



Muscliff Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Last reviewed on: November 2025

Next review due: November 2026

Statement of Intent

At Muscliff Primary School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children so they can learn in a happy and secure atmosphere where they feel they truly **'belong'**. We will provide guidance for staff and parents on the processes and procedures that should be followed both to prevent and address bullying.

The governors value the good relationships between all of the school community as fostered by the school, and expect that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously.

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 that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

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

Aims and objectives of the policy

- To ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- To demonstrate the ways the school works to eliminate any discrimination or harassment on grounds of disability, race, religious belief, gender or sexuality.
- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and during off-site activities.
- To support everyone in actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To promote an environment where children feel they can trust and tell adults.
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care, and the need to be alert to signs of bullying.
- To make staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve the above aims.

We aim to create an environment where pupils can grow and flourish without fear. Each pupil has the right to be safe in and out of school and to be protected when he/she is feeling vulnerable.

What is bullying and what does it look like?

At Muscliff 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. 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 to 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 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).

However it manifests itself, bullying will not be tolerated at Muscliff Primary School.

What does bullying behaviour look like?

Bullying behaviour may include, but not be 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, 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; and although it is important to acknowledge that banter is not inherently bullying, at Muscliff we do not feel it is necessary to use ‘banter’ to develop/maintain friendships as it can so easily be taken too far, and jokes made at the expense of others can be hurtful.

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.

What do we do to combat bullying?

The school’s values (resilience, responsibility, curiosity, kindness and aspiration) are at the centre of the school’s culture, policies and approach. The school promotes children’s ‘emotional literacy’ skills, teaching the children to ‘recognise, understand and appropriately express their feelings/emotions’. We therefore take a strong stance against bullying of any type, since it indicates a lack of empathy for the feelings of others.

Everyone in the school community has a role to play in countering bullying:

- We will work together to develop a culture of respect and responsibility within Muscliff Primary School
- We will seek to prevent and tackle bullying, through the development and implementation of effective anti-bullying policies and practice
- We will highlight prejudice-based forms of bullying based on inequalities and any perceived differences, and ensure our policies and practices are effective in dealing with these issues;
- We will address the needs of children and young people who are bullied as well as those who bully within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support;
- We will share information and work jointly to make sure we are co-ordinated and cohesive in all that we do.

Strategies and skills for countering / addressing allegations of bullying

- Developing children’s emotional literacy is key to Muscliff’s ethos and values through the ‘Relationships and behaviour policy’, PSHE curriculum and whole school culture, recognising and celebrating inclusion and diversity
- Trauma-informed training for all staff
- Adult’s use of ‘PACE’ (Play, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) when working with children who have experienced trauma
- PSHE curriculum supports children to learn about emotions, discuss their feelings etc, through small group and individual work
- Focused friendship/ support groups within year groups, using Hamish & Milo resources
- Awareness raised through anti-bullying week, curriculum links
- School captains representing and celebrating pupil voice
- Close communication between home and school to deal with problems when they are small

- Worry Boxes (or similar system) in classrooms
- Opportunities within the curriculum for discussions that counter bullying and promote positive behaviour in response to children's needs
- Monitoring of and discussion among staff and children to identify 'vulnerable times/ places' that bullying may occur and appropriate response/ actions to those issues
- Children can identify trusted adults in and out of school they can talk to
- Sports Leaders to support positive play at outside times
- Use of activities at outside times
- Referral to outside agencies, if appropriate (Listening Ear, Child Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Assemblies to promote school's values, culture and ethos
- Staff committed to undertaking appropriate relevant continuous professional development
- Reward and sanctions systems in place across school – see Behaviour & Relationships Policy
- Support for all involved in bullying – victim and perpetrator
- Where pupils do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, tougher action will be taken to deal with persistent and violent bullying. Sanctions might include:
 - Removal from the group (in class)
 - Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privilege
 - Withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
 - Internal or external fixed term exclusion from school*

**An exclusion would only be considered in a case of extreme and continuing bad behaviour, bullying, sexual harassment etc .*

Roles and responsibilities of the school community

All Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Promote and celebrate inclusion and diversity
- Challenge any name-calling, unwanted touch, rumour mongering and disrespect
- Take seriously any suspected bullying.
- Not make premature assumptions.
- Listen carefully to all accounts and investigate as fully as possible.
- Adopt a problem-solving approach which moves children on from justifying themselves.
- Always report to the Head teacher
- Follow-up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed.
- Use interventions which are least intrusive and most effective.
- Know and follow all relevant policies and procedures
- Keep clear records which are added to CPOMs
- Be observant and talk to pupils
- Deal with incidents according to the policy
- Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity
- Take action to reduce the risk of bullying at all times and in places where is most likely

The Governing Body has a responsibility to:

- Liaise with the Senior Leadership Team over all anti-bullying strategies
- Discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies and will discuss the Head's report on the working of this policy
- Ensure the Head teacher carries out the legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst pupils
- Have a designated Governor for Safeguarding to include Anti-bullying

The Head teacher has a responsibility to:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and review them regularly
- Determine the strategies and procedures
- Discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Management Team
- Ensure appropriate training is available
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, volunteers, parents and children
- Report to the governing body.

