



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed by	Hattie Henderson	Authorised by	WGB Committee
Last Review	Spring 2026	Date	January 2026
Next Review	Spring 2027	Review Cycle	Annually

Introduction

Freegrounds Infant School is a Rights Respecting school. Children and adults work together to recognise and act upon the rights of the child within our school, our local community and the wider world. We believe that by understanding their own rights children learn to respect and value the rights of others. This policy exemplifies these rights and our practise aims to ensure that the following rights are adhered to:

Article 3 The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 19 Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.

Article 28 Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29 Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Aims

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We promote a culture where children feel able to tell adults about concerns related to bullying. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available in school.

What is Bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those who are being bullied to defend themselves.

The main types of bullying are:

- Emotional – *being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)*
- Physical – *pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence*
- Verbal – *name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing*
- Racist – *racial taunts, graffiti, gestures*

- Sexual – *unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments*
- Homophobic – *because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality*
- Cyber – use of email or texts

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts and no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

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| ◦ is frightened of walking to and from school | ◦ changes their usual routine |
| ◦ is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) | ◦ begins truanting |
| ◦ becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence | ◦ starts stammering |
| ◦ attempts or threatens suicide or runs away | ◦ feels ill in the morning |
| ◦ begins to do poorly in school work | ◦ has possessions go "missing" |
| ◦ has dinner or other monies continually "lost" | ◦ has unexplained cuts or bruises |
| ◦ becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable | ◦ stops eating |
| ◦ is bullying other children or siblings | ◦ is frightened to say what's wrong |
| ◦ asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a bully) | ◦ gives improbable excuses for any of the above |
| ◦ cries themselves to sleep at night, has nightmares or bed wets | |

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

Principles of the Management of Incidents

To discourage bullying behaviour and when handling reported incidents of bullying the school ensures:

- A secure environment is provided in which incidents can be reported confidently
- The pupil who has been bullied is made to feel safe
- All pupils should be shown that bullying is taken seriously
- Teachers respond calmly and consistently to incidents of bullying
- It protects and supports all parties while the issues are resolved
- The person who has done the bullying, and those who may have colluded, are encouraged to behave in a more acceptable way
- Interventions are monitored and followed-up appropriately at the individual, group or whole school level

Staff should:

Be available - Break the code of secrecy. Make it known that you are ready to listen. Provide immediate support

Listen to the child - Ask the bullied child who was involved and how she or he is feeling

Record - Ensure the incident is recorded and that reports are collated

Respond - Ensure that your response is non-aggressive and provides models of positive behaviour. Identify pupils with long-term needs requiring a development programme.

Follow up - Review progress and evaluate policies and intervention.

Working with Parents

It is essential to involve parents where bullying has taken place. The most effective emphasis in meetings with parents is on joint problem solving. The aim of such a meeting is to minimise the likelihood of further bullying regardless of whether one is talking about the child who has bullied or the one who has been bullied. Careful planning is necessary to retain the joint problem-solving focus in the face of such an emotive subject.

Advice for Parents

If your child is being bullied:

- encourage your child to talk about it, but be patient as she or he may be distressed
- stay calm but show that you are supportive
- avoid dwelling on sensitive issues
- reassure your child that you are sympathetic and will do something about it
- try to help him or her to see the difficulty as a problem that can be solved
- ask your child if they can see ways of changing things
- talk to staff at Freegrounds about bullying and work with them to improve the situation
- help him or her to develop coping strategies
- help everyone to keep a sense of proportion in the situation

Work with Children

Work with individual or groups of children are carried out for two reasons:

- to reduce the likelihood of instances of bullying occurring

- to respond to the needs of children who have been bullied and of those children responsible for the bullying

Preventative Measures

Ethos

At Freegrounds Infant School our key message to the children about bullying is "SEE IT SAY IT". It is the responsibility of every single person in the school to report bullying if they see it happening and not just the responsibility of the child to whom it is happening.

