



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy is informed by the Department for Education guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2017; publication page updated July 2026) and the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026'. It should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Behaviour & Relationships Policy.

2026 – 2028

Date written:	September 2026
Date agreed by Governors:	September 2026
Date to review:	September 2028

‘LEARNING FOR LIFE’

At Whiston Willis Primary Academy, we are a safe, happy and inclusive community where everyone is valued, respected and celebrated. We embrace difference and promote equity, ensuring that every child feels a strong sense of belonging and has the support, opportunities and encouragement they need to thrive.

We have high expectations for every child and are committed to enabling all pupils to reach their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. Through an ambitious, inclusive and engaging curriculum, we develop knowledge, skills and understanding while nurturing curiosity, confidence, independence and a love of learning.

We believe that every child should have a voice. Through purposeful talk, active listening and respectful dialogue, we empower our pupils to express their ideas, listen to others, challenge themselves and participate confidently in their learning and the wider world.

We are committed to developing the whole child. Through positive relationships, shared values and a strong sense of community, we support our pupils to become resilient, respectful and compassionate individuals who understand their responsibilities towards others and approach their future with a strong moral purpose.

Learning is a lifelong journey. We aim to inspire motivated, independent and reflective learners who are equipped with the knowledge, character and confidence to embrace opportunities, overcome challenges and make a positive contribution to an ever-changing world.

1. Statement of Intent

Whiston Willis Primary Academy has a responsibility to provide a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which bullying is not tolerated. We have high expectations for behaviour and relationships and will respond consistently to behaviour that harms, intimidates, excludes or targets another member of our school community. Pupils are supported to feel safe, valued and able to learn, develop and participate fully in school life.

As a Rights Respecting School, children's rights, dignity, equality and respect are central to our culture. Pupils are taught that rights belong to every child and that respecting their own rights includes recognising and respecting the rights of others. Through the curriculum, assemblies, class charters, pupil voice and the Whiston Willis Way, we promote respectful relationships, inclusion, difference and responsibility. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated or dismissed as 'banter', 'having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. Child-on-child abuse can occur between children of any age and may take place inside or outside school and online; any safeguarding concern will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Rights Respecting Approach

Our anti-bullying approach reflects the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), particularly Article 2 (non-discrimination), Article 12 (the right to be heard), Article 19 (protection from harm) and Article 29 (the aims of education). These principles support our commitment to a community in which every pupil is treated with dignity, difference is respected and pupils are encouraged to speak up when something is wrong.

2. Objectives of this Policy

- The purpose of this policy is to outline what Whiston Willis Primary Academy will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- To ensure that all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers have an understanding of what bullying is and how it should be reported.
- To ensure that all pupils and their families know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying occurs.
- To assure parents and carers, that as a school, we take bullying seriously and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

3. Definition of Bullying

The Department for Education describes bullying as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying may take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice or difference. It may occur face to face or online and can happen inside or outside school.

Bullying is distinguished from ordinary friendship difficulties, disagreements or isolated incidents by features such as repetition, intention to cause harm and/or an imbalance of power. However, a one-off incident may still be serious, harmful or a safeguarding concern and will be addressed appropriately even where it does not meet the school's definition of bullying.

Bullying may include threats, intimidation, exclusion, spreading rumours, physical aggression, verbal abuse, online behaviour, sexualised behaviour or behaviour directed at a person's identity, perceived identity, appearance, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or another characteristic or difference. Physical safety is always a priority, while recognising that emotional and relational harm can also be significant.

4. Forms of Bullying

There are many forms and types of bullying that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive:

- Emotional, relational or psychological
- Physical
- Online / cyberbullying
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory

- Sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying will therefore be challenged and addressed. Where behaviour may constitute child-on-child abuse, a hate incident, sexual harassment, sexual violence or another safeguarding concern, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures without delay.

Bullying towards any member of our school community is unacceptable. Where concerns relate to adults, the school will follow the appropriate staff conduct, complaints or safeguarding procedures as applicable.

5. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Bullying is not the same as falling out with your friend or friends. Rather than telling an adult, children may indicate by signs and symptoms that they are the victims of bullying. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Is unwilling to come to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do less well in school work
- Comes home with clothes or possessions damaged
- Starts stealing money
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Comes home hungry (more so than is usual)
- Becomes aggressive or unreasonable
- Is bullying siblings or other children
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Is afraid to use the mobile phone, internet or online games
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

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.

6. Prevention of Bullying

Prevention is embedded within our whole-school culture. Staff explicitly teach and model respectful relationships, emotional literacy, empathy, inclusion, safe online behaviour and appropriate ways to resolve conflict. Pupils are encouraged to report concerns and to act as responsible members of a Rights Respecting community.

