Apex Primary School

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Reviewed: September 2026 **Next review: September 2027**

1.0 Introduction

The Apex Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed in line with best practice guidance on preventing and tackling bullying, the DfE guidance on cyberbullying, and the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version). The policy also reflects the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010, particularly in relation to preventing discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

Our policy against bullying is also in line with the school's ethos on building the Islamic personality - respecting each other's differences and encouraging a positive learning environment.

Allah (SWT) says in the noble Qur'an (interpretations of the meanings):

{Believers, no group of you should mock (laugh at or hurt in any way) another one - perhaps they are better than you. Nor should women mock each other; perhaps one is better than the other. (And) do not defame one another nor call anyone with evil nicknames. How terrible is it to insult (your Muslim brother or sister) after having gained true faith. Those who do not repent are certainly unjust.}

[Surah (49) Al-Hujuraat, Ayah 11]

It was reported from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

« … [Oh Muslims] be Slaves of Allah and Brothers [amongst yourselves]. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; he neither oppresses him, nor humiliates him, nor looks down upon him. Taqwaa (Piety) is right here [and he pointed to his chest three times] ... »

[Reported in Sahih Muslim in "The Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining of the Ties of Relationship"]

The Prophet (SAW) said: "Whoever among you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand (by taking action); if he cannot, then with his tongue (by speaking out); if he cannot, then with his heart (by hating it and feeling that it is wrong), and that is the weakest of faith."

[Reported in Sahih Muslim, Kitaab Al-Imaan]

At Apex we have a no tolerance approach on any form of bullying and we take great care to investigate all reports of bullying and work closely with parents and guardians to address any bullying in our school.

Apex will fulfil its legal duty to have measures in place to prevent and address bullying, in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 89). The school will work closely with parents, carers, and relevant professional agencies to help ensure that all children remain safe, supported, and able to achieve their full potential.

This policy is informed by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004, which place a duty on schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also reflects the principles of the Equality Act 2010, including protection from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and the Children and Families Act 2014, particularly in relation to supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

2.0 Aims of the Policy

- To create a school ethos that has a no-tolerance policy on bullying so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn, express themselves and work in
- To create an environment where children feel confident to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour
- To create awareness of what bullying is amongst all trustees, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians
- To create awareness amongst all trustees, teaching and non-teaching staff of the different forms of bullying, methods of detection and the effect it has on pupils (Refer to the Child Protection Policy)
- To develop effective procedures for recording and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour
- To develop effective and fair procedures for investigating any incidents of bullying
- To make all pupils and parents/guardians aware of what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if it occurs.

3.0 What is bullying?

Bullying is any act of aggression be they verbal, physical, psychological or deliberate exclusion of a student from other students or groups of students. We believe that a pupil is bullied if they suffer from:

Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, gestures), ridiculing, humiliation
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
Racist	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
Online/cyber	Setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones
Disability/SEN	Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs
Misogyny/Misandry	Bullying behaviour rooted in hostility or prejudice towards a person based on their gender, including derogatory comments, stereotyping, harassment or intimidation directed at boys or

girls. Schools should recognise the escalatory nature of misogynistic behaviour and address it at an early stage.

Bullying is not:
It is important to understand that bullying is not the *odd occasion* of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done *Several Times On Purpose* (STOP). Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classified as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Where does bullying happen?
It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school and online.

4.0 Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine/route to school
- Begins truanting
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to under-perform in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go "missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.
Bullying can have a significant and lasting impact on a pupil's mental health and emotional wellbeing. Staff should be alert to signs of anxiety, low mood, withdrawal or distress that may indicate a pupil is being bullied, and should refer any concerns to the DSL or a member of SLT promptly.