To support the delivery of this message and ethos at Freegrounds:

- We establish school rules which demonstrate caring behaviour, and ensure that they are understood by all children
- Specify clearly those types of behaviour which are considered to be "bullying" and therefore unacceptable
- Specify clearly what sanctions will follow bullying behaviour
- Regularly remind children in assembly or on notices, etc, of the importance of respectful and caring behaviour to be shown to everyone
- Use the personal, health and social curriculum. This curriculum should permeate all aspects of school life and be thoroughly integrated into the more general curriculum wherever possible.
- Every member of staff has the responsibility to support and foster this curriculum.
- Need to have structure in place which ensures that issues of bullying are routinely and regularly addressed in the classroom curriculum. We draw up individual educational programmes for those children experiencing interpersonal and peer relationship difficulties
- We use differentiated personal and social curriculum materials (eg: social skills curriculum and materials from the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- We monitor closely those children which special educational needs
- We take part in Anti-bullying week each year as part of the curriculum
- Address the subject regularly during the school year through PSHE, Circle Time and Worship
- Children can use the worry bubble to report concerns

Procedures

- Bullying incidents should be reported in the first instance to the class teacher(s) of the child who is being bullied. The class teacher(s) of all the children involved will also be informed.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by the class teacher(s) and referred on to the Headteacher.
- In serious cases parents of all the children involved should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
- Work with children after reported bullying

Work with children that follows any discovery or report of bullying must scrupulously avoid aggravating the bullied child's physical or emotional distress.

Teachers need to take particular care that in following up a complaint of bullying they do not expose the bullied child to the risk of even more bullying. They should take all reasonable measures to ensure that the bullied child is supported and protected. Interventions which appear to be particularly sensitive to the needs of all children are those in which more general problem solving strategies are modelled. Where a bullied child is suffering prolonged or intense anxiety or distress, referral to outside agencies should be considered.

We will:

- Avoid embarrassing and shaming the bullied child by focusing on a particular incident when the child is present
- Use "supportive" children to ensure that the bullied child is befriended and protected, eg. in going to and from school
- Consider the appropriateness of referring the bullied child for specialist help, having consulted and secured the agreement of parents. Outside agencies which may provide this expertise include the Educational Psychology Service, the Education Welfare Service, child and family guidance, etc.

Self-esteem

Children who are bullied tend to have very low self-esteem. They feel guilty and worthless and, because they sometimes lack self-assertion skills, they are targeted by the kind of children who themselves bolster their own low levels of self-esteem by physically hurting, mocking and shaming "weaker" peers.

Class teachers and staff generally need to be aware of the ways in which school practices may enhance or diminish children's levels of self-esteem.

- Ensure that all children are spoken to respectfully
- Ensure that all children are noticed and valued
- Ensure that all children have access to rewards and privileges
- Acknowledge that effort is more important than achievement

The Child who Bullies

We work hard with those children who bully others to ensure that they receive the help that will prevent further bullying. Bullies themselves are frequently bullied and may need help to see that bullying is not acceptable behaviour.

It is useful for staff to acknowledge that children sometimes bully because they have not learned appropriate ways of interacting with their peers. Modelling and role play will often be required. Approaches which are solely punitive are not advisable, since evidence suggest that they do not prevent further bullying. Therefore, the bully may benefit from modelling and role play to learn specific interpersonal and social skills if they have not acquired them. In some circumstances staff trained in FIEPS will work with groups of children to provide strategies to avoid bullying behaviour in the future.

If bullying persists, the following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending
- detention
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- minor fixed-term exclusion
- major fixed-term exclusion
- permanent exclusion

Inclusion

Freegrounds Infant School is committed to offering all children equal opportunities regardless of gender, disability, race or religion.

Child Protection and PREVENT

We are aware that bullying can be a deeply disturbing experience for children and that it causes a lot of distress for the individual or group of individual involved.

We are committed to ensuring that children feel safe in our school and we have a zero tolerance approach to any behaviour which may cause segregation of groups or individuals.

Should any concerns arise, which may mean a child or group of children, following a period of bullying, present signs of isolation which cause us concern in relation the Prevent Duty we will follow procedures outlined in our Child Protection Policy.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Version control	V2 September 2024 Change of date for when policy was renewed.
	V3 September 2025 Change of date for when policy was renewed

	<p>V3 JAnuary 2026</p> <p>Addition of box at the top to show policy information</p> <p>Formatting of font and text size</p>
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