

Policy: (Managing) Bullying behaviour including Cyber Bullying

Reviewed: July 2026

Next review: July 2027

Mid-year updates:

Policy Monitoring

Libra Policies are reviewed when the need arises in line with legislation updates, guidance, and useful information we receive to improve and enhance our provision. Additionally, Policies are updated annually by relevant members of staff and the Senior Leadership Team.

Equality Statement

We believe that this policy is in line with the Equality Act as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any child or member of staff, and it helps to promote equality at this school.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates into all aspects of school life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with this school to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We acknowledge the findings of the Race Disparity Audit that clearly shows how people of different ethnicities are treated across the public services of health, education, employment, and the criminal justice system.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with other connected policies. There is evidence that a 'whole school approach' (Cambridge Education, 2005) where the whole school community, including the children, teachers, support staff, parents and directors, are involved in confronting the issue of bullying is the most effective approach to tackling it in school.

The anti-bullying alliance 10 key principles are the foundation of this policy:

1. All children and parents are listened to and influence strategies and approaches to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.
2. All children are included, valued, and participate in all aspects of school life.
3. All school staff are role models in demonstrating how others are treated.
4. All forms of discriminatory language, including disablist language are challenged and taken seriously.
5. Difference is actively and visibly celebrated and welcome across the whole school.
6. All school staff, children, parents, and carers understand what bullying is and what it is not.
7. All children, and their parents and carers are acknowledged, believed, and taken seriously when reporting incidents of bullying.
8. All children within the school and their parents and carers understand how to report incidents of bullying.
9. We respond quickly to all incidents of bullying. Children participate fully in decisions made about them and help to formulate appropriate action to respond to incidents of bullying.
10. Our school's anti-bullying policy reflects these principles and is embedded within other school policies. They are widely and actively promoted to school staff, children and their parents and carers.

Learning to understand and manage conflict is an important part of growing up. Bullying is not simply a 'falling out'. Research shows that experiencing bullying can have a significant impact on a child's life well into adulthood. To ensure we can prevent bullying, act quickly when it takes place and avoid misidentifying bullying, it is vital that the whole school community including parents / carers know the difference between unkind words and bullying especially as we work with children whose communication needs mean they can use unkind words.

Aims and Objectives:

We aim to:

- To have in place a safeguarding and child protection policy and related policies that outline clear procedures to ensure that we meet our responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.
- To protect children from bullying as part of our responsibility to provide a safe, secure, caring, and friendly school environment for all children.
- To look out for all signs of bullying and to take the appropriate action to stop it.
- To have in place established systems that will deal with incidents of bullying in school and outside of school.
- To develop staff relationships so children feel confident to notify staff of any incident of bullying.
- To inform everyone connected with the school of the school's anti-bullying policy.
- To provide guidance, consistency, accountability, efficiency, and clarity on how the school manages bullying on a day-to-day basis.
- To ensure children, school staff and parents understand what cyber bullying is and how it can be prevented.
- To have in place procedures to prevent incidents of cyber bullying.
- To have in place effective procedures to deal with all reported incidents of cyber bullying.

We consider bullying to be the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online. There are four key elements to this definition, hurtful, repetition, power imbalance, intentional.

Bullying behaviour can involve:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling, and baiting.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate materials etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion.
- Indirect - can include the exploitation of individuals.

Bullying can happen to anyone and is often motivated by prejudice. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, or culture.
- Bullying related to special educational needs.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions. We know that children can be subjected to bullying related to their physical appearance (e.g., weight, height, disfigurements, hair, teeth, skin conditions, glasses, and clothes) and bullying related to health conditions and allergies.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation including homophobic and social transition bullying.
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Baiting which can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.
- Banter, which is the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks. Understanding the four elements of bullying is vital to knowing whether banter is bullying: intentional, hurtful, repetitive, involves a power imbalance.
- False friendships which describe relationships where someone pretends to be a friend, or a 'friend' sometimes, but uses their power to bully.
- Sexist or sexual bullying. Sexual bullying is any behaviour with a sexual element that is harmful, non-consensual, and repeated. For example, this could include sexual comments and name-calling, spreading of sexual rumours, use of technology to spread sexual gossip, comments, or images, exposing body parts and non-consensual touch (e.g., touching body parts, pulling bra straps, raising skirts, pulling down trousers).
- Cyber bullying. The continual development of internet and mobile phone technology has provided different tools and methods for bullying others that we call cyber bullying. However, fundamentally it is driven by the same behaviours and motivation as any form of bullying. Cyber bullying can include sending or posting of harmful

messages, comments, and images online or through mobile phones, exclusion from social networking and impersonating of others to cause harm.

