Great Gaddesden C of E (VA)

Primary School

'Treat others exactly as you would like to be treated yourself'. (Luke 6:31)

Anti-Bullying Policy

Review date: May 2025

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Date approved by governing body: 19th May 2025

Signature:

Date: 19th May 2025

Headteacher

1. MISSION STATEMENT

'Treat others exactly as you would like to be treated yourself.' (Luke 6:31)

At Great Gaddesden C of E Primary School, we believe that all children, staff, parents & carers and other adults have the right to be protected from bullying, hurtful and abusive behaviour.

We believe that a good school creates a safe, nurturing and inspiring learning environment. It develops self-esteem and confidence in all its children and in so doing inspires and motivates them to become positive and enthusiastic learners who are curious and caring about their world.

A good school recognises that children learn from those around them. They learn to value others by being valued themselves. They develop the social skills and personal qualities of courtesy, honesty, kindness, tolerance and respect from the adults close to them.

A good school models high standards in all that it does.

Children are unlikely to bully if:

- They have secure relationships;
- They feel good about themselves;
- They have empathy for others;
- They are emotionally literate;
- There are clear, decisive and consistent policies and procedures that are agreed, understood and followed by all members of the school community.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- To make Great Gaddesden C of E Primary School a safe and positive place for the whole school community
- To support the Herts Therapeutic approach to positive behaviour choices within the school
- To support the school Behaviour Policy
- To ensure that all those connected with the school understand that bullying behaviour is in all circumstances unacceptable.
- To ensure that all adults in the school community (staff, governors and parents/carers) present positive role models to children.
- Bullying and hurtful behaviour is a shared problem and staff and parents will need to work together in partnership to resolve incidents.
- To make the procedures for dealing with bullying and hurtful behaviour very clear, so that all members of the school community know what they can expect from the school and what the school expects of them.
- Anti-bullying approaches will be consistent with the values of a Christian, inclusive community and prepare children for life in an inclusive society. These include incorporating an acceptance of and valuing difference, the need to cope with individuals who demonstrate hurtful or challenging behaviour and the role of forgiveness.
- When incidents have been dealt with, all parties should be supported and enabled to move on positively. In keeping with our core Christian values, it is our aim that in the resolution of incidents, pupils should wherever possible be reconciled.

3. WHAT IS BULLYING?

"Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical, verbal or indirect."
DfEE Circular 10/95

<u>The key factors that characterise bullying are</u>:

1. **Bullying is intentionally hurtful.**
   It is the deliberate, unjustifiable and unprovoked use of aggressive behaviour. It includes actions that cause physical, emotional or mental hurt to the person being bullied and actions that violate another person's freedom and rights.

2. **Bullying is a repeated experience.**
   Being bullied is the experience of persistent or repeated anti-social behaviour. However, very rarely there could be single incidents which constitute bullying because of the fear and intimidation that projects beyond that initial incident or because of the number of people who have become involved (e.g. cyberbullying).

3. **Bullying involves an inequality of power.**
   The person/s being bullied find it difficult to reject or deal with the offending behaviour, or those involved in the bullying behaviour have power over the person being bullied. Some power imbalances can be subtle or build up over time, but more common examples include that they are bigger/stronger/older, have more friends, are more established in the school or care less about the consequences of their actions. Bullying behaviour can involve individuals or groups.

<u>Examples of hurtful behaviours that can contribute to bullying include</u>:

(A) DIRECT BULLYING

- **Physical**
  Hitting; kicking; tripping; spitting; unwanted physical contact; stealing; damaging belongings
- **Verbal**
  Name calling about the person's individual characteristics, eg insulting language or gestures based on a person's actual or perceived: race, ethnic origin, faith, nationality or colour; gender, sexual orientation or disability
- **Insults** about a person's family
- **Threats** of physical violence
- Putting the person down constantly

(B) INDIRECT BULLYING

- **Spreading malicious rumours or nasty stories**
- **Graffiti**
- **Exclusion** from social groups; humiliation in front of peers
- **Emotional/psychological –** eg excluding someone from a group

(C) ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY AND BULLYING

- Much verbal bullying and indirect bullying now occurs through the electronic technologies now increasingly accessible to children and young people, for example:
  - **o** Bullying by text message
  - **o** On the internet (social media or other social networking sites)
  - **o** On hate websites.

All hurtful and bullying behaviour - including subtle actions which can build up for individuals over time, eroding self-esteem and building unhappiness or a climate of fear - is taken seriously. Hurtful and bullying behaviour can have a significant impact on the person who is being bullied and can also have a significant impact on the culture of the school.

The school avoids at all times labelling pupils as either victims or bullies. It is important that pupils who have been the targets of hurtful or bullying behaviours are able to see that this experience will end and that it is not the result of something about themselves that has attracted or deserved such treatment by others. Similarly children who have engaged in hurtful or bullying behaviour will be expected to resolve the matter and change their behaviour. The school is committed to providing support to both parties to encourage effective resolution and prevention of future incidents. It should be remembered that there is no typical "bully". Many children may use hurtful behaviours from time to time.

Not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all hurtful behaviour is unacceptable in school. The following are examples of hurtful behaviour which may not be bullying:

- Children may fall out with their friends and engage in hurtful behaviour. Such experiences can be extremely distressing to the individuals involved.

- Children may retaliate against the hurtful behaviour of others.

Although not all hurtful behaviour is intentional, all hurtful behaviours are a matter of concern and will be dealt with by the school. Where pupils cause harm or distress without intent, the impact of their behaviour will be pointed out and any continuance will be regarded as intentional. Similarly, all unsafe behaviours and unsafe environment issues will be dealt with.

STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING BULLYING

Great Gaddesden Primary School is committed to stopping bullying behaviour and to do this We need everybody's help. As part of the school community, children have a responsibility to help combat bullying or hurtful behaviour by following these **DO**s and **DON'T**s:

DO	**DON'T**
DO tell someone if you think you are being bullied or threatened. DO be observant for signs that another child is unhappy. DO tell a member of staff when you think someone is being bullied or threatened. DO tell when you think someone is bullying others or is threatening them.	DON'T join in with making fun of the child being bullied, even if you don't feel able to challenge the bullying behaviour yourself. DON'T group up against another child in a vulnerable position. DON'T be a bystander. If you do nothing to help, you *are* involved in the bullying.

All incidents considered to be bullying are recorded on CPOMs and monitored. The process for recording incidents is used to inform preventative strategies. Pupils will understand the school's procedures for responding to bullying and know that they are safe.

At all times children's concerns are our concerns. Pupils are encouraged to express their concerns about themselves and others and to seek help and support whenever they need it. However, we recognise that children can sometimes be reluctant to seek help, so pupils can report their concerns anonymously by using a worry box. The school's Behaviour Policy details the behaviour standards set within the school.

It is important for children to know that procedures are being followed. In order to encourage pupils to continue to express their concerns, where appropriate, information is shared across the school about hurtful or bullying incidents having been dealt with and resolved.

Collective Worship and assemblies are used regularly to reinforce positive anti-bullying messages and to raise issues concerning bullying within the context of a Christian school message. Activities across the curriculum (largely in Personal, Health and Social Education, R.E. and English) develop pupils' understanding of bullying and this includes key ~~Catholic~~ messages in line with our Christian ethos, such as respect and forgiveness. We take part in Anti-Bullying week each year and all children are taught that each person is special and unique and that differences should be celebrated and should not be the focus of negative behaviour. In order to build children's resilience and reduce their vulnerability, pupils are coached and guided in developing coping strategies and in how to respond positively to hurtful behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to look out for each other and to show good witness behaviour by reporting their concerns for others.