5.0 Procedure to Report Bullying

This is a set of guidelines for teachers to follow if they suspect a child is being bullied or if an incidence of bullying is reported to them. Teachers should:

- Never ignore any suspected bullying
- Not make premature assumptions about bullying
- Listen carefully to all accounts to gain a full picture of what has happened
- A problem solving approach needs to be adopted not focusing on blame but on practically solving the problem to minimise the reoccurrence
- Any investigation needs to be followed up to check that the bullying has not resumed or taken another form

6.0 Protocol for teachers on incidents of bullying

- Listen carefully and with consideration to all reports of bullying
- Never ignore a problem or an incidence of bullying
- Identify all sides of the incident so that you are fully aware of the situation
- Talk to all pupils involved
- Attempt to resolve the situation with both sides sitting and discussing the incident together
- Record the incident in the school's Bullying Log, including: date, time, names of those involved, and an account of what was seen, heard or said (refer to the Child Protection Policy on questioning and the Behaviour Policy for appropriate sanctioning). The KS1/KS2 behaviour log should also be updated to help identify patterns at phase level.
- Serious incidents need to be reported to the Head Teacher
- Follow up with the discipline procedures outlined in the Behaviour Policy
- If necessary and appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Social Services or police will be consulted

7.0 Procedure for the Head teacher

Once an incident is serious enough to be reported to the Head Teacher, the following procedure needs to be followed:

- Read the incident(s) recorded in the Bullying Log
- Discuss with the teacher reporting the incident
- Listen carefully to all sides of the argument
- Establish how regularly the incident/bullying has been going on for
- Establish whether the discipline procedures have been exhausted
- If incident is serious or continuous then engage parents of both the child that is bullying and being bullied

8.0 POLICY ON INVOLVING PARENTS

When parents are contacted to discuss the problem and solutions that will be put in place, great care needs to be taken on the approach. This is a very sensitive subject for both parents involved and it is more productive to discuss the solution at length rather than the problem. The following points are guidelines for involving parents.

- Approach parents in a calm manner
- Involve the parents constructively
- Use a problem solving approach
- When approaching the parents of the bully, approach not in a blaming way but rather in a way to solve problems that their child is having at school (make them aware of the disciplinary procedures and the school's policy against bullying)
- When approaching parents of the child who is being bullied make them aware of our policy against bullying and assure them that the school will do all that is possible to address the problem
- Discuss with each set of parents what actions will be taken at school to solve the problem and prevent its reoccurrence.
- Ask the parents/guardians what action they will be taking at home to contribute to the solution
- Set out a timeframe with the parents and the agreed measures (these plans should initially be for two weeks and then reviewed with both sets of parents)
- In serious incidences, the child who is bullying may need to be excluded from the school for a period of time (parents will need to be informed if the measures taken do not solve the problem then the permanent exclusion is possible)

9.0 SANCTIONS USED FOR BULLYING

Some of the possible sanctions that may be carried out depending on the incident are as follows:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Lose privileges
- Lose playtimes (stay with the class teacher). Where appropriate, pupils may be asked to complete a reflection sheet, reflecting on their actions, what went wrong and setting personal targets – reviewed with their teacher and SLT with links back to Islamic values
- Report to the Head Teacher or a member of SLT to discuss the incident
- Head Teacher's homework
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- Parents will be invited into school
- Go on a self-improvement report
- Be removed from class and work in another class
- Lose team points

- Report to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visits, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

10.0 Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

Apex Primary School is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are.

At Apex, we have some children who have learning difficulties and/or communication difficulties and also high attaining pupils. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times. Staff will treat this type of bullying seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

11.0 Curriculum approach

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

- Whole school assembly on bullying
- Create awareness about what bullying is
- Create awareness of what constitutes bullying
- Encourage reporting of bullying
- Encourage against bullying by discussing the Islamic Personality and emphasise within the Islamic Studies curriculum (Anti-bullying week in Islamic Studies – Respecting Differences)
- Incorporating awareness of bullying into SMSC
- Show and tell assemblies help children to get to know each other in other ways and promote friendship development
- Active participation in Anti-Bullying Awareness Week and also involving parents
- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year, involving parents
- To make cross-curricular links with PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) in Islamic Studies
- Circle time on bullying issues
- Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures about bullying

