

LOCKS HEATH INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

Anti-bullying Policy



Reviewed by school:
Spring 2 2026

Date of next review:
Spring 2 2027

This policy forms part of our principle of safeguarding children and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- *Relational Behaviour Policy*
- *Child Protection Policy*
- *Safeguarding Policy*

Definition

Bullying is defined as:

‘a premeditated conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone, either physically or emotionally, over a period of time’

Leaders and staff at Locks Heath Infant and Nursery School do not tolerate bullying. Bullying, by definition, involves the inappropriate use of power and may be displayed through physical, verbal or intimidating behaviour, including reference to individual characteristics, protected characteristics, ethnic origin, nationality or colour, or some form of physical or mental disability.

Identifying bullying at Locks Heath Infant & Nursery School

For the most part the children in our school community are lively, enthusiastic and caring pupils, who enjoy the freedom to learn and play together without being hindered by other children’s actions. From time to time, however, children who live in a community will not always agree and difficulties arise. These situations may not necessarily meet a definition of bullying, but are significant in that they prevent a child having a happy playtime on a regular basis and as such have remained unresolved through our relational and positive behaviour management strategies.

Such behaviours may include:

- Play, which isolates individual children (children who don’t feel included).
- Persistent rough play.
- Repeated arguments between the same groups of children.
- Name calling.
- Persistent ‘bossy’ behaviour.

Whilst these incidents would not usually be considered as bullying, they would be considered as a ‘Relational Conflict’. As such, they would be managed through our Relational Behaviour Policy and would involve educating the children around the expected behaviours that we expect to see, including why some children are not liking what is happening. Senior leaders regularly monitor behaviours recorded for specific traits and patterns, supporting staff to act to solve relational conflict before it gets to the point where it could be considered bullying.

For clarification of what is considered as bullying and what would be considered as Relational Conflict, please use the table below. For any situation to be considered as bullying, **all** 6 elements of the ‘Bullying’ side of the table would need to be true:

Bullying	Relational Conflict
Repeated, hurtful behaviour	Happens occasionally
Deliberate or intentional behaviour that causes physical or emotional harm	Accidental
Imbalance of power	Equal power

No remorse	Remorse shown
No effort to solve the problem	Effort to solve the problem
Unprovoked	Provoked

Aims

The general ethos of our school precludes bullying and we aim to foster a caring, thoughtful environment. By increasing awareness of the potential problem of bullying we are confident that our procedures, in the event of unacceptable behaviour, are robust and effective. There is the commitment of all staff to maintain a high level of attention to the issue, and to ensure our policies work on a day- to day basis.

Policies and strategies which support our anti- bullying ethos:

- School values which demonstrate caring behaviour, and are understood by all children.
- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education (SMSC) is integrated into the school.
- Specification of the types of behaviour which are considered to be 'bullying', and therefore unacceptable.
- Clear specification of the consequences which will follow bullying behaviour.
- Regular reminders to children in assemblies, through planned curriculum, in day-to-day dealing with children, and through our Learning Values notices, the importance of showing respectful and caring behaviour to everyone.
- A secure, safe and well supervised playground environment. We have purposeful recreation, increased imaginative play, stimulating provision for physical and social play. Our positive behaviour strategies extend to playtimes and dinner times.
- Annual awareness raising for all staff, including a review of the policy.
- Awareness and training for Governors, as appropriate e.g. Safeguarding Children Governor.
- Recorded information on the incidence of bullying is regularly collected and analysed, along with the action taken.
- Action taken as necessary following bi-annual Year 2 'What do I think' pupil survey and results of the safeguarding audit pupil conferencing carried out by the governing body.

Awareness is raised through:

- Good relationships between school and home, to enable parents and carers and carers to feel confident to approach the school to voice any concerns, which they, or the child, may have.
- Helping both teaching and non-teaching staff to recognise all aspects of bullying, with appropriate training as necessary.
- The development of co-operative attitudes through a variety of means, including games, stories and informal discussions.
- Our Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE / Jigsaw) raises children's awareness about bullying and teaches children how to constructively manage their relationships with others.
- Assemblies promote 'Everyone Caring', thinking deeply about the words *Respect and Empathy*. Specific assemblies on understanding the term '*bullying*' are highly effective in developing the children's understanding of bullying and what they can do if they feel they or others are being bullied.
- Taking positive steps to integrate new children into the school.
- Circle times and whole class carpet sessions which are used as and when the need arises, to explore issues of concern related to friendships and bullying.
- Our relational positive behaviour management strategies including our Learning Values and reward systems– see Relational Behaviour management policy.