Guidance is given to pupils who display behaviour which raises concern.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING AND HURTFUL BEHAVIOUR (INCLUDING STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES)

- All incidents of bullying must be reported and all such reports will be taken seriously. The perspective of the person who feels bullied will contribute to understanding and establishing the seriousness of the incident.

- The school recognises that speed of response is important and wherever possible incidents will be resolved quickly. However, significant incidents will involve investigation and this can cause delay to the resolution. The school will need to take the time necessary to respond to and resolve incidents appropriately, while ensuring the safety of the child who feels bullied.

- The role of all staff, in responding to hurtful behaviour is made clear to them as part of their induction. Teaching assistants will usually be involved as playground supervisors to give continuity of care. Incidents of bullying (see definition above) observed or reported at play and lunch times will be reported to a member of the leadership team.

- Single incidents of hurtful behaviour must be recorded on CPOMS and dealt with by the class teacher. (The Headteacher will be kept informed of any incidents dealt with by the class teacher so that he holds the overview across the school.) Follow up and ongoing monitoring will be conducted by the class teacher whilst keeping the Headteacher informed at all times, even if it is felt that the matter has been resolved. If the behaviour dealt with by class teachers continues, it will be reported to a member of the leadership team.

- Responses to all bullying behaviour will be educational and seek to ensure that this behaviour will not be repeated. A child who has been involved in bullying behaviour will be expected to take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour on others, the reasons for their behaviour will be explored and they will be expected to improve and change. The aim will be to resolve incidents, rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all. Incidents will be resolved in age-appropriate ways. Those who have been bullied have a right to know that action has been taken.

- Persistent bullying – after support such as counselling or other external support – could result in fixed term or permanent exclusion as a last resort. Any such decision is at the Headteacher's discretion. *(See Behaviour Policy)*

THE ROLE/INVOLVEMENT OF PUPILS

- Pupils will progressively develop their understanding of bullying and related behaviour issues through the curriculum. All pupils will be expected to develop appropriate witness behaviour and to show concern for others across the school community. Pupils will have opportunities to develop their resilience and problem solving strategies in the face of hurtful behaviour.

- Concerns and worries related to incidents and bullying in general may be explored and shared in PSHE / circle time, but pupils will have access to anonymous reporting opportunities through the use of a connection box. The seriousness of making false reports will be understood.

- Pupils will be actively involved in anti-bullying developments through the school council, curriculum work and in special initiatives. From time to time pupils may be involved in group support for vulnerable individuals (those who have been bullied and those who have bullied).

THE ROLE/INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS/CARERS

- Parents/carers have an important role in actively encouraging their child/ren to be a positive member of the school. Dealing with behaviour problems effectively requires the school and parents to work in partnership. To this end it is included in the Home School Agreement.

- If parents/carers have concerns about bullying or hurtful behaviour they should take up those concerns with the class teacher or a member of the leadership team as soon as possible.

- Parents should raise any concerns about bullying or other hurtful behaviour directly with the school and not with the parents of other parties, involved or otherwise. While we recognise that parents who are friends may wish to resolve matters informally they are advised that the school should always be made aware of tensions and difficulties between children so that they can be supported appropriately. The best place to resolve conflicts between children is in school where all sides and aspects of incidents can be explored.'

- Parents are expected to exercise reasonable confidentiality around incidents in which they are involved. In particular, parents are requested not to spread stories about incidents. Partial information can be inaccurate and the dissemination of this can help to escalate rather than resolve situations, with potential negative impacts on the children involved, relationships within the wider school community and the reputation of the school.

- Parents will be informed of any significant incidents involving their children in order to enable them to support their child and the school in seeking resolution and restoring a safe environment for all children.

THE ROLE/INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNORS

- The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all strategies to eliminate bullying from our school, while still recognising that it is likely to occur in school from time to time. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor and review the anti-bullying policy and its effectiveness. They require the Headteacher to keep records of all bullying incidents and to report on the effectiveness of the school anti-bullying strategies.