

Leverton Church of England Academy



Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

At Leverton C of E Academy our Christian vision shapes all we do. We provide our children with the opportunities to flourish spiritually, academically and as confident individuals. We believe that all children are individuals with their own interests, qualities and needs. We believe that all children are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve their best, become confident individuals living life in all its fullness, and make a successful transition into adulthood.

At Leverton Church of England Academy we aim to provide a supportive, caring and friendly environment which allows all our pupils to learn in an atmosphere which is focussed on improving life chances and enabling children to reach their full potential. We expect our pupils to act safely, and to feel safe both in and outside of school. We do not tolerate any form of bullying and are committed to preventing and tackling it. We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these conflicts and to prevent them from progressing into bullying behaviours. If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident to report it and to know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

At Leverton Church of England Academy we encourage open discussions around differences between people. Within our PSHE curriculum we teach children about differences, discrimination and tolerance. This learning is embedded through our Christian Values of Hope, Encourage, Accept, Respect and Trust. We actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strength-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance. This policy takes into account the views and wishes of parents, pupils and governors through pupil voice, parent questionnaires and governor visits. The policy is available through the school website [Policies | Leverton Church of England Academy \(levertonacademy.co.uk\)](https://www.levertonacademy.co.uk/policies) and on request from the school office. This policy is reviewed and evaluated through the academic year and updated annually.

Roles and responsibilities

At our school all staff are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both in and outside of school as well as online. All staff understand the school's anti-bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they all have in preventing and tackling bullying.

Headteacher has overall responsibility for Anti-bullying at our school. They are responsible for ensuring there is an Anti-bullying coordinator within school and liaising with the Governing body, parents/carers, the local authority and outside agencies where appropriate.

Anti-bullying coordinator is responsible for:

- Policy development and review (ensuring that pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers have opportunities to contribute)
- Implementing the policy and monitoring/assessing its effectiveness
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents

- Coordinating anti-bullying training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

The Designated Safeguarding Lead's (DSL's) - Safeguarding is the responsibility of ALL, however all staff, parents/carers and pupils need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns.

What is bullying and how does it differ to relational conflict?

At Leverton Church of England Academy we have adopted the definition of bullying provided by the Anti-bullying alliance:

"Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face to face or online."

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (for example on grounds of race & ethnicity, religion & belief, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care of has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflicts differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are not relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware that occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention is to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that ALL pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

What does bullying behaviour look like?

At Leverton Church of England Academy we consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours of concern occur. We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age and stage of development of the pupils involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all children involved.

Bullying behaviour many include, but is not limited to:

- **Physical** - pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, pinching etc.
- **Verbal** - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling
- **Emotional** - isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- **Online/Cyber** - posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion etc.
- **Indirect** - can include the exploitation of individuals such as 'false friendships', criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation
- **Prejudice-related** - derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed toward people because of their sex, religion or beliefs, race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Our school understands that 'banter' is an increasingly relevant part of discussions relating to bullying, however it is important to acknowledge that banter is not inherently bullying, and it can be an important part of social bonding and friendships. At the same time, we know that some bullying in society is passed off as 'just banter', and we know that banter can quickly escalate to inappropriate or harmful exchanges and bullying.

Our school defines 'prosocial banter' as 'playful, typically funny, teasing between friends'. Prosocial banter can occur both online and offline and includes a range of behaviours that may be verbal, physical, or information/message sharing (online). Banter can include some of the bullying behaviours set out in this policy document, so it is important to distinguish between shared positive social bonding and inappropriate banter and bullying. School staff will distinguish between banter and bullying by taking careful consideration of the *intention, content and topic* of reported incidents.

Where does bullying take place?

At Leverton Church of England Academy we understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying).

We will offer support and guidance to pupils, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We

are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

How to report bullying concerns

At Leverton Church of England Academy we want pupils, parents/carers, staff and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. This can be done by speaking to an adult in school, telephoning or emailing. The class teacher will make contact with the parent/carer and discuss their concerns and action plan what will happen next to best support their child and all pupils concerned. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community.

We have clear reporting systems for each group of our school community, the effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year with the safeguarding senior leadership team and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

Pupils, including bystanders/witnesses

We ask that all pupils report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviours to a member of school staff - this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including a class teacher, TA, the headteacher, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and collective worship to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to.

The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss the next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated safeguarding lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We understand that some pupils may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place. Worry boxes are provided in each classroom for pupils can post a letter/note or picture with their name - these worry boxes are regularly referred to as part of our PSHE teaching and at other appropriate times. Classroom teachers will monitor and address any worries/concerns with a pupil on a daily basis.

Even if a behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is through to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

Parents/Carers

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff. Initially we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher (in person/via telephone/via dojo) to explain their concerns. The class teacher will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for

more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the teacher will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's reporting system (CPOMs) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online.

Our school remains committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations). This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

School staff

Our school staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

We ask that staff report their concerns to a Designated safeguarding lead. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal report of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOM's) and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff must directly alert the school's Designated safeguarding lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

Visitors

We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to (the member of staff may differ depending on the purpose of the visit e.g. supply reaching, governor, external agency etc.).

We ask that if a visitor to our school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated safeguarding lead. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by end of the school day. For example, it would not be appropriate to wait until the following day or leave a written note with concerns. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated safeguarding lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

How our school will respond to reports of bullying

At Leverton Church of England Academy all reports of bullying or reported concerns of bullying behaviours will be taken seriously and investigated. Even if an incident is deemed 'not bullying' or a 'relationship conflict', our school remains committed to supporting all pupils who have been involved and affected.

Our school keeps records of all reports of bullying, this information is stored on our school's recording system (CPOMs). These records are used to identify trends and inform our school's preventative work. Information from these records is discussed regularly at staff meetings to ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date and are alert to any ongoing concerns.

Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Some of our school's responses may include, but may not be limited to:

- Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident - this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses.
- Talk to the parents (of the target and/or the alleged perpetrator)
- Implement appropriate consequences in accordance with our school's behaviour policy. *Consequences range from expressions of disapproval, withdrawal of privileges, to referral to senior leaders, letters to parents/carers and as a last resort, suspension or fixed term exclusion (following DfE guidelines). Most instances of poor behaviour are relatively minor and can be adequately dealt with through minor consequences. It is important that the consequence is not out of proportion to the offence (School Behaviour policy). These consequences will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable.*
- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate
- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g. Police, District Council etc).
- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken - this may include a pupil, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.
- Implement a range of follow up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the alleged perpetrator, individual or group work with any witness/bystanders, group work with the wider community etc.).
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate
- Liaise with the Designated safeguarding lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns - a DSL may refer to the Nottinghamshire MASH
- Refer to the Nottinghamshire County Council 'Pathways to Provision' document and complete an EHAF if appropriate.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available from our school website and on request from the school office.

Strategies for preventing bullying

At Leverton Church of England Academy we are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Taking part in Anti-bullying week annually (November)
- Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February)
- Robust PSHE curriculum for all year groups
- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions
- Inclusive displays throughout school with a diverse range of work/photographs etc.
- Inclusive toys and books throughout school, raising awareness of and celebrating differences.
- Counselling/Nurture sessions for identified groups/pupils
- Parent information on school website
- Regular staff training and development for all staff
- All staff model expected behaviour

Breaches/Complaints

Breaches to this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complain policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website, and on request from the school office.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year.