- Taking part in the national Anti-Bullying week, talking to the children about feeling safe in school and what to do if they feel unhappy.
- Actively promoting the term 'Safe Adults' in school, including staff who are not always working in the children's specific year group.

Guidance for Staff:

How we deal with bullying:

Children need to see that such behaviour is dealt with promptly in order to re-enforce our anti bullying policy. In some instances in order to resolve bullying issues a planned programme may need to be put in place over a period of time. Given that any individual incident will be dealt with accordingly, the guidelines below are necessarily general.

- Children, staff or parents and carers reporting incidents of bullying will be listened to and managed sympathetically.
- 5 Key points support staff in managing such situations:
 - Never ignore suspected bullying.
 - Don't make premature assumptions.
 - Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth.
 - Adopt a problem-solving approach, which moves pupils on from justifying themselves.
 - Follow-up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed and that the confidence of the victim is restored.
- Incidents will be dealt with primarily by the teacher responsible at that time
- If the teacher suspects that this is bullying she/he will **refer to the headteacher for support.**
- The teacher will inform their lunchtime Playleader, and any staff who cover their class, of any child needing closer observation.
- Should the problem occur at lunch-time, it will be dealt with by the Playleader, **who will inform the class teacher.**
- If the teacher observes this to be persistent and needs to take some intervention parents and carers will be involved at the class teacher's/headteacher's discretion.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss any issues and problems arising with their child's class teacher in the first instance.
- Parents and carers are seen as providing partnership with the school in order to resolve the situation, through a problem solving approach, which agrees an appropriate course of action.
- Support will be provided for the victim(s) and appropriate counselling for the perpetrator(s).

- Consequences will apply as appropriate to the situation; including exclusion in extreme cases ~ see positive behaviour management policy.
- Group support can be used if the teacher feels this will be beneficial see Annex 1
- Teachers will, as per the Relational Behaviour Policy, record all incidents of bullying and how each occurrence was managed throughout.

Working with parents and carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss any issues and problems arising with their child's class teacher in the first instance.

Their concerns must be taken seriously.

5 Key points:

- Recognise that the parent may be angry and upset
- Keep an open mind – bullying can be difficult to detect, so a lack of staff awareness does not mean no bullying occurs
- Remain calm and understanding
- Make clear that the school does care and that something will be done to investigate and find out more
- Explain the school policy, making sure procedures are followed

Make further appointments as necessary to explain actions and find out if the problem is progressing towards a resolution. Staff will keep parents and carers on both sides of any allegations and actual cases of bullying fully informed and updated throughout.

Many of these points also apply when the school has to tell parents and carers their child has been involved in bullying.

Adopt a problem solving approach:

'It seems _____ has not been getting on very well lately'

Rather than

'_____ has been involved in bullying'

This helps avoid a 'blame scenario'.

Parents and carers are encouraged to look out for all members of our school community when on the school grounds and out in the local community.

Guidance for Staff

Involving Parents and Carers

It is essential to involve parents and carers where bullying has taken place. Emphasis in meetings should be on joint problem solving. The aim is to minimise the likelihood of further bullying - both the child(ren) who has been bullied, and the child(ren) who has bullied.

Ensure:

- That parents and carers are clear about the joint problem-solving focus.
- They have been given enough notice.
- The meeting is informal but uninterrupted.
- All relevant information is available.
- Parents and carers have an opportunity to have their say and express their feelings about the situation.
- The meeting is positive and ends on a positive note with clear who is doing what and when the next follow up meeting will be.
- Staff will always have the option of a senior leader working alongside them to advise and support them through management of the process and meeting with parents and carers, as well as to ensure accurate and appropriate record keeping is kept.

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 intrinsic rewards and privileges.
- Acknowledge that effort and trying your best is more important than achievement.

The child who bullies

Schools should work hard with those children who bully others to ensure that they receive the help that will prevent further bullying. There is always a reason for behaviours displayed, particularly by children of such a young age. Bullies themselves are vulnerable and may have experienced frequent bullying themselves, and may need help to see that bullying is not acceptable behaviour. If they do not receive appropriate help, children who bully will often repeat the behaviour and not grow up to become balanced and happy members of society.

