



MARSHBROOK FIRST SCHOOL AND MARSHMALLOWS

Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2023

To be reviewed: September 2026

See also Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy and E-Safety Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils.

1.2 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 provide that the proprietor of an Academy school ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.

1.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

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

2. Criminal Law

2.1 Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

2.2 If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

3. What is bullying?

3.1 PVAT Joint Statement about Bullying

- Bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated in any of the Penk Valley Multi-Academy Trust schools.
- All schools in the trust work individually and together in an effort to provide a safe and secure environment for both children and adults.
- Bullying is defined as premeditated hurtful behaviour, targeted at an individual or a particular group over a period of time.
- Bullying can hurt another child both physically and/or emotionally. It could be difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.
- A 'fall out with friends' is common and is not usually bullying.

- Some children can react, often without thinking, which whilst it can cause emotional or physical distress, it is not classed as bullying

Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available on the DfE website.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1** Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- 4.2** We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.
- 4.3** This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- 4.4** We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

5 Strategies in school for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules.
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year.
- Raising awareness through assemblies and work in PSHE/SEAL lessons.
- Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to express their views through questionnaires, worry boxes and circle time discussions.
- Setting up a circle of friends support network to support individuals experiencing difficulties.
- Using drama and role-play activities to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives, e.g. PE coaches at lunchtime.
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour.
- Involving parents and the wider community.
- Multi agency work – working with social services, police etc.

6 Procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying incidents

The following step by step procedures will be followed :

- Initially, staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
- Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour.
- Appropriate advice and support will be given to help the victim.
- Staff will reinforce to the bully/ies that their behaviour is unacceptable and they will be given a warning and appropriate punishment. The bully/ies will be asked to genuinely apologise for what they have done.
- Work will be done with the bully/ies (for example with the learning mentor or in circle times) to help him/her/them understand and change his/her/their behaviour including investigating the underlying reasons as to why they are bullying.
- In serious cases e.g. when threatening behaviour is involved, parents will be informed and invited into the school to discuss the problem.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- Should the bullying continue the Head teacher may make the decision to exclude the child.
- Appropriate records will be kept of all incidents.

7 Monitoring and review

- 7.1** This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to trustees on request about the effectiveness of the policy.
- 7.2** This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary.