

Brooklands Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Written by	Mike Waddell	Role	Deputy Headteacher
Approved by	Katie Puls	Role	Chair of Governors
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1. Introduction

Brooklands Primary School takes bullying seriously and bullying will not be tolerated. We aim to provide a safe, secure and inclusive environment for all children. We develop a school ethos in which bullying, harassment, intimidation and discriminatory behaviour towards any child or adult are regarded as unacceptable. We also recognise that children in a primary school are still learning how to make and maintain friendships, manage emotions, and resolve conflict and need support to do so.

2. Aims and objectives

- To prevent bullying through a culture of kindness, respect, inclusion and active bystander behaviour.
- To make sure pupils, staff, governors and parents understand what bullying is and what it is not.
- To distinguish carefully between bullying, conflict, falling out and friendship difficulties, while taking every concern seriously.
- To provide a consistent school response to concerns, including clear recording, investigation, support and monitoring.
- To support the child who has been harmed and the child who has caused harm, so that behaviour changes and relationships can be repaired where appropriate.
- To work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve concerns promptly and fairly.

3. Definition of bullying

Brooklands uses a definition based on 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, emotional, relational, indirect, online, discriminatory or linked to protected characteristics.”

At Brooklands, our Anti-Bullying charter uses the child-friendly reminder S.T.O.P. - Several Times On Purpose. This helps children understand that bullying is usually repeated, intentional and targeted. S.T.O.P. helps children understand bullying, but staff will also use professional judgement.

One-off incidents

A single incident may still be very serious and will be dealt with immediately through the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy or Equality procedures as appropriate. Some one-off incidents, especially those involving serious violence, sexual harassment, online abuse, significant intimidation or discriminatory language, may also be treated as bullying-related behaviour depending on context.

4. Types of bullying

Types of bullying include:

Type	Examples
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, damaging belongings or using violence towards a person or property.
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, threats, repeated unkind comments or comments about someone being different.
Emotional or relational	Exclusion, intimidation, staring or glaring, tormenting, spreading rumours, made-up stories or manipulating friendship groups.
Cyber or online	Using phones, messages, apps, games, websites, social media, images or videos to hurt, threaten, humiliate or exclude someone.
Discriminatory	Behaviour or language linked to race, faith, culture, disability, SEND, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, appearance or family background.
Prejudice-related	Any incident perceived to be racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist, disablist or linked to another protected characteristic.

5. Bullying, conflict and friendship difficulties

Not every difficult interaction between children is bullying. Children may fall out, argue, misunderstand each other, exclude each other, say unkind things in the moment or struggle to repair friendships. These situations can be very upsetting and still require adult help.

School staff will listen carefully, gather information and consider whether the concern appears to be a friendship difficulty, conflict, relational conflict, bullying, discriminatory / prejudiced or other safeguarding concern. Where issues are friendship-related, both parties may need support to understand what happened, repair harm and learn better ways to manage relationships. Where behaviour is repeated, intentional and involves an imbalance of power, it will be treated as bullying and the anti-bullying process will be followed.

Situation	What it may look like	School response
Friendship difficulty	Falling out, changing friendship groups, feeling left out, not wanting to play with someone, misunderstandings or on-off friendships.	Adult support, listening to both children, social skills teaching, restorative conversation, support with play choices and monitoring.
Conflict	A disagreement or argument where both children may be upset or unkind and there is broadly equal power.	Mediation, reflection, repair, behaviour support if needed and communication with parents where appropriate.
Relational conflict	Repeated friendship tension, exclusion, rumours, group dynamics or children struggling to repair after repeated fall-outs.	Adult investigation, support plan if needed, group work, PSHE input, parent communication and monitoring for patterns.
Bullying	Repeated intentional harm with an imbalance of power. This may be physical, verbal, emotional, discriminatory, relational or online.	Anti-bullying process, record on system (CPOMS), parents informed, support for affected child, behaviour/support plan and education for child showing bullying behaviour, monitoring and escalation.

