

Vallis First School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Approved by the Governing Body of Vallis First School

Date: October 2024

Proposed Review Date: October 2025

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and is based on DfE guidance [“Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017](#) and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance [“Keeping Children Safe in Education”](#).

Rationale

Vallis First School is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment. All members of our community are entitled to go about their life at school without fear of harassment or harm and have the right to feel welcome, respected, safe and included. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists, the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school. This document outlines how we make this possible at Vallis First School.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of name-calling, violence, threatened violence, isolation, ridicule or indirect action such as spreading unpleasant stories about someone. This can also take the form of cyber bullying when the bullying behaviour takes place via mobile phone or social media. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out".

Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- o Bullying related to physical appearance
- o Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- o Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- o Physical bullying
- o Emotional bullying
- o Sexualised bullying/harassment
- o Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- o Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
 - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act).

Actions to Tackle Bullying

Prevention is better than cure so at Vallis First School we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour. We use Coram SCARF curriculum which includes bullying units in all year groups in the 'Valuing Difference' module and 'me and My Relationships'.

Children at Vallis are told that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff. We ensure that through our personal development children are taught the difference between bullying and conflict and are taught to alert staff if they see bullying taken place. All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of incidents. The Class teacher of the victim will be responsible for this and will be required to give a copy of report and the action taken to the Headteacher. Older pupils may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate co-ordinated action, all proven incidences of bullying should be reported to the Headteacher, and they will be noted on a serious incident sheet and in the Bullying Log. If bullying includes racist abuse, then it should be reported to the Headteacher to be recorded in the Racial Incident log.

In the cases of cyber bullying where staff are victims of the bullying, the incident will be dealt with by the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is a victim of cyberbullying the Governors will take action in line with this policy.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children/adult the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk, and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

There are various strategies that we use if more than one pupil is involved in bullying another e.g. Roleplay, drama techniques and regular Circle Time sessions. (Circle Time is an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice, and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just within the affected group to confront bullying that already exists.) We encourage victims who are worried about openly discussing an incident to speak confidentially to any adult or Peer Supporter in school. Victims are encouraged to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour, and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying.

Supporting Children

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- o Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- o Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
- o Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to any further concerns.
- o Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- o Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.

o Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Children who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- o Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- o Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- o Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- o If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- o Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include:
 - official warnings
 - internal exclusions
 - removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns)
 - in extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- o Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Parental Involvement

The parents of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. (Persistent bullies may be excluded from school). A monitoring tool may also be used, usually incorporating a reward for achieving desired behaviours. Parents are reminded regularly through letters and newsletters to inform their children that they must tell someone should they ever be bullied.

Keeping information from the school, or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer.

Police Involvement

Bullying involving violence, assault, theft, harassment, or intimidation over a period of time could be reported to police as a criminal offence. Hate crimes such as homophobic or racist bullying could also be reported to the police. Incidents that occur out of school such as in a park, by phone or online may need to be dealt with by the police.

Whilst there is little history of bullying at Vallis First School, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review our practice to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Annual pupil and parent surveys will include questions about bullying to ensure we are aware of any current concerns. Where necessary we have and will call on outside resources such as a referral to the school ELSAs, Kidscape and their parent advice line., Team Around the Child Meetings, Team Around the Family meetings or we may complete an Early Help Assessment and get help from the Somerset Inclusion Team.

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following: Behaviour Policy, Confidentiality policy, Acceptable Use Policies (AUP), Curriculum policies, such as, RSE/RSHE, PSHE, and Online Safety (including mobile and smart technology and social media) policy.

Appendix 1 – Bullying incident form

Bullying Incident Report Form	
<i>Name of Pupil:</i>	<i>Year Group:</i>
<i>Date:</i>	<i>Incident reported to:</i>
<i>Details of incident:</i>	<i>Action taken:</i>
<i>Signed by Pupil:</i>	
<i>Class teacher:</i>	
<i>Parent:</i>	

Appendix 2 – Serious Behaviour Incident Form

Child's Name:		Date of Incident:	
Form completed by:		Other witnesses:	

Time of incident:	Location:	Curriculum Subject	Supervising Adult

Type of Incident: (Tick all that apply)

Ready	Care	Safe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disrupting learning <input type="checkbox"/> Refusing to take part <input type="checkbox"/> Refusal <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving teaching space <input type="checkbox"/> Refusing to come in <input type="checkbox"/> Other... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Not listening to adults <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal to peers <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal to staff <input type="checkbox"/> Swearing <input type="checkbox"/> Damaging property <input type="checkbox"/> Other... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hurting others <input type="checkbox"/> Hurting staff <input type="checkbox"/> Dangerous behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> In a dangerous place <input type="checkbox"/> Other...

Brief Outline of Incident:

A What happened before?	
B Behaviour witnessed	
D Analysis What did the child want?	

Discussion: How can we put things right/make things better?
C Consequences ACTION TAKEN: