POLICY DOCUMENT

Anti-Bullying Policy

Princess May Primary School's approach to preventing and responding to bullying — 2026–2027

Governing Body Representative (GBR)	Kristofer McGhee (Chair of Governors)
Signed by (GBR)	
Date approved	4 September 2026
Next review due by	September 2027
Related policies	Behaviour Policy; Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Online Safety Policy; Prevent Duty Policy; SEND Policy and SEND Information Report
Aligned to	The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 89); the Equality Act 2010; the DfE's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026); and the DfE's advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)

1. Aim

At Princess May we aim to ensure that our pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied, and we are always looking at ways in which we can improve. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Princess May Primary School.

Our Anti-Bullying strategy:

- Educate every child to understand what bullying is (in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development)
- Help every child to exemplify the school values of 'Respect, Empathy and Determination' through regular work and discussion about difference and tolerance, and celebrate this
- Ensure all children know what to do and who to speak to if they are being bullied or if they are concerned for a friend or fellow pupil
- Ensure parents and carers know what to do and who to speak to if they are concerned that their child might be being bullied

2. What is bullying?

Sometimes we get confused about the difference between conflict (disagreements) and bullying. As part of our school Anti-Bullying strategy we recognise it is important that our children know the difference so that we can help make things better:

- Bullying is NOT one-off incidents where someone is mean or unkind to another person
- Bullying is NOT when someone accidentally hurts another person
- We all have disagreements or arguments with others at times and this is normal but is NOT bullying
- Someone choosing not to play with you and playing with others is NOT bullying
- Sometimes mean things are said but this is NOT bullying
- Bullying is when someone harms or hurts another person over and over again
- Bullying is targeted and repeated harmful behaviour to get power over someone else

Bullying involves behaviour that is either physically or emotionally harmful, such as taunting, name-calling, making threats, excluding people from groups, hitting, kicking and damaging belongings, directed at individuals because of gender, race, religion, culture or sexuality. It is harmful for all involved: not just the person who is bullied, but also those who stand by. It can lead to a lack of self-esteem, depression, anxiety and physical harm. It is not a one-off; it is when it happens repeatedly.

See the Childline link for further information about types of bullying: *https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/*

As a school we recognise that 'getting on and falling out with our friends' is part of growing and developing as individuals. Children can get angry or upset with their friends and will sometimes behave in a way that is not thoughtful or kind. Losing your cool or saying a mean thing once does not necessarily make you a bully, but it does mean that you have strayed into a form of behaviour that could be viewed as bullying.

We want to help our pupils learn from their mistakes so that they are less likely to repeat them. Our aim is to act swiftly on a reported or known incident — for example, two children fall out and argue and one calls the other a mean name. A school adult learns of this and talks with both children about what happened. The child who used the rude name apologises, and the adult monitors the friendship and is satisfied that it was a 'one off' and unlikely to escalate further.

If the behaviour goes unchallenged, there is a danger the child will repeat the same mistake. If the child's outbursts are directed at the same individual every time, the chances are they have become a bully without even realising it. If the child starts to encourage others to join in with the unpleasantness because they now have an 'easy victim', then things have become very serious.

3. Types of bullying

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups — for example, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences:

- Emotional — being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures or looks)
- Physical — pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist — racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual — unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic — because of, or related to, sexuality or gender identity in a negative way
- Gender / sexist — stereotyping, misogyny, or treating people differently because of their gender
- Religious — because of someone's religion or faith
- Classist — verbal abuse, mimicry, mocking clothing and belongings
- Disablist — mockery, verbal abuse by name-calling, physical threats about a person's disability
- Verbal — name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber — bullying through any online means such as email, chat group misuse, or mobile phone messaging and calls

At Princess May we are committed to standing up to bullying and protecting any group or individual who may be vulnerable.

4. Online bullying

Bullying can take place in both the real and online world. Online bullying is common on social media networks but is not limited to these; email, text messaging and online gaming can all become a vehicle for bullying.

Parents and carers have a huge role to play in protecting their child from online bullying. This may include:

- Setting clear rules for the use of technology in the home
- Ensuring parental controls are set on the internet and on individual devices
- Reading 'terms and conditions' before allowing their child to sign up to certain sites (most social media sites do not allow users under the age of 13)
- Monitoring their child's use of technology and ensuring that behaviour which would not be tolerated in the real world is not accepted online, e.g. bad language and inappropriate comments during online gaming

Please see our Online Safety Policy and the 'Online Safety — a Parent's Guide' on the Parents and Carers page of the school website, and the DfE's advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying and for headteachers and school staff.

We recognise that bullying may start online and find its way into school (or vice versa). We will act to deal with all instances of bullying involving our children that we become aware of, including instances which may originate out of school hours, in the online world.

5. Who is responsible in school for standing up to bullying?

The Behaviour Lead is responsible for:

- Promoting good behaviour
- Supporting staff to implement the school Behaviour Policy consistently and fairly
- Teaching the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors skills to support peers during break and lunch periods
- Promoting positive behaviour between peers through the school reward system

Lunchtime supervisors are responsible for:

- Promoting good behaviour and positive relationships during the lunch period in accordance with the Behaviour Policy

- Alerting class teachers if they believe a child is being bullied or bullying others

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are responsible for:

- Promoting good behaviour and engaging with peers
- Supporting peers to experience positive relationships during the lunch period
- Alerting lunchtime supervisors if they believe a child is being bullied or bullying others

School Council is responsible for:

- Promoting good behaviour and engaging with peers
- Representing their class and sharing views and opinions at school council meetings

Teaching assistants are responsible for:

- Promoting good behaviour and positive relationships throughout the school day in accordance with the Behaviour Policy
- Alerting class teachers if they believe a child is being bullied or bullying others

Teachers are responsible for:

- Promoting good behaviour and positive relationships throughout the school day
- Teaching children about bullying as part of PSHE and computing sessions
- Responding proactively to any child who they believe may be the victim of bullying
- Responding appropriately to families who raise a concern
- Monitoring the behaviour of individuals where instructed to by the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher or a member of the SLT

Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is applied fairly and consistently across the school
- Monitoring the number of allegations of bullying raised
- Challenging the school's leadership and staff to eradicate bullying in all its forms

We all play an important role in standing up to bullying.