- Bullying and crime. There are times that bullying behaviours become criminal - but not all bullying behaviour is criminal. Some examples of bullying behaviours that could be considered criminal include:
 - threatening or actual physical assault
 - threatening or actual sexual assault
 - the use of technology to bully and harass
 - theft
 - coercing others to commit a crime, hate crime (e.g., racism)

Managing bullying issues

Libra is fully aware that the nature of the provision offered by the school community could potentially see fluctuations in children's behaviour and therefore, the increased chance of bullying incidents (whether implied or in fact). However, this does not undermine the school's overall intention of targeting and addressing children's behaviours and sharing with all involved the *positivity* and *fairness* that we expect and ask for.

The children placed with Libra have often experienced multiple adverse childhood experiences and unfortunately all have experienced trauma to some level which has had an impact on their behaviours. For some these behaviours can significantly challenge the boundaries of others and can be bullying in nature. We regularly support children whose behaviours can manifest into verbal aggression and abuse, physical aggression (hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, hair pulling, biting, head butting), withdrawal and self-harm. We know that all ~~this~~ behaviour is a form of communication, and we strive to understand what the child is trying to tell us so that we can support them in being able to communicate this message in other more socially acceptable ways to reduce the impact of their behaviour on other children.

In dealing with any incidents of bullying that do occur, we feel that 'punishment' can reinforce the idea that it is power that matters. This is a notion that we as a school community are eager to dispel and act to achieve this through appropriate procedures. We have developed a consistent set of guidelines and procedures which can be found in the Anti Bullying Staff Handbook that have been designed to address bullying through supportive awareness. Not only do we feel that this is more effective and productive, but we do not want to make children feel that they cannot report bullying because of the fear of the consequences. This is why Libra prides itself on being clear in its attitude towards bullying and the expected route that bullying might follow.

The senior management team will:

- Create an ethos of good behaviour, respect for others and strive to prevent all forms of bullying among children as outlined in Section 157 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- Work in conjunction with the directors to implement this policy.
- Work to create a safe, secure, caring, and friendly school environment for the school community.
- Develop a strategy to manage bullying that:
 - Involves 3 steps. STEP 1 Safety of those directly involved STEP 2 Preventing the bullying from reoccurring STEP 3 School learning.
 - Is person-centred.
 - Is SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) outcomes are established
 - Makes sure the perpetrator is a part of the setting, not apart from the setting (i.e. not being separated in classes or in the playground)
 - Ensure training needs for parents and professionals have been met.
 - Welcome diversity and the child is included.
 - Ensure as a school we learn from any incidents of bullying.
 - Ensure responses are not primarily about changing the behaviour of the child who has been bullied.
- Have a clear understanding of the extent and nature of bullying that may take place in, out and on the way to school.
- Have in-post an effective DSL and supporting deputy team.
- Proactively liaise with parents and carers.
- Identify and investigate all incidents of bullying (both verbal and non-verbal examples), documenting and reporting it appropriately, and implementing successful forms of resolution.

- Ensure the child who has experienced bullying is safeguarded and will ensure access to sources of support for him or her. In addition, the perpetrator will also be supported in reflecting on their actions, with interventions put in place to build on their social skills.
- Ensure that the personal social and health-education curriculum and the religious education curriculum help support anti-bullying education.
- Keep all records in a central log to build up a picture of concerns of individual children and in identifying patterns of behaviour for individuals or groups.
- Discuss with the school council:
 - That our definition of bullying is relevant and accurate.
 - That children are aware of this policy
 - How bullying can be effectively dealt with
 - ⊖ How good school staff are in dealing with incidents of bullying
 - How good school staff are in identifying the symptoms of bullying amongst children?

