



The Mead Infant and Nursery School

Anti-Bullying Policy

School name: The Mead Infant and Nursery School

Status & review cycle: Every 3 years

Next review date: Autumn 2026

ANTI-BULLYING

At The Mead Infant and Nursery School, in line with our vision for nurturing wellbeing and positive mental health, we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We expect pupils to feel safe in school, including having an understanding of the issues relating to personal safety, such as bullying. We encourage them to feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe.

Every child has the right to be happy in school and bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and will not be tolerated

Roles and responsibilities

The Role of Governors

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher as they build and maintain a safe and secure school environment. This policy states that the Governing Body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Governing Body will monitor the incidents of bullying that occur, and review the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

If the Governing Body receives a request from a parent to investigate an incident of bullying they will respond within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Governing Body notifies the Headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to the named Anti-Bullying Governor.

The Role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying policy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets a school climate of mutual support and praise for success that makes bullying less likely to occur because when children feel they are valued and belong to a friendly and welcoming school it is far less likely to be part of their behaviour

The Role of PSHE Leader

He/she is responsible for policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies. It includes implementing the policy, monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice in particular ensuring that the reporting and recording of bullying incidents occur correctly, assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate and coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour from a group or an individual that is **deliberately designed to be hurtful**, either physically or emotionally, is **repeated and targeted** over a period of time, and is behaviour that **makes it difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves because there is an imbalance of power**. Bullying is learned behaviour and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, SEND, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can be:

- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, offensive comments, racist and homophobic remarks
- Sexual- unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Cyber- all areas of the internet, mobile phone messages and calls, misuse of camera video facilities
- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening gestures, mocking, invading privacy
- Direct or indirect- spreading nasty stories/ rumours about someone, excluding someone from social groups, failure to acknowledge a person

Bullying can take place between:

- Children
- Children and staff
- Staff
- Individuals or groups (certain groups who are particularly vulnerable to bullying by others)

Why is it important to Respond To Bullying?

We know that bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying and everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

A Whole School Approach.

Bullying is a community issue. It is only when all members of the school community - Governors, staff, children, carers and parents – work together to avoid or resolve bullying situations, that a healthy social and learning environment can exist.

Bullying behaviour at The Mead must always be taken seriously and always be challenged to ensure:

- the safety, happiness and wellbeing of children,
- the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience in children,
- a secure environment in which children can learn and achieve,
- that parents are reassured that incidents are dealt with positively and effectively,
- that children know and understand that unacceptable behaviour is never condoned by adults in the school.

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

Bullying can be prevented when all members of the community are aware of the needs of others, and when everyone follows the guidelines of the Behaviour Management Policy and E-safety Policy. As part of our on-going commitment to the safety and well-being of our pupils we at The Mead Infant and Nursery School have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour:

- Creating an inclusive environment which promotes respect and care for others
- PSHE and RSE lessons and circle times to talk about issues of differences that may occur in our setting.
- Using 'What would Roo do?' to skill children in understanding the difference between 'big' and 'small' problems
- Specific lesson content on what bullying is, and isn't. How to recognise it and what to do if they feel like they, or someone else, is being bullied.
- Happiness and Friendship leaflet distribution to all families aimed at children for their reference.
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and internet safety
- Regular student voice – talking to children about bullying to ensure understanding of what they would do.
- Parent information events/information, including parental leaflets on bullying, identifying it and what to do if they suspect it is happening.
- Staff training and development for all staff

- Creating safe spaces for children who may be vulnerable. Children who are bullied are frequently unwilling to tell of their experiences. Staff and parents need to develop an atmosphere where it is 'safe to tell' and where children's worries and concerns are always taken seriously. There should be opportunities for children to talk about their experiences to adults, in groups - e.g. in circle time, and as individuals, in confidence with an adult that they trust and feel comfortable with.
- Play leaders at lunch time to encourage cooperative play
- Well-being Weavers to help identify and support children who look like they are having difficulties at play times, seeking adult help if needed

Identifying bullying behaviour

Bullying can best be identified by assessing and defining the effects the acts have on a vulnerable child.

Staff will need to be vigilant at all times to look out for bullying situations.

The behaviour of children who are the victims of bullying may include:

- a reluctance to go to school;
- unexplained tummy upsets or headaches;
- showing signs of distress on a Sunday night or at the end of school holidays;
- becoming either quiet or withdrawn, or playing up;
- torn clothes and missing belongings;
- seeming upset after using their ICT equipment such as tablets, computers etc.
- be unusually unhappy or lonely,
- frown and seem angry for no apparent reason,
- seek a hiding place in the playground or classroom,
- avoid a particular pupil or group of children,
- seem isolated,
- begin to perform poorly in school work,
- become unhappy about going to lunch,
- begin to stutter,
- become aggressive towards others,
- begin bedwetting,
- have nightmares, be unable to sleep, or cry him/herself to sleep,
- refuse to say what is wrong.

Staff should also be alert to:

- a child who is being 'crowded' or surrounded by a group of children,
- play fights - are all children happy; have equal strength and roles?
- a child who is afraid of another child or group of children,
- a child who 'loses' property but who is normally responsible and careful,
- a parent who raises concerns about possible bullying.

Bullying can have an impact on a child's mental health so if any child is showing signs of serious distress - such as depression, anxiety and self-harm they must always be referred to see a GP.

When observing an incident, it is important to remember to ask yourself, 'What effect is it having on the vulnerable child and what is the intention of the dominant child or group?'

Some situations are not bullying - for example in play fights where children are clearly enjoying 'rough and tumble'. In this kind of situation it may only be necessary to observe, although if one child is stronger it may be necessary to intervene.