Procedures and Recording

Recording incidents is vital as it allows school staff to identify patterns of behaviour, as often what is perceived initially to be a trivial incident, may be part of a number of incidents which are serious for the individual child.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with any incident:

- All reported incidents will be investigated immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the incident.
- Listen to the child/ parent reporting the incident and make sure that they feel that their concerns are being taken seriously. Record on 'CPOMs' (Safeguarding online record system)
- Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team about the incident.
- Check to establish if there are any previous incidents involving the same children.
- Please make sure you deal with the incident effectively and in line with the 'Relationships and Behaviour' policy. Children must feel that their complaint has been dealt with properly. If you are unsure what to do, please seek advice.
- A thorough investigation of the incident involving all parties will be undertaken and recorded in writing on CPOMs – see prompt sheet for staff – Appendix 1.
- After the investigation has taken place, a decision should be made as to whether a case of persistent bullying is taking place. If this is the case, the parents/ carers of the perpetrator will be invited to discuss the situation with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Parents/ carers of the bullied child must be kept informed of the whole process and it is vital that they feel satisfied with the way the incident has been dealt with.
- If an allegation of bullying is made by a parent, full written details should be taken and referred to the Head teacher or Deputy Head teachers who will then follow the same procedure and investigate thoroughly.

Support for children

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Reassuring the pupil and offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parents/ carers to help change the attitude of the pupil.
- Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Support for Parents/ Carers

When parents/ carers raise a concern that their child is being bullied it is essential that this concern is taken seriously and not dismissed without further enquiries being made. Our Senior Leadership Team are always on hand and parents can use them as a point of contact if the class teacher is not available.

Incidents of bullying outside the school's premises

Although schools are not directly responsible for bullying off the school premises, we would still encourage this to be shared with us. Actions the school could take, if deemed appropriate, include:

- talking to the local police about the problems within the Community
- talking to the Head Teachers of the schools whose pupils are involved in bullying off the premises

Bullying can also take place via text messages, online games and other means of 'cyber communication'. This often happens out of school hours, but has implications for the parties involved when they are in school. We would always talk to pupils and parents about the issues and take their concerns seriously.

Adult Bullying

From time to time, adults behave inappropriately towards each other. If any parent/carer feels that they are being treated inappropriately within our school community they must report this to the Head teacher immediately.

On occasions, when a parent/carer suspects another child of inappropriate behaviour towards their own child, they try to take matters into their own hands. This can result in:

- parents approaching other parents in groups
- inappropriate verbal exchanges in front of pupils
- a breakdown in communication

If children are experiencing problems with other children, parents/ carers must not try to take matters into their own hands. Parents confronting other parents in the playground is not acceptable and could be viewed as adult bullying. The school should be informed immediately of any concerns so that we may intervene to resolve the problem to ensure our school community remains a happy, safe and enjoyable place where everyone wants to be.

Links with other Policies

The policies below all relate to issues surrounding bullying and should be referred to, when necessary, in relation to the Anti-Bullying policy:

Policy	How it links
Relationships and Behaviour Policy	Includes details about the school's relational practice and how behaviour is managed
Safeguarding Policy (including child-on-child abuse)	Includes information about child protection procedures and contextualised safeguarding and sexualised bullying and exploitation
Online Safety / E-Safety / Acceptable Use Policies	Includes information about children's online behaviour and details about online bullying/cyberbullying
Equalities Policy	Includes information about our school's approach to tackling prejudice and celebrating differences. Links to prejudice-related language and crime and the protected characteristics
RHE / PSHE Policy	Includes information about our school's RSHE programme and how we teach about relationships, friendships, and bullying
Complaints Policy	Includes information about how to make a complaint if you are not satisfied with the school's response

Please also see:

Equality Act 2010 [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)

Monitoring and Review

The DfE requires all schools to have an Anti- Bullying Policy. This policy was developed by a group of staff and parents taking account of children's views and national guidelines, and is reviewed annually. The Working Party consisted of children - School council, Rights Leaders, and MDSA/Staff Governor, Parent Governor, Parents, Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher, Teaching Assistant, Trainee Teacher.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of this policy will take place annually as part of the Safeguarding programme.



Appendix 1

Prompt sheet of questions (for staff when investigating a situation):

What has the child said? Use TED to understand more about the situation(s)

Who is doing the bullying?

How long has this been going on?

Are there any other children involved (on both sides)?

What is the history between these children?

What sort of help/ support does the victim need/ want?

What sort of help/ support does the bully need/ want?

Is the bullying related to gender/ race/ SEN/ any other sort of discrimination?

Short term aims/ actions

Long term aims/ actions

Actions – including who to talk to, SLT/ parental involvement

- who will monitor this situation/ how regularly

All incidents to be recorded on CPOMs – category of bullying/ friendship issues/ discrimination