



# Onslow Infant School

## Policy for Dealing with Bullying

**This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment**

### Policy Review

This Policy was adopted Spring 2024  
The Policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2026  
Delegated to Head Teacher

## Definition

Onslow Infant School recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying, which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during their childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, schools can help create safe, disciplined environments where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Bullying behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images or video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities.

It may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously the school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; school staff have to make judgements about each specific case. Many experts say that bullying involved an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve the perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or be isolating them either physically or online.

Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating. All forms of bullying (including online-bullying) should be handled as a community issue for the whole school. Onslow Infant School will take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils. We are also clear that bullying of staff, whether by parents or colleagues is unacceptable.

We recognise that bullying has three common traits:

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- Repeated often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:

- Physical-hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal-name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect-spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours

Staff, parents and children at Onslow Infants work together to create a happy, caring and safe learning environment. Bullying, whether verbal, physical or indirect, is not tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to try to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Onslow Infants School has a child-friendly Anti-Bullying Policy. Each year, supported by the Head Teacher and led by the School Council representatives, all children in Key Stage 1 contribute to their Anti-Bullying Policy. This enables them to recognise the signs of bullying and also to understand the difference between bullying and friendship fallouts.

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern the latest guidance KCSiE will be consulted.

The victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people may bring bullying to the attention of any member of staff.

### **Aims of Policy**

- ◆ To provide a safe, caring environment for the whole school community, especially the children in our care.
- ◆ To instil in children that bullying is unacceptable and that reports of bullying will be taken seriously and acted upon.
- ◆ To reassure children that they will be listened to and will know that it is all right to tell.
- ◆ To heed parents and keep them informed of actions taken in response to a complaint.
- ◆ A full investigation will follow any report of bullying.
- ◆ To take appropriate action, including exclusion in cases of severe bullying.
- ◆ To monitor incidents of bullying.

### **Procedures for Dealing with Bullying**

In dealing with bullying, staff at Onslow Infant School follow these fundamental guidelines.

- ◆ Never ignore suspected bullying.
- ◆ Do not make premature assumptions.
- ◆ Listen carefully to all accounts
- ◆ Adopt a problem-solving approach that moves pupils forward from self-justification.
- ◆ Follow up proven cases to check bullying has not returned.
- ◆ Ensure the Headteacher is aware of strategies implemented and progress.

Strategies have been introduced at our school to reduce the possibility of bullying. These approaches cover raising awareness about bullying including anti-bullying week, PSHE sessions, values led assemblies, etc., increased understanding for victims and teaching pupils how to manage relationships in a constructive way. The curriculum for Personal, Social, Health and Emotional Development and developing the understanding of British Values supports this work. PSHE education regularly provides opportunities for children to understand bullying is wrong, its impact and how to deal with it. We teach assertiveness and other social skills and teach victims to say NO or to get help.

In response to a complaint of possible bullying, our discipline procedures will be followed, with staff making a full investigation and applying sanctions as necessary. The emphasis will always be one of showing a caring and listening approach. An accusation of bullying will be recorded.

All staff, taking into account the perceived seriousness of the situation, will follow these procedures.

- Discuss the nature of the bullying with the 'victim' at length, noting all the facts.
- Identify the bully/bullies and any witnesses.

- Give others the opportunity to talk about the situation.
- Discuss the incident(s) with the alleged bully/ies. Discuss with them the allegations and encourage them to tell the truth about the situation/incident.
- If the bully owns up, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable. Ensure they understand the effect it has on the victim and the rest of the children in the class/school. Apply sanctions relevant to the type of bullying.
- If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, apply relevant sanctions.
- Hold separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
- Sanctions for the bully could include:
  1. withdrawal from favoured activities
  2. loss of breaktimes as appropriate
  3. internal exclusion
  4. fixed period of exclusion from school
- Provide support for the victim with the Class Teacher monitoring and staff observing at break times and lunchtimes, and through discussion to make sure there is no repetition.
- Provide a support for the bully. This will include behaviour targets and opportunities in circle time or groups for the child/ren to discuss relationships, feelings and the effect bullying can have on individuals. The Class Teacher will support the child during this programme.
- Ensure all appropriate staff are informed including mid-day supervisors

In order to reduce incidents of bullying and recognise bullies, all staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.

Part of the curriculum includes making children aware of Childline and other age-appropriate websites. We also ensure that this is reinforced during our assemblies (biannually) run by NSPCC.

### **Bullying off the School Premises**

Onslow Infant School is not directly responsible for bullying off the school premises; however, if both the victim and the bully are pupils at the school, support may be given using procedures in this policy.

Where possible, we will support pupils who have been bullied, especially on their way to or from school, by pupils from another school or by other persons.

### **Cyber-Bullying**

Our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy identifies cyber-bullying as a form of bullying and outlines how this type of behaviour will be dealt with.

We keep a record of known cyber-bullying incidents which is shared with, and analysed by the governing board. All staff are aware that children with SEND and/or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied/victims of child abuse.

### **Bullying Directed Towards Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Disability or individuals from the protected groups named in the Equality Act**

We will not tolerate bullying against anyone because of his or her race, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, disability or inclusion in a protected groups (Equality Act). The school will take preventative action to reduce the likelihood of bullying incidents of this nature occurring.

Stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising for example from race, gender, ability or disability.

In cases that include racial bullying/harassment a full investigation will be carried out, recording incidents in a separate incident book and on LEA forms. Onslow Infant School has a duty to develop children's understanding of ethnic diversity and inclusion, this will happen in many ways but most explicitly in PSHE and in RE lessons.

### **Special Education Needs or Disabilities**

We make sure the behaviour of staff does not trigger bullying unintentionally. They should avoid undue attention towards SEND children compared with others and should not make comments on pupil's appearance or perceived character.

High attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Teachers should treat this as seriously as any other type of bullying.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Disability Access Plan, the school's Equality documents, Whistle Blowing Policy and Allegations Policy.