FOREST OF DEAN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

PARKEND PRIMARY & YORKLEY PRIMARY

Anti-Bullying and Hate Policy 2026 - 2028

Ratified: March 2026

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Statement of Intent

The Forest of Dean Community Schools Federation believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, e.g. learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are also part of the school's Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

The Federation recognises that persistent or unexplained absence may be an indicator of wider safeguarding vulnerabilities, in line with KCSIE guidance.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at our Federation.

- ## **Legal Framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Provision in Schools'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025'
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

Hate Incidents and Hate Crimes - In line with Home Office and CPS definitions:
A hate incident is any incident perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on one or more of the following protected characteristics:

- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Gender identity

A hate crime is a hate incident that constitutes a criminal offence, such as harassment, assault, criminal damage or malicious communications.
Schools must record hate incidents, even where they do not meet a criminal threshold.

• **Types of Bullying / Hate Crimes**

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying) *Online risks include exposure to misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy content, and the misuse of generative AI e.g. deep fakes or manipulated images.

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 focusses 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.

Actions NOT considered bullying: (examples)

- Occasionally not liking someone so not wanting to be his or her friend.
- Being excluded from a game e.g. at lunchtime.
- Accidentally bumping into someone and injuring them unintentionally.
- A single act of unkindness.
- Not being listened to or having a difference of opinion.
- An argument.

• **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The Executive Head teacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training / updates for staff members

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Knowing our children well, forming good relationships so children can go to a trusted adult when concerned.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.

- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the class teacher.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.
- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.

Parents are responsible for:

- Informing their child's teacher if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from unwanted situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.
- Understanding the difference between bullying and pupils just being unkind.

• **Prevention**

Across our Federation, we use a variety of methods to support children in preventing and understanding the consequences of bullying, for example through:

The curriculum will explore and discuss issues at age-appropriate stages such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- Harmful sexual behaviour, the concepts involved and why they are always unacceptable, and the laws relating to it.

Further support will be through:

- Circle time.
- School assemblies.
- School Council discussions.
- Small social skills groups e.g. ELSA.
- The implementation of whole school Rewards and Sanctions – house points / green slips.
- The Buddy System / Wellbeing Champions.
- Anti-bullying week and continued focus throughout the year.
- Talks and support from outside agencies e.g. PCSO.

- Support from our Inclusion Team - Family Support Worker & SENDCo.
- Early Help signposting and support with indicators such as suspensions or frequent absence.

All children and parents should feel confident that the issue or concern will be dealt with in a non-confrontational way and fairly. They are encouraged to talk to the class teacher if their child experiences any form of bullying.

Each school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.

Seating plans will be considered and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying. Potential victims of bullying will be placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

Pupils deemed vulnerable will meet with their teacher and/or a member from the Inclusion Team where and when appropriate, to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly. The Forest of Dean Community Schools Federation will offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Each school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour. Each school will also recognise that persistent absence can be a cause and a consequence of bullying and will liaise with attendance leads in line with statutory guidance.

Each school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

• **Signs of Bullying and Hate-crimes**

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each child's response to being bullied is unique. There is also a wider invisible impact on those that share an identity with a victim, even if they themselves may not have been targeted.

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Depression and anxiety.
- Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness.
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy.
- Unexplainable injuries.
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery.
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness.
- Persistent absences.
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Children may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.

- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular.
- They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time.
- They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group.
- They are fearful of other children's differences.
- They are jealous of another child.
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.
- Them not understanding pressures that an individual is under e.g. a young carer / child in foster care.

• **Staff Principles**

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL or DDSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

• **Child-on-child Abuse (links to our Safeguarding Policy)**

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, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.

- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- 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 and one that risks normalising abuse.
- 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.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

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) and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that pupils may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Pupils being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

The school's Safeguarding 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.

• **Cyberbullying (links to our Online and Acceptable Users Policy)**

Cyberbullying 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. Snapchat / Instagram.

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms. This includes the creation or sharing of AI generated or manipulated content.

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. Filtering and monitoring aligns with KCSIE expectations and is reviewed regularly to address emerging online risks.

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 Executive Headteacher for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Pupils will report incidents to a trusted member of staff.

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 Executive 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.

• **Procedures**

The procedure for reporting and dealing with incidents of bullying is as follows:

All staff note any incidents and report them to the School Inclusion Team who will record them on My Concerns. Patterns of behaviour will be monitored (through the white behaviour slips / bullying logs.)

In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Executive Head teacher as soon as possible.

The victim and the perpetrator are spoken to on separate occasions by a member of the Inclusion Team / Class Teacher / SLT or EHT (as appropriate).

The victim and the perpetrator may then be spoken to together to seek a way forward.

If deemed serious in nature, the issue is then reported to the parents concerned. All adults and children involved will have contributed to the evidence.

As a result, the children are monitored closely by all staff. Staff report any further concerns directly to the EHT.

If the incidents links to lunch or break times, then the perpetrator may be excluded from an activity or the playground, or allowed with close adult supervision.

In extreme circumstances, the perpetrator will be given an internal lunch-time exclusion and a fixed-term exclusion may then be considered necessary.

The victim is provided with a circle of friends to support and instil confidence. They may also be included in a self-esteem group if necessary.

Parents are kept informed of any recurring incidents.

• Sanctions

If the Executive Headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. A member of staff will inform the perpetrator of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, e.g. time off play / meeting with parents.

If possible, the Executive Headteacher/ Inclusion Team will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions, and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.

Each school will remain cognisant of the fact, that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour, and will not exclude pupils unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with the Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

• Support

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

- Emotional support and reassurance from the Inclusion Team
- 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
- Discussion with their parent on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents)

The Executive Headteacher will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled, whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them

sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Victims will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school clubs or activities.

• **Follow-up Support**

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by their teacher(s). One-on-one sessions to discuss how the victim and perpetrator are progressing may be appropriate

Pupils who have been bullied will be offered continuous support. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

Pupils who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents

In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the pupil cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the Executive Headteacher and DSL will look to transfer the pupil to another mainstream school with the consent and involvement of the pupil's parents.

• **Bullying Outside of School**

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Safeguarding Policy and Online Safety Policy.

The Executive Headteacher has a specific statutory power to sanction pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Executive Headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, e.g. on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it might be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only sanction the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

• Record Keeping

Staff will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

Staff / SLT will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.

• Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed at least every two years by the Executive Headteacher and staff. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

• Links to other Policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Users Policy
- Child in Care Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing

Bullying report form

This form will be sent to the Executive Headteacher upon completion.

Personal details	
Name of person reporting incident	
Name of pupil(s) being bullied	
Year group (Class)	
Date:	

Incident details
What happened?
Where did the incident take place?
When did the incident occur?
Who has been suspected of bullying and for what reason?

Did anyone else see the incident?

According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?

According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?

Possible other relevant Information