6. Statutory duty of schools

Headteachers have a legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. 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. See the DfE's guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2017) for further information.

7. Safeguarding children and young people

Signs, especially physical ones, are hard to identify, as the most frequent forms of bullying in schools are intimidation, threatening behaviour and name-calling. Some signs could include:

- Unexpected illness
- Desire to be with adults / clinginess
- Crying a lot
- Lack of appetite
- Reluctance to go to school
- Damaged clothing
- Fear of going out alone, e.g. toilet, playground
- Isolation, depression, being withdrawn and having fewer friends
- Lower self-esteem and self-confidence
- School absenteeism and deterioration in school work
- Less willing to participate in the classroom or socially

Where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm', a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern — the school DSL will

always be alerted and will act in line with the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Prevent Duty, risk assess the incident, and report concerns to Hackney MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub), working with them to take appropriate action.

External support can be given to pupils whether or not it is deemed a child protection concern. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, we may draw on external services to support a pupil experiencing bullying, or to tackle an underlying issue contributing to a child engaging in bullying.

8. Staff induction and training

We place significant emphasis on understanding that all behaviour is a form of communication, and provide regular staff training so that staff can understand some of the causes of poor behaviour choices and have a range of strategies to improve behaviour management in and outside of the classroom (see the Behaviour Policy).

At the start of the 2026–2027 academic year, staff will receive training and induction on Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026, replacing the 2025 edition) and must understand their roles and responsibilities as set out in Part 1 of this document, including the updated online safety risk categories reflecting the increasing presence of AI, and the DfE's guidance on mobile phones in schools.

Staff learn the importance of recognising and acting swiftly on any incidents of bullying, including online and child-on-child abuse, in order to prevent further suffering or significant harm. Regular staff safeguarding updates and training are delivered by the school DSL during staff meetings, including scenario-based discussions to help staff explore fictional behaviour incidents and appropriate responses.

9. Mental health and wellbeing

Bullying can have significant effects on children's mental health, including into adulthood. A child's academic achievement, self-esteem and ability to socialise with peers can be hindered.

Through staff training and the support of our Connect Education counsellor, we are able to spot behaviours that may indicate a child needing help. As a school we ensure a culture of vigilance that reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

At Princess May we recognise the importance of good mental health on a pupil's behaviour choices, academic attainment, self-esteem, confidence and life chances, and we value having Connect Education within our school, offering optional drop-in sessions for pupils to discuss any concerns.

10. Preventing and responding — our school approach to bullying

We believe there are two components to effective anti-bullying practice: preventing bullying incidents, and responding to bullying incidents. Punishing bullies does not end bullying — it is the bullying behaviour, rather than the person doing the bullying, that is not liked. We positively encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences, and to make a commitment to end the bullying and support the bullied pupil.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy and practice includes a range of strategies adapted to suit particular incidents through a whole-school approach, including:

- Ensuring that the whole school understands what bullying means — both adults and children
- Making it clear that no bullying of any kind is tolerated
- Allowing children to report incidents without feeling they are telling tales
- Taking incidents seriously, investigating and acting upon them using clearly defined procedures

- Systematic recording of incidents using CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System), helping us review and evaluate policy and practice
- Peer support systems — developing listening, social skills, self-esteem, confidence-building and befriending programmes
- Programmes of lessons in the curriculum and weekly circle time — sharing skills and experiences
- Whole-school assemblies — raising awareness and providing a consistent focus on positive peer interactions
- Induction for all new staff
- Annual whole-school review of procedures
- Training staff to identify and help vulnerable children and those more at risk of bullying
- Assertiveness training — helping pupils vulnerable to bullying use verbal and body language that discourages bullying
- Use of sanctions, which might include removal from class, detention, or fixed periods of internal/external suspension, in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Working with parents/carers to promote good behaviour and consult over the school's approach to bullying
- A Behaviour Policy setting out clear guidelines for managing pupil behaviour in class and around the school
- Improving the school grounds to provide a safe, secure, active and easily supervised environment, monitored using cameras
- Connect Education — a safe environment for children to share worries and concerns at Talk Time
- Questionnaires for use with pupils, parents and staff
- Meetings with the School Council to gain an indication of the extent and nature of bullying-related problems and the effectiveness of the above procedures

11. Procedures

- Bullying incident reported to a member of staff.
- Staff investigate the situation by talking to the children involved, witnesses and other staff members.
- The situation is recorded on CPOMS, from the perspective of the children and staff involved.
- SLT respond to the CPOMS report and speak with the young person undertaking the behaviour — ensuring they recognise their behaviour and how it affects others, applying appropriate sanctions, guiding and supporting them to change behaviour, insisting on full responsibility being taken for wrong actions, involving parents, and involving external agencies where necessary.
- The class teacher, SLT or Connect Education respond to the child who is bullied, hurt or upset — actively listening, supporting the restoration of self-esteem and confidence, offering strategies to deal with unwanted behaviour, protecting the child, involving parents and external agencies as appropriate, and reinforcing the need for behaviour change in the pupil responsible.
- The situation is reviewed (if necessary) with the children involved, parents and others where appropriate.
- The Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies are monitored and evaluated through regular review.

Please support your child and us, and together we will stand up against bullying.