

1. Policy Statement

At Trust Education Group Ltd., we believe that every pupil has the right to learn, thrive, and grow in a secure and supportive environment, free from fear, harm, or intimidation. As a specialist provider for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, we understand that bullying can have a disproportionately damaging effect on our learners, both academically and emotionally. We therefore adopt a zero-tolerance stance on bullying in all its forms, while simultaneously embedding trauma-informed and relational practices that focus on restorative solutions and the holistic development of our pupils.

We commit to creating a culture where pupils feel safe, valued, and able to speak up. Our whole-school ethos actively promotes kindness, mutual respect, diversity, and positive relationships. We aim to not only address bullying behaviour when it occurs, but to proactively educate, support and empower our pupils to build healthy, empathetic peer connections.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following key statutory and regulatory frameworks:

- * **Education and Inspections Act 2006:** Legal requirement for schools to promote positive behaviour and prevent bullying.
- * **Children Act 1989 and 2004:** Safeguarding the welfare of children, including their emotional safety.
- * **Equality Act 2010:** Protecting pupils from discrimination or harassment related to protected characteristics.
- * **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2024):** Recognises bullying as a safeguarding concern.

* **SEND Code of Practice (2015):** Emphasises the importance of tailored support for pupils with special educational needs.

* **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023):** Encourages coordinated responses from multiple agencies.

This policy is also underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

3. Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- * Establish a shared understanding among pupils, staff, families, and governors of what constitutes bullying.
- * Prevent bullying through the promotion of a respectful, inclusive, and emotionally literate school culture.
- * Encourage early identification and reporting of bullying incidents.
- * Respond quickly, appropriately, and consistently to incidents of bullying, offering support to all affected parties.
- * Ensure that all pupils, including those with SEMH needs, feel safe and able to develop their full potential.

We aim to achieve these goals by embedding anti-bullying themes across the curriculum, promoting restorative approaches, and regularly reviewing and improving our practice based on pupil voice, data analysis, and current research.

4. What Is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as:

“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.”* (Anti-Bullying Alliance)

This imbalance may be physical, emotional, social, or psychological. Bullying is not limited to face-to-face interactions and can occur through digital technology (cyberbullying).

Forms of Bullying:

- * **Physical:** hitting, pushing, tripping, damaging belongings, physical intimidation.
- * **Verbal:** name-calling, mocking, taunting, threatening language.
- * **Emotional:** manipulation, isolation, exclusion, spreading rumours, coercion.
- * **Cyberbullying:** harmful messages via texts, social media, gaming platforms, or image sharing.
- * **Discriminatory:** targeted bullying related to race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or appearance.
- * **Sexual:** unwanted touching, sexualised comments or gestures, sharing explicit content without consent.

Not all peer conflict constitutes bullying. Staff are trained to distinguish between isolated incidents, reciprocal fallouts, and sustained bullying behaviours that require targeted intervention.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Creating a safe and respectful school culture is the responsibility of every member of our community.

- * Pupils are encouraged to speak up if they witness or experience bullying. We teach them to be active bystanders (upstanders) rather than passive observers. Pupils can report bullying via trusted adults, key workers, worry boxes, or ClassCharts.
- * All staff, including teachers, support staff, and key workers, are expected to challenge derogatory behaviour, model respectful conduct, listen without judgement, and log concerns accurately using ClassCharts or CPOMS.
- * Key Workers play a vital role in supporting pupils who have been bullied or who may be exhibiting bullying behaviour. They facilitate reflective conversations, restorative dialogue, and provide emotional support.
- * Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are responsible for overseeing all serious bullying cases, implementing safety plans, and escalating safeguarding concerns where appropriate.
- * Parents and carers are key partners. We welcome their involvement in resolving issues collaboratively and transparently. They are informed of all substantiated bullying incidents.

* Senior Leadership Team (SLT) monitors incidents, trends, and ensures consistent application of the policy across the school. They provide termly reports to the governing body.

