

St Peter's CE Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy



2026–27

Policy status	September 2026
Policy lead	Headteacher / DSL
Approved by	Governing Body
Review date	September 2027

We have faith in our children.

This policy applies to St Peter's C of E Primary School. It should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Equality information and objectives, and the school's aims and values.

Introduction

At St Peter's C of E Primary School, we recognise that bullying can occur in any school or setting. Preventing bullying, raising awareness and responding consistently to concerns are priorities so that pupils feel safe, respected and able to learn.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the school will have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Bullying may become a safeguarding concern where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm. Staff must act promptly, record concerns and follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy. This reflects Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Principles

The Governing Body and Headteacher are responsible for promoting a safe, respectful and inclusive environment. We value pupils developing respect for others through active listening, trust, honesty and positive relationships.

The Early Years Foundation Stage principles underpin our approach from the point children enter school. We recognise that:

- every child is unique and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments that respond to individual needs and build strong partnerships with parents and carers; and
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Aims

We aim to sustain a school culture in which bullying is unacceptable and all pupils can learn, play and develop in a safe and secure environment. We will work to prevent bullying, make it easy for pupils to report concerns, respond consistently and support all pupils involved.

What We Mean by Bullying

Pupils are taught about bullying through the curriculum, assemblies and age-appropriate discussion. Bullying is generally behaviour by an individual or group that hurts another individual or group, is repeated over time and often involves an imbalance of power. A one-off disagreement or friendship difficulty may be upsetting and will still be addressed, but it is not necessarily bullying.

Bullying may include:

- emotional bullying, including deliberately excluding, humiliating, intimidating or tormenting someone;
- verbal bullying, including name-calling, threats, mocking or spreading harmful rumours;
- physical bullying, including hitting, kicking, pushing, damaging or taking possessions;

- prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying, including bullying related to race, religion or belief, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or another protected characteristic;
- bullying related to SEND, appearance, health, family circumstances or perceived difference; and
- online or cyberbullying, including harmful messages, posts, images, group-chat behaviour or other misuse of digital technology.

Child-on-Child Abuse and Safeguarding

Bullying can overlap with child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour, discriminatory abuse and abuse taking place online. It will never be dismissed as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. Where a concern may be safeguarding-related, staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures and refer promptly to the DSL or deputy.

Pupils Who May Be More Vulnerable

Any pupil can experience bullying. Staff will remain particularly alert to pupils whose circumstances or characteristics may increase vulnerability, including:

- children with SEND or medical needs;
- looked-after children and previously looked-after children;
- children from minority ethnic, faith or cultural groups, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children;
- children for whom English is an additional language;
- children experiencing disadvantage or changes in family circumstances;
- children who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bisexual, or who are questioning aspects of identity; and
- any child who is perceived as different by their peers.

Preventing Bullying

Prevention is embedded in school life. The school will:

- teach respectful relationships, online safety, equality and appropriate behaviour through the curriculum and assemblies;
- provide clear routes for pupils to tell a trusted adult about concerns;
- promote positive behaviour and relationships consistently through the Behaviour Policy;
- supervise and monitor areas or times where concerns are more likely to arise;
- work with parents and carers where appropriate; and
- review patterns in recorded incidents to identify recurring locations, groups, protected-characteristic issues or online trends.

Reporting Bullying

Pupils are encouraged to report bullying affecting themselves or another child to any trusted adult in school. Parents and carers should raise concerns with the class teacher in the first instance, or with the Headteacher/DSL where the concern is serious or safeguarding-related. Staff receiving a report must listen carefully, reassure the child that the concern will be taken seriously and record and pass on the information appropriately.

Responding to Reports

Reports will be considered promptly and proportionately. The member of staff leading the response will establish the facts by speaking separately with relevant pupils and adults, reviewing available records or evidence, and considering whether safeguarding action is required.

Where bullying is substantiated, the school will:

- take immediate steps to make the targeted pupil safe and provide appropriate support;
- inform parents or carers where appropriate, taking account of safeguarding considerations;
- record the incident and actions taken;
- apply appropriate consequences and educational or restorative work in line with the Behaviour Policy;
- support the pupil whose behaviour has caused harm to understand the impact, change the behaviour and address underlying needs; and
- monitor the situation and take further action if the behaviour continues.

Restorative approaches may be used where they are safe, appropriate and genuinely helpful. A pupil who has been harmed will not be required to meet with, mediate with or accept an apology from another pupil where this would be inappropriate or distressing.

Online Bullying

Online bullying may happen inside or outside school and can continue beyond the school day. Where online behaviour affects pupils or the school community, the school will respond in line with its Behaviour, Safeguarding and Online Safety policies. Evidence should be preserved where safe to do so, and safeguarding concerns must be referred to the DSL.

Signs That a Pupil May Need Help

Possible indicators are not proof of bullying, but staff should remain alert to sudden or unexplained changes such as:

- unexplained injuries, damaged or missing belongings;
- reluctance to attend school, changes in attendance or routes to and from school;
- withdrawal, anxiety, loss of confidence, tearfulness or marked changes in behaviour;
- changes in friendships, participation, appetite, sleep or concentration;
- frequent headaches or stomach aches without an identified cause; and
- distress connected with phones, messages, games or social media.

Any concern about a child must be considered in the context of safeguarding and recorded or escalated in accordance with school procedures.

Recording, Monitoring and Review

The school will maintain appropriate records of bullying concerns, decisions, actions and outcomes. Senior leaders will monitor patterns and the effectiveness of interventions. Governors will receive appropriate oversight information without unnecessary disclosure of personal information. This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner following significant statutory or safeguarding guidance changes.

Key Guidance and Legislation

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Department for Education, in force from 1 September 2026.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- Preventing and tackling bullying: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, Department for Education.