

Anti-Bullying Policy



Policy Document	Anti-Bullying policy
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This policy is written to comply with the Independent School Standards, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, and is based on the National Curriculum and Ofsted framework.

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For information on behaviour, please see our Behaviour Policy.

For information on Suspensions and Exclusions, please see our Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions policy.

ISS 9(a)(b) Is there a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving.

The Oaks – Anti-Bullying Policy

Our school is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

This policy outlines the actions our school will take to prevent, address, and respond to all forms of bullying. It is informed by the Department for Education (DfE) guidance *“Preventing and Tackling Bullying” (July 2017)* and takes account of the statutory requirements set out in *“Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025.”*

In developing this policy, reference has also been made to Childnet’s publication *“Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond – Guidance for Schools and Colleges.”*

Our school is proud to be a member of the Anti-Bullying Alliance, and we actively use their research and resources to inform our practice and strengthen our whole-school approach.

This policy has been created collaboratively, with input from all stakeholders, reflecting our shared commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment for all members of our school community.

1. Principles

At The Oaks, we are committed to creating an environment that is conducive to learning, promotes mutual respect between staff and pupils, and encourages every young person to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We aim to foster a calm, caring, and positive atmosphere where pupils feel safe, valued, and motivated to achieve their full potential.

We believe that effective teaching and learning can only take place where good behaviour is consistently promoted and modelled across all aspects of school life. Our approach seeks to build a supportive, inclusive, and structured learning environment where expectations are clear, relationships are positive, and all members of the school community are treated with fairness and respect.

This approach enables us to:

- Raise individual standards
- Promote self-discipline and positive relationships
- Support pupils’ social and emotional development
- Develop aspiring, confident, independent, reflective, and resilient young people
- Prepare pupils for successful transitions to the next phase of their education and life

At The Oaks, we use a range of positive behaviour management strategies to promote pupils’ welfare, engagement, and enjoyment of school. Where appropriate, we work in partnership with parents, carers, and external agencies to ensure a cohesive approach to meeting individual needs. Behaviour is managed through clear, consistent, and positive systems, with a focus on encouraging reflection, responsibility, and self-regulation.

The Oaks is fully committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion. We do not tolerate discrimination against pupils or staff on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, religion or belief, race, ethnicity, age, or disability. Equality of opportunity underpins every aspect of our provision, fostering respect for difference and building a strong sense of community cohesion.

These principles are embedded through our therapeutic and holistic approach, which aims to:

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- Promote socially acceptable behaviour, self-esteem, and mutual respect irrespective of background or ability
- Ensure consistency and fairness of treatment for all pupils
- Encourage early intervention through proactive and targeted support
- Help pupils to understand their behaviours and make positive changes
- Establish firm and clear boundaries within which learning and aspirations can flourish
- Develop pupils' independence and self-discipline through supported reflection
- Ensure all members of the school community act with courtesy and respect at all times, upholding every pupil's right to learn in a safe environment

This policy sets out the principles, systems, and strategies by which The Oaks supports pupils in managing their behaviour, ensuring they are able to engage meaningfully in education and participate positively in the wider community. In doing so, it enshrines anti-discriminatory practice, fairness, and consistency, providing a clear framework for both promoting positive behaviour and responding appropriately to behaviour that does not meet expectations.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Independent School Standards (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

This policy is written so it complies with the Independent School Standards and the Ofsted framework.

3. Roles and responsibilities

This Policy only works effectively if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.

It is the responsibility of:

- The Executive Headteacher is to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility
- The Proprietors will take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy
- All staff, including proprietors, executive headteacher, headteacher, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, will support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly

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- Parents/carers will support their children and work in partnership with the school
- The schools will ensure that pupils understand this policy and why it is important

4. Definition

Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

- Bullying can include name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos
- The school recognises bullying as a form of child-on-child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s and young people’s emotional development

4.1 Forms of bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying, not limited to, but including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance;
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions;
- Physical bullying;
- Emotional bullying;
- Sexual bullying;
- Bullying via technology is known as online or cyberbullying.
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith;
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture;
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND);
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/bi-phobic bullying);
- Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying;
- Bullying against teenage parents/carers (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

The Oaks has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and discrimination against protected characteristics.

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5. Aims

At The Oaks, we strive to create a happy, safe and caring learning environment where everyone feels safe. All cases of bullying are serious and any behaviour that adversely affects the well-being of another will not be tolerated.