Situation	What it may look like	School response
Discriminatory or prejudiced behaviour	Racist, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, SEND-related, faith-related or other discriminatory comments or behaviour.	Taken seriously even if one-off, recorded, parents informed where appropriate, education, support and consequences in line with school policy.
Safeguarding Concern	Serious harm, coercion, sexualised behaviour, threats, exploitation, significant online risk	DSL involvement, safeguarding procedures, external agencies if needed

6. Child-friendly Brooklands language

Word	Child-friendly explanation
Rude	When someone says or does something unkind, often without thinking.
Mean	When someone says or does something unkind on purpose.
Conflict	When people disagree, argue or fall out.
Friendship difficulty	When friendships feel tricky, confusing or hurtful and children need help to sort things out.
Bullying	When someone hurts, threatens, humiliates or excludes someone repeatedly, on purpose, and there is an imbalance of power.
Bystander	Someone who sees or knows something is happening. We teach children to be active bystanders by getting help.

Whatever the problem is called, children should tell a trusted adult if they feel worried, unsafe or upset.

7. Preventing bullying and supporting positive friendships

Brooklands works proactively to prevent bullying and to develop positive relationships. Prevention is part of everyday school life, not only a response when something has gone wrong.

- PSHE teaching on friendships, inclusion, respect, difference, empathy, online safety and being an active bystander.
- Assemblies, stories, drama and role play to explore feelings, choices and repair.
- Annual Anti-Bullying Week and regular reminders of the school anti-bullying charter.
- Anti-Bullying Champions who help promote messages, support younger pupils and raise concerns with staff.
- Worry box or other routes for children who find it hard to speak directly to an adult.
- Monitoring of identified hot-spots at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Annual pupil and parent feedback to review how well the school is preventing and responding to bullying.
- Recognition and celebration of kind, inclusive and respectful behaviour.

8. Signs that a child may be experiencing bullying or friendship distress

Signs of bullying or friendship distress may or may not be present and will depend on the individual child and circumstances. These signs could also indicate other difficulties, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and investigated where appropriate.

Area	Possible signs
Physical	Injuries, damaged clothing, lost or damaged belongings, frequent physical complaints or stress-related ill-health.
Emotional	Mood swings, anxiety, tearfulness, low confidence, changes in personality, defensiveness or appearing unusually upset.
Behavioural	Withdrawal, poor concentration, changes in behaviour, reluctance to attend school, unexplained absences or disrupted sleep.
Social	Avoiding particular children or places, becoming isolated, losing friends, wanting to stay close to adults or avoiding entering/leaving school with others.
Online	Becoming distressed after using a device, avoiding devices, secrecy, sudden changes in online behaviour or fear of messages.

Staff must remain vigilant and must not wait for a child to use the word bullying before responding to concerns. Vulnerable pupils, including pupils with SEND, communication needs, mental health needs or protected characteristics, may need additional monitoring and support as they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly.

9. How pupils can report concerns

Children are encouraged to tell someone they trust if they or someone else is being bullied, hurt, excluded or worried. If the problem continues, they should keep telling adults until it is resolved.

- Tell a class teacher, teaching assistant, senior leader or trusted adult.
- Speak to an Anti-Bullying Champion or buddy, who can help them tell an adult.
- Use a Worry Box or other agreed reporting route.
- Tell a parent or carer, who can contact school.
- Report online or cyber concerns to an adult immediately and avoid replying or retaliating.

10. How parents and carers should report concerns

Parents who are concerned that their child may be experiencing bullying, friendship distress or conflict should contact their child's class teacher in the first instance. If concerns continue, parents should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If parents remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school complaints procedure.

Please do not approach other children or parents directly

Parents and carers should not try to deal with incidents themselves by approaching another child or another child's parent. This can make the situation more difficult for the children and can prevent school from investigating fairly.

11. School response pathway

The school will respond proportionately and promptly. The exact response will depend on the age of the children, the seriousness of the concern, whether there is a pattern, whether there is an imbalance of power and whether there are safeguarding or discriminatory concerns.