It is useful for staff to acknowledge that children sometimes bully because they have not learned appropriate ways of interacting with their peers. Exploration of additional interventions may be required to support them towards appropriate behaviours in line with the expectations of the school

values, these may include but are not limited to modelling and role-play activities. Approaches, which are solely punitive, are not advisable, since evidence suggests that they do not prevent further bullying. The following are principles that school staff will adhere to when working with children who have been identified as undertaking bullying actions towards another child(ren):

- Specifically teach interpersonal and social skills to children who have not acquired them. Modelling and role-play will often be required.
- Ensure that there are serious talks with any child found bullying, making it explicit that the behaviour cannot continue and that 'we' are going to work together to help you.
- Use non-punitive approaches, which involve all participants, including bystanders.
- Explain the problem and help everyone to understand how the bullied child feels, using reference to 'Empathy' from our learning values.
- Share the responsibility for the problem.
- Involve the group in sharing ideas and improving the situation for everyone.
- Include a later review of progress with the child(ren).
- Judge appropriateness of working with both parties at the same time, ensuring that parents and carers are involved / give permission for any sessions that involve joint work with the perpetrator and victim.

Parent and carers who are dissatisfied with how an allegation of bullying has been managed should seek a meeting with the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity. Where parents and carers remain dissatisfied, the procedure in the Complaints Policy should be followed – this can be found under Policies on the school's website.

Appendix 1

Locks Heath Infant & Nursery School Bullying incident report form

To be used where incidents are persistent and not resolved by positive behaviour management strategies. To be used where parents and carers, staff and / or children still feel that bullying is taking place.

Please refer to anti-bullying policy and positive behaviour management policy.

Date:	Name of alleged victim:
Bullying reported by:	Name of alleged bully/ies:
Incident reported:	
Background information:	
Action taken to date (Dates, people involved):	

Bullying or relational conflict?

(Highlight statements – must be **all** 6 to be bullying)

Bullying	Relational Conflict
Repeated, hurtful behaviour	Happens occasionally
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Unprovoked	Provoked

Incident was bullying?

Yes

No

Incident was not bullying on this occasion because it was: Please highlight appropriate sentences

1. The first hurtful incident between these children
2. Teasing between friends without intention to cause hurt (should not happen again)
3. Falling out between friends after a quarrel, disagreement or misunderstanding
4. Conflict that got out of hand (should not happen again)
5. Activities that all parties have consented to and enjoyed (check for subtle coercion) a. got out of hand b. parental concern
6. Other. Please describe.

Agreed next steps:

Headteacher		Parent of victim		Parent/s of bully/bullies (if confirmed)	
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Follow up **Date:**

Situation resolved (no further bullying and confidence of victim restored)	
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Further Action required (please state what and when)	
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Appendix 2

Support Group approach

Working closely with parents and carers and carers from both sides, teachers and school leaders will make a judgement of appropriate action which may include but isn't limited to the 'Support Group' approach. The support group approach was developed by George Robinson and has been adapted by many anti-bullying organisations. It empowers young people to change behaviour and make decisions with low level input from a facilitator- a teacher or other adult.

It is essential that facilitators have support and training in this approach and are willing to remain an objective facilitator. The target of the bullying needs to agree that this is the appropriate way forward for them;

Step One: The facilitator talks to the child who has been bullied. They can help the children record his or her feelings through drawing, poetry or by talking.

Step Two: The facilitator meets with the group of pupils who have been involved, including the named perpetrators (if parents and carers give permission). This includes some bystanders and some peers who are positive role models but not the target of bullying. We recommend about 8 children in total.

Step Three: The facilitator tells the group how the target pupil feels, sharing the expressed views of the target pupil. No accusations are made.

Step Four: Each member of the group is asked for ideas about how to help the target child feel happier. No prompts are given; the suggestions are accepted by the facilitator.

Step Five: The facilitator passes responsibility to the group to solve the problem. He/she arranges to meet the group again in about a week.

Step Six: The facilitator meets with the group and the target pupil, separately, after a chosen time, to monitor the situation and to celebrate successes. This meeting may need to be repeated if the target still feels there is an issue.

The key to the success of this approach is the dynamics of the chosen group and the monitoring of the situation. This approach ensures the safety of all concerned by allocating no accusation or blame to anyone but allowing everyone to take responsibility for improving the situation.

The advantages of this approach are that it empowers the young people to take responsibility for changing the behaviour of the group.

Research shows a high success rate in stopping bullying behaviour in the early stages.