Some pupils may experience considerable difficulties with communication, social interaction and empathy, which can affect their ability to reflect on the impact their behaviour has on others or to self-manage their behaviour. These difficulties can mean that some pupils are less likely to intentionally 'bully' others, although behaviour that could be bullying behaviour does occur on occasions. While these actions may not have the same degree of intention as is usual when describing bullying, the effect on the targeted individual or individuals is the same and therefore must be addressed. The way staff members deal with such incidents of behaviour should consider all individual needs.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to work towards eradicating any incidents and types of bullying in our school.

The policy aims to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and work towards eradicating any incidents and types of bullying in our school. Reports of bullying will always be taken seriously. Reports of bullying will be recorded on an Incident report form and shared with the Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team. The Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team will then log each incident of bullying on the school's bullying log.

The aims of our anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour;
- To prevent bullying through education, giving pupils the knowledge and understanding surrounding their behaviour, bullying and respecting the differences of others.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way;
- To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil;
- To help the pupil causing the bullying to reflect on their behaviour and the impact it has on others;
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support.

ISS 5(b)(iii) encourages pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely

6. Recognising the indicators that bullying is occurring

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, appetite irregularities, feigning illness, refusing to attend school or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in personal habits, lack of concentration or high levels of distractible behaviour. A pupil may become super-vigilant. Individual behaviour patterns are well known to staff and when there are changes in these patterns, the possibility of bullying must always be considered, especially where the pupil has limited communication skills.

Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying. Advocates for the pupils must report any possible bullying on behalf of their charges and, where possible, implement communication strategies to allow pupils to express

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their feelings. Pupils' communications must be listened to. Staff must be alert to the signs of bullying (in all its many forms) and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

7. Understanding why bullying is occurring

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s and the victim. This could include perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship, which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to isolate socially. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by separating them, either physically or online.

Other reasons or motivations given for bullying include: bullying related to race, religion or culture; bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities; bullying related to appearance or health conditions; bullying related to sexual orientation; bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances; sexist or sexual bullying. We carefully review the reasons why bullying is occurring on a case-by-case basis.

Some pupils may experience considerable difficulties with communication, social interaction and empathy, which can affect their ability to reflect on the impact their behaviour has on others or to self-manage their behaviour. These difficulties can mean that some pupils are less likely to intentionally 'bully' others, although behaviour that could be bullying behaviour does occur on occasions.

8. Implementation

8.1 Preventative strategies include

- Through our curriculum and the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Our PSHE curriculum encompasses British Values and citizenship, which ensures:
 - A strong anti-bullying culture is embedded in the school.
 - Pupils explore anti-bullying and relationships through the PSHE/RE curriculum.
 - Discussions take place surrounding prejudices and prejudice-based bullying, which is supported by learning in RE and PSHE
 - Pupils explore that there are different types of teasing and bullying, that bullying is wrong, and how to get help to deal with bullying.
 - Discussions take place surrounding the consequences of anti-social and aggressive behaviours, such as bullying and racism, on individuals and communities
 - Pupils to realise the nature and consequences of racism, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours, and how to respond to them and ask for help

- Using our extensive knowledge of pupils and strong relationships with home, to recognise any changes that might result in 'bullying' behaviours;
- Changes to individual behaviour plans;
- Talking to pupils about issues of difference through our PSHE curriculum and memorable days throughout the school year;
- Talking with and educating pupils about how to manage their own feelings and emotions;
- Ensuring that all pupils are appropriately supervised;
- Ensuring that all members of staff are made aware of the anti-bullying policy and have access to where the policy is kept;

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- Watching for early signs of distress and where pupils can communicate, listen to what they are saying; foster a listening and caring ethos and encourage discussion without making premature assumptions;
- Ensuring that appreciation and respect for all cultures are promoted;
- Ensuring that all pupils have the means to communicate, especially those with complex needs or limited communication;
- Ensuring that monitoring and filtering software is effective in protecting pupils from cyber-based bullying;
- Positive behaviour management strategies with a focus on restorative practice, educating and supporting pupils, not just sanctioning.
- Support the bully and the victim in modifying behaviour;
- Provide information through notice boards, posters and Childline;
- Provide support through playground buddies, friendship groups and peer support.

