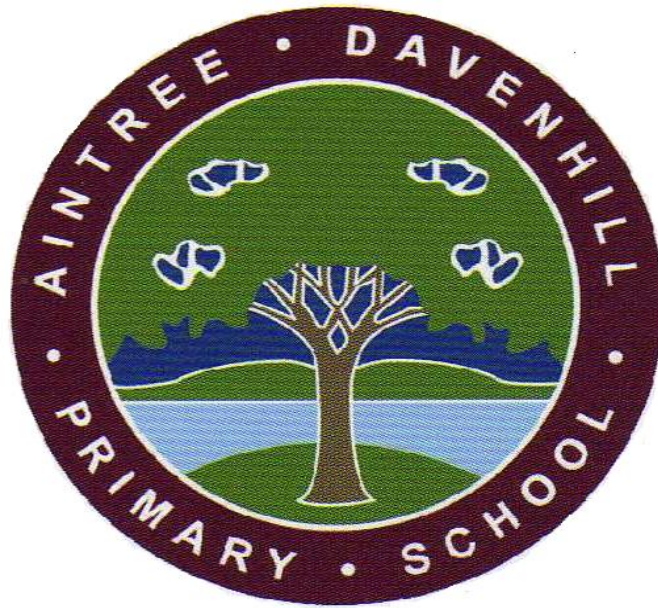


Aintree Davenhill Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by the Headteacher

June 2025

AINTREE DAVENHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

It is important to bear in the mind the requirements of the Equality Act when implementing this policy. Special consideration must be given to the special needs of individuals.

Bullying occurs in every school, even if only slight or infrequent. Aintree Davenhill is a caring school and our policy is to deal with bullying positively and effectively. We focus on anti-bullying and related issues for at least one week in each school year in our PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) lessons so that children know how to deal with it. But we also address the subject of bullying at many times throughout the school year and through work on healthy relationships in PSHE. Adults in school will always take bullying complaints seriously. Parents will be kept informed and victims will receive a guarantee that any repercussions will be dealt with.

What is bullying?

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- Deliberately hurtful behaviour
- Often repeated over a period of time
- Difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focuses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived 'quality' of their clothing or belongings.

Cyberbullying: This can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Staff will report incidents to the headteacher for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Where offensive content is posted online targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who has posted it is known to the school, the headteacher will request they remove it directly.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

Child-on-Child Abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers. Staff will take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims, will never tolerate abuse as 'banter' or 'part of growing up', and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as 'boys being boys', as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours. Staff will also be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing – or initiation-type violence.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to Children's Social Care Services (CSCS), where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

The school's Child-on-child Abuse Policy outlines the school's stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed.

Guidelines for Staff to Follow

Stage 1

When a complaint of bullying is made, the parent or child should discuss the issue with the class teacher who will investigate the complaint.

Stage 2

If the complaint is substantiated, the teacher will refer the matter to the headteacher or a member of the SLT. The headteacher or a member of the SLT will then investigate, and if, in their opinion, it is a more serious case, the procedure will move to Stage 3.

Stage 3

- Alleged bullies and victims will record their version of the incident unless too young, then the adult will make notes.
- If the complaint is upheld, the bully will be told to stop and will be asked to consider the feelings of the victim. They will then be asked to think of ways they could help to make the victim happier.
- If appropriate a circle of support will be set up to help the victim. This group will include the bully. The support group will themselves decide how they are going to improve the situation.
- There might also be a sanction for the bully if this is deemed appropriate. This might be:
 - Isolation from peers.
 - Removal to another class for a set period of time.
 - Missing playtimes or lunchtimes.
- The headteacher will follow up the situation and check that the bullying has stopped at regular intervals for a period of about one month.
- Parents would normally be informed of this process.

Stage 4

Should the bullying be found to have continued the headteacher will take further steps:

- The headteacher will inform parents of both parties.
- Sanctions will be imposed and will include a behaviour report.
- The headteacher will discuss ways forward with all parties. Another attempt will be made with the circle of support approach as in Stage 3.

- Any major sanctions will be discussed with the child's parent. The ultimate sanction is exclusion. **Parents do not have the right to request that a child who has been bullying is excluded from the school.**

NB At Stage 3, alternative system – the 'No-Blame' approach – may be implemented if deemed appropriate. In this system, a circle of friends (which includes the bullies) will consider the victim's feelings without blame being attached to anyone. The circle will decide how they might help the victim. They will be asked to go away and put these plans into action. The group will meet again a week later to discuss progress.

Support

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from the class teacher and/or SLT.
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken.
- Liaison with their parents to ensure a continuous dialogue of support.
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff.
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online.

Advice for Parents

Is Your Child Being Bullied?

Your child may not tell you if he / she is being bullied because they:

- fear reprisals;
- think no-one can help;
- feel ashamed;
- feel unpopular;
- think it will soon stop;
- don't want to tell tales.

You may find that your child is being bullied because of certain signs or certain sorts of behaviour. The following could be the signs, although of course they could indicate something else. The child may:

- be frightened of going to and from school;
- be unwilling to go to school, and make excuses to avoid going to school;
- beg to be driven to school;
- change the route to school every day;
- begin to do poorly in their schoolwork;

- regularly have clothes, books or schoolwork torn or destroyed;
- come home hungry because dinner money was taken;
- become withdrawn;
- start stammering;
- start acting up or hitting other children as a reaction to name calling;
- develop stomach-ache or headaches due to stress;
- discuss or attempt suicide;
- cry themselves to sleep;
- begin wetting the bed;
- have nightmares and call out things like, "Leave me alone!";
- have unexplained bruises, scratches and cuts;
- have their possessions 'go missing';
- ask for money or begin to steal money;
- continually lose their pocket money;
- refuse to say what's wrong;
- give improbable excuses to explain any of the above.

If your child has been bullied:

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience.
- Make a note of what your child says, particularly who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred where it has happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing telling you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur, he/she should report them to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.
- Do not go to another child's parents, come to the school.

Talking with Teachers About Bullying

- Try to stay calm; bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened; give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.

- Stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.
- **Parents do not have the right to request that a child who has been bullying is excluded from the school.**

If your child is bullying other children:

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it is wrong;
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family who they admire;
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends;
- their friends encourage them to bully;
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

To stop your child from bullying others:

- Calmly tell your child that you have heard and listen to his/her story.
- If there has been bullying, tell him/her that it must stop at once, making it clear that it is the behaviour you dislike – not your child.
- Is there any obvious reason for your child to be seeking extra attention?
- Many bullies feel badly about themselves. Boost his/her confidence, focusing on their feelings and interests.
- Show your child how much their friends mean to you, and try to discuss the value and nature of friendships.
- Don't bully your child.

Advice for Children – Don't Suffer in Silence

When you are being bullied:

- Be firm and clear; look them in the eye and tell them to stop.
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away.

After you have been bullied:

- Do not suffer in silence. Tell an adult who you feel you can confide in.
- If you have friends you can trust, tell them as well.
- Stay close to friends in places where bullying is likely to happen.

- If this is not possible, stay close to other children or adults who may provide protection.
- Avoid, as far as possible, situations and places where bullying is likely to occur.
- If possible, walk away from the bullying. Try to avoid making too much fuss, for example shouting, screaming, crying, or giving the impression of being frightened.
- If the worst comes to the worst, get away any way you can and tell an adult what has happened.
- Keeping safe is the most important consideration and if this means doing what the bully says, do it, but **do tell an adult** what has happened.
- Keep a diary of events, time and place and what is said, and ask your parents to contact the class teacher or headteacher.