- Children being read stories about bullying
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters produced by the children around the school
- Introduction of a confidential 'worry box' box where children and parents/guardians can write and post their concerns and ideas
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Organising regular anti-bullying training for all staff

12.0 **CYBERBULLYING**

Cyberbullying is bullying behaviour that takes place through digital devices and online platforms. This may include bullying through social media, messaging apps, online gaming, emails, websites, livestreams, or the sharing of images, videos, or comments intended to upset, intimidate, embarrass, threaten, exclude, or harm another person.

Examples of cyberbullying may include:

- Sending abusive, threatening, or offensive messages
- Posting or sharing humiliating or harmful content
- Spreading rumours online
- Sharing images or videos without consent
- Creating fake profiles or impersonating another person
- Deliberately excluding others from online groups or activities
- Repeated unwanted contact through digital platforms
- Encouraging others to target or mock an individual online

- The school also recognises the growing risk of AI-generated or digitally altered images, including deepfakes, which may be used to bully, harass or humiliate pupils. The creation, sharing or possession of such images — whether consensual or non-consensual — will be treated as a serious safeguarding matter and investigated in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All such incidents will receive a safeguarding response.

The school recognises that technology can be used positively to support learning and communication, but also acknowledges the risks associated with online behaviour and cyberbullying. The school uses appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, including Impero Education Pro, in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version), to help maintain a safe online environment for pupils.

Any alerts generated through Impero will be reviewed by the DSL or DDSL. Where an alert relates to bullying, it is recorded in the Bullying Log and, where appropriate, investigated in line with the school's Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The use of monitoring systems supports the school's duty to safeguard pupils, identify risks at an early stage, and respond promptly to concerns relating to cyberbullying, child-on-child abuse, harassment and violence, online harassment, and other safeguarding matters. See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Pupils, parents/carers, and staff are encouraged to report any incidents of cyberbullying promptly. Where possible, evidence such as screenshots, messages, emails, or usernames should be saved and shared with the school to assist investigations.

The school will respond to incidents of cyberbullying seriously and proportionately. Responses may include:

- Investigating the incident and recording concerns in the Bullying Log
- Supporting the victim and addressing safeguarding needs
- Educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour and digital citizenship
- Applying sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Contacting parents/carers
- Referring serious incidents to external agencies, social care, or the police where appropriate

13.0 Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated.
This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and SLT. The Bullying Log and the Pupil Pastoral and Incident Log will be monitored termly by the DSL and DDSL, with SLT and Phase Leads, to identify patterns and assess the effectiveness of the policy. Incident logs and recording forms are also reviewed during weekly peer coaching meetings between teachers, which SLT may sit in on. Findings will be shared with Trustees as part of the school's safeguarding review.

14.0 Sources of further information, support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

Name of Organisation	Telephone Number	Website
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0207 704 3370	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Anti-Bully	not available	www.antibully.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Network	0131 651 6103	www.antibullying.net
Bully Free Zone	01204 454 958	www.bullyfreezone.co.uk
BBC	not available	www.bbc.co.uk
Childline	0800 1111 (helpline for children)	www.childline.org.uk
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number) 08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only)	www.kidscape.org.uk
Redbridge Local Authority	0208 708 3885	www.redbridge.gov.uk
NSPCC	0207 825 2500	www.nspcc.org.uk
Coram Family Lives	0808 800 2222	www.familylives.org.uk

The Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
The Office of the Children's Commissioner	0844 800 9113	www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk
UK Government Website	not available	GOV.uk
Internet Matters	not available	www.internetmatters.org
UK Safer Internet Centre	0345 601 3203	www.saferinternet.org.uk
Anna Freud Centre	not available	www.annafreud.org
Place2Be	not available	www.place2be.org.uk