We nurture, we flourish, we achieve

Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School

Anti-Bullying Policy 2026-2027

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Review date	Sept 2027 if not before
Head Teacher	Lauren Kay
Approved/Ratified by Signed by Governor Name	Governing Body

Introduction

At Nettleworth Infant and Nursery school, we are dedicated to providing a safe, warm, and inclusive environment where every child can nurture, flourish, and achieve. We believe that every child deserves to feel safe, valued, and respected from their very first steps into education. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school, and we are committed to preventing it through a culture of kindness and mutual respect.

We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience disagreements with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours. If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

This policy outlines how we work together as a school community—including staff, pupils, parents, and governors—to prevent bullying, respond quickly to any concerns, and maintain a happy place to learn.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in accordance with the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance and reflects current safeguarding, behaviour and equality legislation and guidance.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for Anti-Bullying at our school. They are responsible for liaising with the Governing body, parents/carers, the Local Authority, and outside agencies when appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Lauren Kay – Headteacher

Gina Taylor – Deputy Headteacher

Lauren McHale – SENCO and SLT

Sian Brookes – Key Stage 1 Lead and SLT

The nominated Governors for Safeguarding are Ann Beastall and Christine Hogarth

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

At Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School 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 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 or 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 conflict differs from bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are 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 incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

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 Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School, 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 may include, but is not limited to:
● Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, 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/videos/personal information without consent, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion, group chats, online gaming platforms, impersonation of accounts 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 towards people because of their sex, religion or beliefs, race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, 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?

Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School, 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 Nettleworth Infant and Nursery school we want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. 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 and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

Pupils, including bystanders/witnesses:

We actively encourage pupils to be positive upstanders rather than passive bystanders. Pupils are taught how to safely challenge unkind behaviour where appropriate, support others and report concerns to trusted adults. We ask that all pupils report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including a class teacher, a TA, the Head teacher, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies 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 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 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 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. Our school has a worry box in each classroom where the pupil can put their name/a brief note about their concerns/draw a picture of their concern – these worry boxes are introduced to the pupils at the start of the year, and pupils are reminded of them regularly. 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.

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 or via telephone call) 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 recording 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 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 which is the Head teacher and if not available to another Deputy DSL. 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 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 teacher, 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/the Head teacher/a Deputy DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the 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 Nettleworth Infant and Nursery school, 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 'relational 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 sanctions in accordance with our school's behaviour policy. These sanctions 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 (e.g. ESHAWH team).
●Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the 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 witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school 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 then 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 online from our school website and on request from the school office.

Strategies for preventing bullying

At Nettleworth Infant and Nursery school, 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:

- Active school council with representatives from each year group
- Playground buddies
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November)
- Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February)
- Robust PSHE/R(S)HE curriculum for all year groups
- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying
- Themed assemblies promoting British Values and equality
- Weekly celebration assembly to promote positive values
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through circle time etc.
- Inclusive displays throughout the school with a diverse range of work, photographs etc.
- Inclusive toys and books throughout the school raising awareness of and celebrating differences
- Nurture group / Thrive support / Drawing and Talking/ counselling (via SAP) for identified pupils
- Staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime supervisors and staff who support our before and after-school clubs)
- All staff model expected behaviour
- Pupil council
- Use of restorative approaches

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 Head teacher and Governing Body. 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 online from our school website, and on request from the school office.