Responding to a bullying situation

As with other forms of unacceptable behaviour, a direct incident must be challenged / stopped immediately. Measures should be applied fairly, consistently and taking into account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have. Adults should respond calmly and consistently. (See Sanctions in Behaviour policy)

In these cases the Headteacher must always be informed and the involvement of parents at an early stage is essential. It is vital that accurate records are kept of serious incidents and of how the school has responded. An incident log is held on the school's electronic CPOMS system

The record contains:

- who was involved (or alleged to be involved),
- where and when it happened,
- what happened,
- what action was taken,
- how it was followed up,
- Parents will be kept informed of the concern and of action taken

Termly reports will be prepared for Governors informing them of any logged incidents.

If the incident is not too serious - for example chasing and rough handling of another child who clearly does not like it, but where no physical harm has been done - then a reprimand and an explanation of why the behaviour is not acceptable may be sufficient. It will be helpful for the 'aggressor' to know how it made the vulnerable child feel. It will also be helpful to praise the aggressor when he is seen to be kind or helpful to another child.

(Appropriate behaviour should be actively encouraged, noticed and praised.)

Use of 'What would Roo do?' is an effective tool to help children identify problems that they are able to solve themselves. But it must be made clear to them the difference between a 'big' problem and a 'small' problem, as taught in the program. 'Restorative Justice' is also a valuable tool used by staff, where a solution is agreed with the 'victim' and they feel happy that their issue has been dealt with satisfactorily.

Support

We consider that the vulnerable child and the dominant child / children in a bullying situation will need support.

Supporting children who are bullied includes:

- Closely monitor interactions with other children, particularly with those identified as a perpetrator of bullying behaviour towards them.
- Using a behaviour log to monitor incidents
- Setting time set aside to talk about worries or concerns of the child with an adult that they feel comfortable with (logging any concerns, discussions in the child's words)
- Giving regular updates given to the parents/carers of the child involved
- Providing avenues of support identified outside of school, shared with parents/carers if needed
- establishing whether the child will be able to manage by him/herself with advice and support from the adult.
- Reassuring the child should be reassured that the adult *will* do something about the situation.
- showing the child that she views him/her positively, i.e. not to make the child feel that s/he is weak.
- Class teacher helping the child to build a network of friends. Friendship skills could be directly taught in circle time.
- Developing the child's self-esteem through praise.
- Intervention from ELSA, if appropriate
- developing assertiveness through drama.
- for very few children, understanding how their own behaviour may actually provoke bullying behaviours.
- Informing children, particularly in more serious situations, that parents and staff are going to work together to support them.

Supporting children who bully includes:

- Considering the motivations behind the bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the proprietor. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.
- Disapproval directed at the behaviour - focusing on the **effects** on the vulnerable child - not the bullying child.
- A child who bullies may enjoy the excitement of exercising power over another child. It may, therefore, be useful to redirect this desire to dominate into a mentoring or tutoring role. It may help to raise the self-esteem of the child by seeking his/her advice, ideas, co-operation, or to give him/her activities which require a leadership role.
- Discouraging bullying groups or pairs by reducing the amount of time they can play, eat or sit together.
- Teaching friendship skills within whole class situations, encouraging children to talk about their ideas on this.

- Asking the child if s/he can think of any ways to help the vulnerable child to feel better. If some of his/her ideas are put into practise, and the situation improves, make sure s/he is aware of how pleased you are that his/her ideas helped.
- Referring to ELSA, if appropriate
- If appropriate, using a 'no blame' approach conveys the idea that the children involved are not 'bad' and are capable of helping a vulnerable child.
- Giving reasons for any action you take.
- Being aware of not bullying the bully - keep calm when dealing with situations.
- Monitoring whether the bullying continues.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

At The Mead we celebrate differences and believe in a supportive and inclusive community. However, we acknowledge that differences can sometimes make some children more vulnerable and susceptible to bullying.

Bullying of this kind often happens because of misunderstandings, misinterpretations, or fear of the unknown. At The Mead we will actively encourage children to talk about differences during, for example, Deaf Awareness Week, as well as PSHCE lessons where diversity, difference and tolerance is covered explicitly.

- assemblies,
- circle time,
- lesson time devoted to understanding hearing impairment,
- Religious Education.

Some children will find it very difficult to articulate their feelings orally. It may be useful for them to draw or act out what happened or how they feel. Some children could be given a range of pictures which depict emotions from which they can choose to express how they feel. It is important to ensure that these images do not lead a child to a particular emotion, but that there is a range to enable free expression.

Other children with communication difficulties, who use bullying behaviour, may benefit from visual cues, such as drama or pictures to convey how it makes others feel and how they could be kind and helpful instead.

Parents

Parents will experience a range of emotions if their children are involved with bullying behaviour including fear, frustration, anger, defensiveness.

At The Mead we believe that we need to work with both the parents of the child who uses bullying behaviour and with the parents of the vulnerable child. Happiness and Friendship leaflets outlining policy is given to all children and parents in their school welcome packs when a child starts their journey at The Mead (as well as to all existing parents when the leaflets were first published.)

The Headteacher will contact parents to discuss any bullying situation and if necessary, agree aims and a way forward to support the children involved.

Parents can help by:

- Contacting staff at school if they are concerned that bullying might be occurring. **In the first instance always talking to the child's class teacher.**
- Assuring the child that they will be listened to and that they will be helped without making the situation worse for them.
- Supporting the school's anti-bullying policy and actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school community.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection and Safeguarding, PHSE, RSE, Behaviour , E-safety Safeguarding and Well-being policy