6. Preventing Bullying

Our prevention strategy is multi-layered and embedded across every aspect of school life.

Curriculum Integration

- * Anti-bullying is taught explicitly in PSHCE lessons, which cover themes such as peer pressure, identity, diversity, conflict resolution, and consent.
- * Regular workshops and circle-time discussions address empathy, emotional regulation, and the impact of words and actions.
- * Pupils explore real-life scenarios and role-play conflict management strategies.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

- * The school behaviour policy promotes restorative conversations and rewards for respectful behaviour.
- * ClassCharts is used to track positive conduct, empathy, kindness, and peer support.
- * Assemblies, display boards, and themed weeks (e.g., Anti-Bullying Week) reinforce anti-bullying messages.

School Environment

- * Staff actively supervise high-risk areas (corridors, playgrounds, transitions).
- * Visual cues, posters, and worry boxes remind pupils of safe adults and support routes.
- * Peer mentors and ambassadors support inclusion and model prosocial behaviour.

Staff Development

- * All staff receive annual CPD on anti-bullying, safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, and conflict de-escalation.
- * Targeted training for DSLs, key workers, and SLT ensures skilled intervention and leadership.

Reporting Bullying

Pupils can report bullying through:

- * Verbal disclosure to any trusted adult or their key worker.
- * Anonymous worry slips or boxes.
- * Digital platforms (ClassCharts, school email).
- * Peer referrals or during therapeutic sessions.

Staff must:

- * Respond promptly and reassure the pupil.
- * Log the concern on CPOMS or ClassCharts with clear detail.
- * Inform the DSL or SLT if repeated incidents, safeguarding risk, or vulnerabilities are identified.

We stress to pupils that all concerns will be taken seriously and handled discreetly. We never dismiss reports as mere "banter" or "just joking."

Responding to Bullying

All reported bullying incidents are investigated thoroughly, respectfully, and in a timely manner.

Initial Actions

- * Pupils involved are interviewed individually and with emotional support.
- * The wellbeing of the victim is prioritised.
- * The investigation is logged and monitored by a DSL or senior staff.
- * Parents/carers of all parties are contacted as appropriate.

Intervention Strategies

- * **Restorative Practice:** where safe and appropriate, restorative meetings allow for understanding, accountability, and repair.
- * **Pastoral Support Plans:** created for victims and/or perpetrators to ensure continued support.
- * **1:1 Interventions:** therapeutic mentoring or anger management may be used for pupils involved in bullying.
- * **Sanctions:** These may include removal from specific lessons, loss of privileges, detentions, or internal exclusions. Serious or repeated cases may result in fixed-term exclusion as per the Behaviour Policy.

Follow-up and Monitoring

- * The situation is monitored closely for a minimum of four weeks.
- * Key workers conduct regular check-ins.
- * A re-assessment of peer dynamics and risk may be undertaken.

9. Supporting All Involved

- * **For the Victim:** Safety plans, daily check-ins, therapy sessions, and parental updates. We aim to rebuild trust, confidence, and emotional regulation.
- ****For the Perpetrator:** Consequences are balanced with support. Behavioural coaching, restorative scripts, and structured reflection sessions help pupils develop empathy and understand impact.
- * **For Bystanders:** Education around speaking out, peer support, and emotional resilience is built into PSHCE and assemblies.

10. Bullying of Staff

Bullying or harassment of staff by pupils, parents, or colleagues is not tolerated. Any member of staff experiencing such treatment should report concerns to their line manager, the SLT, or use the Whistleblowing Policy. Staff will be supported throughout any investigation and protected from reprisals.

11. Monitoring and Review

All bullying incidents are logged using CPOMS and analysed termly by the DSL and Senior Leadership Team. Trends are tracked to inform policy and practice. Pupil voice and parental feedback are used to evaluate impact. This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to significant changes in guidance or local need.

12. Linked Policies

- * Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- * Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- * Online Safety Policy
- * Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- * PSHCE and RSE Curriculum Map
- * Whistleblowing Policy
- * Complaints Policy

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