8.2 The following steps should be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded on an incident report (see Appendix 1) and shared with the Headteacher or an appropriate member of SLT who will act with delegated responsibilities on behalf of the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher/SLT member will interview all concerned and keep a record of their findings.
- Information is gathered about the incident before any conclusion is made about whether the incidents were bullying behaviour – both the pupil suspected of 'bullying' and the 'victim' will be listened to carefully;
- If bullying is found to have happened, the Headteacher or SLT will log the incident on the school's bullying log.
- Relevant staff and parents/carers will be kept informed.
- If the issue persists, then further support meetings (with parents/carers and staff) will be held.
- In cases where a crime has been committed or a pupil is believed to be in imminent danger or risk, the appropriate authorities (police, LA) will be informed immediately prior to any internal investigation. At this point, our Safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- If it is suspected that the bullying is in the form of staff on pupil, then the disciplinary procedure will be acted upon and a safeguarding concern raised.
- If internet/social media-based bullying is suspected, steps **MUST** be taken to check if the filtering and monitoring software protection can be improved.

9. Pupils

Bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be dealt with immediately. Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Immediate support and reassurance;
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence activities;
- Nurture, Lego therapy or ELSA interventions, if required;
- Participating in a restorative justice conversation, where appropriate.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

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- The ‘bully’ being informed in a suitable way that their behaviour is inappropriate and must stop;
- Discovering more about the situation to help restore positive behaviours;
- Informing parents/carers to help change the behaviour of the pupil;
- Participating in a restorative justice conversation, where appropriate;
- Additional interventions focused around PSHE, protected characteristics and differences in people;
- Nurture, Lego therapy or ELSA interventions if required.

We aim to use positive methods to create and restore appropriate behaviours. Action that is solely disciplinary is not considered the right choice within our environment and within our ethos. Positive behaviours, social skills and emotional well-being are promoted within the curriculum (e.g. PSHE, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate).

10. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually to assess its implementation and effectiveness. This will be done through positive action based on Incident Reports, the bullying log and through ongoing feedback from staff and pupils (including Pupil Reviews). The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school, and training will be provided to staff as part of their induction package to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how to implement them effectively.

11. Equal Opportunities

The diversity of cultures is represented in the books, display materials, and equipment used within the school. Memorable days throughout each term are organised to give pupils the opportunity to share in, respect and appreciate a wide range of cultures and activities. Each child’s culture is recognised and treated with respect across the curriculum, and where possible, children are encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge to raise their self-esteem. If a child’s culture or race might be a factor in an occurrence of bullying, staff should refer to Procedures for Dealing with and Reporting Racial Incidents.

12. Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk



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- Young Carers: <https://carers.org/about-us/about-young-carers>

12.1 SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7dcb85ed915d2ac884d995/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

12.2 Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers/principals and school/college staff':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

12.3 Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: <https://www.kickitout.org/take-action/resources>
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: <http://www.theredcard.org/>

12.4 LGBT+

- Barnardo's LGBT Hub: [www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/our work/lgbtq.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm)
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org



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- School/colleges Out: <http://www.schools-out.org.uk/> Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

12.5 Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- Disrespect No Body: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobodycampaign-posters>
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school/college staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: <https://antibullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying>

Note: Additional links can be found in:

- 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE research into anti-bullying practices: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/approaches-to-preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

13. Links to other policies

Behaviour Policy

Curriculum Policy

SEND Policy

Suspension and Permanent Exclusions Policy



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Appendix 1: Incident report



INCIDENT RECORD No:

Incident Record

Within 24 hours					
Name of person completing the record	Name of the child	Date	Time incident began		Specific location incident began
				hrs	
Key staff involved			Number of other pupils involved		
			Male:		Female:

Nature of incident: <i>please underline any descriptions appropriate</i>		
Physical assault to staff	Discriminatory abuse	Disruption of others' learning
Physical assault to peers	Running away	Not following instructions
Targeting of staff	Dangerous Behaviour	Substance misuse
Bullying of peers	Theft	Self-harm
Sexualised behaviour	Vandalism	Attention seeking
Other:	Contextual physical aggression to staff	Verbal abuse to staff

Description of antecedent leading up to the incident: <i>incl. antecedents and how the child responded</i>

Description of incident: <i>incl. what de-escalation strategies were used and how the child responded.</i>

Consequences for any behaviour prior to physical intervention (if applicable)		
Behaviour points not earn	Loss of Trip	Home communication
Full Reward Time not earned	Computer Ban	Police Contacted
Complete unfinished task	Repair damage / clear mess	Other

Discussion and Reflections – Child		
What happened?		
Could you have dealt with the issue in a different way?		
How can we help each other move forward?		
Staff Signature	Staff name	Child Signature

Are amendments to risk assessments or behaviour plans necessary?	
Risk Assessment	Behaviour Plan

Signatures – after being discussed with, and agreed by, all parties involved		
SLT:	Signature:	Date:
Staff name:	Signature:	Date:
Staff name:	Signature:	Date:
Staff name:	Signature:	Date:
Staff name:	Signature:	Date: