- **Children Act 1989**
- **Children Act 2004**
- **Protection from Harassment Act 1997**
- **Communications Act 2003**
- **Public Order Act 1986**
- **Online Safety Act 2023**
- Supporting Children and Young People with Medical Conditions and Allergies at School – Statutory Guidance (DfE, effective September 2026)