Step	What staff do	Decision point
1. Concern reported	Listen, reassure, record initial concern.	Is anyone unsafe now?
2. Immediate safety check	Separate children if needed, inform DSL/senior leader if safeguarding or serious harm is possible.	Is this safeguarding, serious violence, sexual harassment, discrimination or online risk?
3. Fact-finding	Speak to children separately, check witnesses and context, gather adult observations, review CPOMS/history.	Is there evidence of repetition, intent and power imbalance?
4. Classify the concern	Decide whether it appears to be friendship difficulty, conflict, bullying, discriminatory incident or safeguarding concern.	Which policy/process applies?
5. Support and action	Put in place mediation, restorative repair, sanctions, supervision, parent contact, support plan or bullying behaviour plan.	What does each child need now?
6. Monitor	Check in with children, review at break/lunch/class transitions, log follow-up.	Has the behaviour stopped and does the child feel safe?
7. Escalate if repeated or unresolved	Senior leader involvement, parent meeting, behaviour plan, wider support, external advice if needed.	Is this now a pattern of bullying or ongoing harm?

12. Mediation and restorative conversations

Where it is safe and appropriate, staff may use mediation or restorative conversations to help children understand what happened and how to move forward. This is particularly useful where concerns are friendship-related or involve conflict between children of broadly equal power.

Mediation or restorative work may help children to:

- explain what happened from their point of view;
- listen to how others were affected;
- identify what needs to change;
- agree how to repair harm where appropriate;
- agree how they will manage future contact, play or group work;
- develop the skills to solve future friendship problems safely.

Safeguard for bullying cases

Restorative conversations will not be used as a substitute for safeguarding action, sanctions or anti-bullying procedures where behaviour is serious, repeated, threatening or discriminatory. Children will not be forced into mediation if it would make them feel unsafe or if there is a significant imbalance of power.

13. Supporting all children involved

When friendship difficulties, conflict or bullying concerns arise, Brooklands will support all children involved. This includes the child who has been hurt or upset, the child who has caused harm and any bystanders or wider friendship group where relevant.

Who may need support?	Support may include
Child who has been hurt, upset or bullied	Listening carefully, reassurance, trusted adults, safe reporting routes, check-ins, support at unstructured times, friendship support, confidence building and monitoring.
Child who has caused harm or shown bullying behaviour	Clear boundaries, reflection, understanding impact, behaviour plan, restorative work where safe, social skills teaching, consequences, parent involvement and monitoring.
Bystanders or wider group	Teaching about active bystander behaviour, group discussion, PSHE work, circle time, supervision and support to rebuild positive group norms.
Parents and carers	Clear communication, explanation of school action where appropriate, agreed next steps and review points.

Supporting a child who has caused harm does not mean excusing the behaviour. It means helping them take responsibility, understand impact, repair harm where appropriate and learn safer, kinder ways to manage relationships.

14. Recording, monitoring and communication

Concerns about bullying or possible bullying will be recorded on CPOMS - the school's safeguarding recording system. Records should include what was reported, what was investigated, who was involved, actions taken, parent communication and monitoring arrangements.

- Records will be reviewed to identify patterns, repeated concerns or hot-spots.
- Parents will usually be contacted where: bullying is confirmed or strongly suspected; behaviour is repeated or escalating; there is physical harm; discriminatory language or behaviour is involved; online behaviour is involved; a child feels unsafe; the issue requires ongoing monitoring or a support plan.
- Regular check-ins will be made with children involved and, where appropriate, parents will be updated on progress.
- Where bullying behaviour continues, the response will be escalated to senior leaders and further support or consequences will be considered.

15. Role of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- Implement the anti-bullying strategy and make sure staff know how to respond to concerns.
- Maintain a culture where bullying is understood, prevented and challenged.
- Support staff with investigations, behaviour plans, bullying support plans and parent communication.
- Monitor recorded incidents, patterns, hot-spots and the effectiveness of actions taken.
- Report to governors as required on the effectiveness of the policy and anti-bullying work.
- Ensure serious, discriminatory, safeguarding or repeated concerns are escalated appropriately.

16. Role of staff members

- Take all concerns seriously, including concerns described as friendship problems, falling out or conflict.
- Use consistent language to distinguish bullying from conflict and friendship difficulties.
- Respond promptly, record concerns and report to senior leaders where required.
- Model respectful, inclusive behaviour and reinforce the school's values through everyday interactions.
- Teach children how to make, maintain and repair friendships through PSHE and wider curriculum opportunities.
- Support both the child who has been harmed and the child who has caused harm, using plans where needed.
- Maintain confidentiality and share information only with those who need to know.

17. Role of parents and carers

Parents and carers are important partners in preventing and resolving bullying, conflict and friendship difficulties.

Parents and carers should	Why this matters
Report concerns early to the class teacher.	This allows school to gather information and respond before situations escalate.
Share information calmly and factually, including dates, names, online evidence or repeated patterns.	This helps school investigate fairly and accurately.
Support school in hearing all sides before conclusions are reached.	Many primary-age incidents involve misunderstanding, conflict or group dynamics that need careful adult support.
Understand that not all friendship problems are bullying, but that school will still support children to resolve them.	This helps children learn relationship skills while ensuring bullying is not minimised.
Avoid approaching another child or parent directly.	This protects children and helps school manage concerns safely and impartially.
Reinforce kindness, respectful communication, repair and not retaliating at home.	Children make better progress when home and school messages are consistent.
Keep telling school if the situation continues or worsens.	This helps school identify patterns and escalate action if needed.

18. Role of pupils

- Treat others with kindness and respect.
- Tell a trusted adult if they are worried, hurt, excluded or unsafe.
- Keep telling adults if the problem continues.
- Avoid retaliating or joining in with unkind behaviour.
- Act as active bystanders by getting help rather than watching or encouraging.
- Use agreed routes such as trusted adults, Anti-Bullying Champions or Worry Box.
- Take part in PSHE, assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week and pupil voice activities.

19. Role of governors

- Support the Headteacher in maintaining an effective anti-bullying culture.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy and the school's anti-bullying work.
- Receive reports from the Headteacher as appropriate, including patterns and actions taken.
- Ensure the policy is reviewed regularly and includes input from the wider school community.
- Respond to complaints in line with the school complaints procedure where a parent remains dissatisfied.

20. Serious, discriminatory, online or safeguarding incidents

Some incidents require immediate escalation even if they do not appear to be repeated. This includes serious violence, threats, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, online abuse, discriminatory language or behaviour, hate incidents, coercion, intimidation, or concerns that a child may be at risk of harm.

In these cases, school will follow the relevant policy and statutory guidance, including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy and Equality duties. External agencies may be contacted where appropriate.

21. Complaints

If a parent or carer is unhappy with how a concern has been handled, they should first speak to the class teacher or the member of staff dealing with the concern. If the issue remains unresolved, they should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If they remain dissatisfied, they may follow the school complaints procedure.

22. Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored through day-to-day practice, CPOMS records, pupil voice, parent feedback, staff feedback, annual anti-bullying surveys and governor oversight. The policy will be reviewed at least annually or earlier if statutory guidance, school practice or local needs change.

23. Links to other policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour
- Online Safety / Acceptable Use
- Health and Safety
- PSHE
- SEND
- Complaints
- Equality

Appendix 1: Parent quick guide

Question	Answer
What should I do first?	Contact your child's class teacher and explain your concern calmly and factually.
Will school take friendship issues seriously?	Yes. Friendship difficulties and conflict can be upsetting and may need adult support, even when they are not bullying.
How does school decide whether something is bullying?	Staff consider whether behaviour is repeated, intentional and involves an imbalance of power, as well as context, records and pupil voice.
Will both children be supported?	Yes. School supports the child who has been hurt and the child who has caused harm so behaviour changes and children learn safer relationship skills.
Will mediation always be used?	No. Mediation is used only when it is safe and appropriate. It will not replace safeguarding action or anti-bullying procedures.
What if the problem continues?	Keep telling the school. Continued concerns will be reviewed for patterns and may be escalated to senior leaders and a formal support plan.
Should I contact the other child or parent?	No. Please allow school to manage concerns fairly and safely.

Appendix 2: Response checklist for staff

- Listen and reassure the child or parent raising the concern.
- Record the concern on CPOMS.
- Speak to children separately where appropriate and gather adult observations.
- Check whether there are previous incidents or patterns.
- Consider whether the concern is friendship difficulty, conflict, relational conflict, bullying, discrimination or safeguarding.
- Agree support for the child who has been harmed or upset.
- Agree support, reflection and consequences for the child who has caused harm.
- Consider mediation or restorative work only where safe and appropriate.
- Inform senior leaders where the concern is significant, repeated, discriminatory, safeguarding-related or requires a formal plan.
- Set review and monitoring points with children and parents.
- Escalate to Head Teacher if bullying is confirmed, suspected or continues.