Our preventative approaches include:

- Positive recognition and reinforcement aligned with the Whiston Willis Way and Whole School Rewards Policy;
- Safeguarding messages taught and reinforced throughout school;
- Assemblies, pupil voice and whole-school opportunities that promote belonging, respect and inclusion;
- PSHE and RSE lessons that explicitly teach healthy relationships, respect, consent, equality and how to seek help;
- Zones of Regulation as the whole-school approach to emotional awareness and regulation, with The Colour Monster used developmentally within EYFS;
- Relevant whole-school events and curriculum opportunities, including Anti-Bullying Week, mental-health awareness and online-safety education;
- Ongoing professional development for staff so that bullying, prejudice, child-on-child abuse and safeguarding concerns are recognised and responded to consistently;

- Rights Respecting class charters and explicit teaching of relevant UNCRC rights;
- The Whiston Willis Way and the expectations Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Safe.
- Zones of Regulation supports pupils to recognise and communicate emotions and develop strategies for regulation. All emotional states are valid; however, emotions do not justify behaviour that harms, intimidates or targets another person. Where bullying behaviour occurs, a pupil may need support to regulate before reflecting on the impact of their behaviour and engaging in appropriate restorative work. Regulation support works alongside, rather than replaces, accountability and appropriate consequences.

7. Responding to Bullying

Pupils can report bullying or concerns to any trusted member of staff. They may report verbally, in writing or through other agreed communication approaches where direct verbal disclosure is difficult. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact school if they have concerns. A concern may be reported by the pupil experiencing the behaviour, by another pupil, by a parent/carers or by anyone who observes or becomes aware of it. All reports will be taken seriously, listened to carefully and considered promptly. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be informed where appropriate, and safeguarding concerns will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

Bullying incidents and relevant actions are recorded on CPOMS in accordance with school procedures. Records should capture the concern, actions taken, decisions and rationale, communication with families where appropriate, and follow-up. Leaders monitor records for patterns, recurrence, locations, groups or emerging safeguarding concerns. The Principal and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether behaviour may constitute child-on-child abuse, a child protection concern or a criminal offence and will act accordingly.

Responses are proportionate to the nature, seriousness, frequency and impact of the behaviour and take account of safeguarding, SEND, communication needs and any reasonable adjustments required. Understanding contributing factors does not remove accountability or the school's responsibility to protect pupils from harm. Responses should support safety, prevent recurrence, restore relationships where appropriate and ensure that pupils know how to seek further help if concerns continue.

The school's response to any suspected or reported bullying will include:

1. Building a Picture

We will:

- Establish the location, time and date of the incident;
- Establish the type of bullying and the sequence of events; and
- Identify those involved.

2. Responding to the Pupil Displaying Bullying Behaviour

We will:

- Respond promptly, fairly and proportionately;
- Identify factors contributing to the behaviour and take appropriate action to prevent recurrence;
- Maintain clear expectations and accountability, making explicit that bullying is unacceptable;
- Record the incident, decisions, actions and outcomes on CPOMS; and
- Monitor behaviour, support and the effectiveness of actions over time.

3. Consequences, Support and Restorative Action

- Consequences are applied in line with the Behaviour & Relationships Policy and are proportionate to the seriousness, persistence and impact of the behaviour. They may be accompanied by targeted support, regulation strategies, teaching, parental involvement and restorative work. Suspension or permanent exclusion may be considered where appropriate in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's Behaviour & Relationships Policy.

4. Supporting the Pupil Who Has Experienced Bullying

Pupils who experience bullying should know that they will be listened to, believed, supported and kept informed about appropriate next steps. Support will be tailored to the pupil's needs and may include a trusted adult,

regulation support, pastoral support, adjustments to routines or environments, support with peer relationships and ongoing check-ins.

We will:

- Investigate the concern promptly and carefully;
- Take the pupil's experience and safety seriously;
- Speak with pupils separately where appropriate and avoid approaches that could increase distress or risk;
- Consider restorative action only where it is safe, appropriate and acceptable to the pupil who has experienced the bullying;
- Agree proportionate actions and support;
- Maintain an accurate CPOMS record of the incident, decisions, actions and follow-up;
- Communicate with parents/carers as appropriate, taking safeguarding considerations into account;
- Share information with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis;
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions and whether the bullying has stopped; and
- Follow up with the pupil and family, where appropriate, to review safety, wellbeing and progress.
-

SEND, Communication and Vulnerability

Some pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying or may find it more difficult to recognise, report or describe what has happened. Staff will consider SEND, communication needs, disability, social understanding and other vulnerabilities when preventing, identifying and responding to bullying. Reasonable adjustments and communication support will be provided where required, while maintaining clear expectations that all pupils have the right to be safe.

Online and Off-Site Bullying

Bullying may occur online or outside the school premises. Where behaviour outside school affects the safety, wellbeing or education of pupils, or has repercussions within school, staff will respond in accordance with the Behaviour & Relationships, Online Safety and Safeguarding policies. Online safeguarding concerns will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

Monitoring and Impact

Senior leaders review bullying records and pupil voice to identify patterns, recurrence, locations, groups or emerging concerns and to evaluate the effectiveness of preventative and responsive action. Findings inform safeguarding, curriculum and personal-development priorities, staff development and any additional support required. Governors receive appropriate information about the effectiveness of the school's approach while maintaining confidentiality.

8. Links with Other School Policies

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies
- Curriculum policies, including PSHE, RSE and Computing
- The Whiston Willis Way
- SEND Policy
- Whole School Rewards Policy
- Rights Respecting / Personal Development provision

Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed biennially, or earlier where there are significant changes to statutory requirements, national guidance or the school's behaviour and relationships approach.