Monks Risborough
Church of England Primary School
'A school family where everyone thrives in every way.'

Anti-Bullying (including anti-cyber bullying) Policy

This policy was reviewed Autumn 2025

The policy is to be reviewed Autumn 2026

Signed ……Chair of Governors

Introduction

At Monks Risborough CE Primary School, our vision is 'A school family who thrives in everyway.' We therefore aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our pupils to learn in an atmosphere which is focused on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. We expect our pupils to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we 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 '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. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school.

At Monks Risborough CE Primary School we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance (1st September 2023). This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year. It is updated annually.

What is bullying and what does it look like?

At Monks Risborough CE Primary 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. 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 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.

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

becomes 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 Monks Risborough CE Primary 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, homophobic abuse, 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, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their 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?

At Monks Risborough CE Primary 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.

Cyber bullying:

At Monks Risborough CE School, we are aware of the risks posed to pupils from cyberbullying and recognise the shared responsibility we have to ensure its prevention. We recognise that cyberbullying can:

▪ be conducted in a variety of different ways including via mobile phones, social media sites and the internet;
▪ be carried out anonymously and/or by people completely unknown to the receiver;
▪ sometimes be unintentional, e.g. becoming the mistaken recipient of a message.

To prevent cyber bullying the school will:

▪ regularly promote the use of safe practices when using technology through termly e-safety assemblies;
▪ ensure that our Computing Curriculum teaches children how to recognise cyberbullying and report it, through the specific e-safety strand and associated Scheme of Work, Purple Mash;

▪ ensure that all related policies, including the “Acceptable Users Policy” make specific reference to cyber bullying and how to report it;
▪ ensure that any mobile phones brought onto the school site by pupils are kept in the school office.

Should any incidents or suspected incidents of cyber bullying occur, they will be dealt with following the procedures outlined in this policy and will be logged on CPOMS.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Monks Risborough CE Primary School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes',

where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

[School or trust name] will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our **[anti-bullying/behaviour]** policy.

How to report bullying concerns:

At Monks Risborough CE Primary 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 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, Midday 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 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.

Other members of staff may become involved as outlined below. The Headteacher or SLT may become involved at any point in the process if deemed appropriate.

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 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/directly to SLT as appropriate and this should be recorded on CPOMs where 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/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 staff will respond to reports of bullying.

At Monks Risborough CE Primary 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 shared regularly with staff to ensure that all appropriate 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. 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., the Police, Local 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 Buckinghamshire MASH or to Family Support for Early Support.

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 Monks Risborough Primary 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 stemming from our School Values 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 groups
- Through the school's Vision and Values - “A school family where everyone thrives in every way.”
- Ensuring that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity through the school’s curriculum and collective worships.
- Robust PSHE curriculum for all year groups usingJigsaw Resources
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November)
- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice and opinions – through surveys etc.
- Specific initiatives for identified individuals or groups
- Inclusion Assistant who works with identified children on a 1:1 or small group basis
- Anti-Bullying page on the school website
- Regular staff training and development for all staff (including lunchtime play team)
- Visits from external agencies (e.g. NSPCC, TETC Team, NCC Anti-Racism Education Programme etc)
- 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 Head teacher and Governing Body.

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