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe. Cyber bullying is less easy to detect by an adult. Cyber bullying can take place anywhere and can target children and school staff. There are many types of cyber bullying such as:

Texting	Sending abusive, malicious, or threatening text messages to someone is a type of bullying. This could include sharing those texts with other people who might join in the bullying.
Social Networking sites	Social networks including Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, as a few examples, can be used in lots of ways to bully someone.
Sexting	Sexting is when someone takes a sexually explicit picture or video of themselves and then sends it to someone else. Sometimes people who are trying to bully someone may ask for these kinds of images so they can send them on to other people.
Online gaming	Being abusive towards someone or harassing them through online multi-player gaming sites like Minecraft or Call of Duty is also cyber bullying. People may also steal or destroy your “belongings” or “creations” in games.
Emailing	Sending abusive emails is a type of cyber bullying. Sometimes those emails might be shared with other people who could join in the bullying. Sending computer viruses or hurtful videos and pictures by email is also cyber bullying.
Abusive personal info	Sometimes people involved in bullying might post someone else's photos or personal information without that person's permission. This could include pretending to be someone else and writing fake comments or blogs.
Instant messaging (IM) and chatrooms	Sometimes people might receive malicious messages when they are using instant messaging or chat rooms. Sending those types of messages using someone else's account without their permission is also cyber bullying.
Online grooming	A form of exploitation where someone may befriend, show kindness towards and/or offer gifts to another online; to gain control and exploit that person.

(Reference: <https://www.childline.org.uk>)

We have a duty of care to protect children and staff from cyber bullying as part of our responsibility to provide a safe, secure, caring, and friendly school environment for all the children and to protect them from those who

wish to deliberately hurt them emotionally. We believe our safeguarding procedures are in line with current legislation and guidance and that we promote the welfare of all children in our care.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorized into four areas:

Content

Content is anything posted online - it might be words or it could be images and video. Children and young people may see illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content when online. This includes things like pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.

Contact

Contact is about the risk of harm young people may face when interacting with other users online. This includes things like peer-to-peer pressure or seeing inappropriate commercial advertising. Sometimes adults pose as children or young adults with the intention of grooming or exploiting a child or young person for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Conduct

Conduct means the way people behave online. Some online behaviour can increase the likelihood, or even cause, harm - for example, online bullying. Conduct also includes things like sharing or receiving nudes and semi-nude images and viewing or sending pornography.

Commerce

Commerce is about the risk from things like online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing, or financial scams. Children and young people may be exposed to these risks directly. Schools should also consider how the risk from commerce applies to staff.

Through our PHSE curriculum and assemblies programme children are supported to understand what cyber bullying can look like and what to do if they experience this. Parents / carers are also given advice and guidance on the online risks that face their child. When this type of bullying usually occurs outside of school and school is made aware by parents and when the behaviour involves another child within school, this information is passed to the DSL who will liaise with parents/carers to ascertain the details. The DSL will discuss the situation with the parents / carers and agree an action plan to resolve the situation which can involve several different resolution solutions which can also involve the police.

Monitoring and evidence

Under no circumstances will we tolerate any form of bullying, and all incidents of bullying will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We strive to eliminate all forms of bullying, to liaise with parents and carers, to support those who are bullying with effective interventions and reparation and those who are bullied to develop confidence, resilience, and self-esteem, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of this policy by ensuring all incidents of bullying are investigated, are dealt with and the outcome of each incident recorded and disseminated appropriately. The following is evidence that we implement this policy effectively:

- This policy.
- Other related and connected policies and procedures.
- Records of complaints, causes of concern and bullying incidents with outcomes.
- Behaviour analysis data which is evaluated to measure the effectiveness of any bullying strategy e.g., reduction in number of incidents, elimination of a particular problem. These will be kept as evidence of the effect of our anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Libra council meeting minutes.
- Parent and children questionnaire analysis.
- PHSE Curriculum
- Assemblies programme

Staff training and supervision

Staff undertake regular supervision and can ask for additional supervision if they feel they require it. Through induction and ongoing annual training staff are trained:

- To understand that there are many reasons behind why a child might resort to bullying and, whereas it is important to be mindful of this, all instances must be dealt with.

- To identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on how to deal with an incident effectively. We understand that some instances of bullying are hard to detect, and that the perpetrator may be acting in such a way to communicate past emotional incidents that have caused them pain or distress. Staff are aware of children's backgrounds and the importance of sharing appropriate methods of action in a bullying aftermath.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate, and consistent way.
- Proactively gather intelligence about issues between children which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.
- Confidently manage conflict; understanding that such support will encourage more effective child / adult relationships.

Responsibilities

The senior management team will:

- work in conjunction with the Directors to ensure all school staff, children and parents are aware of and comply with this policy.
- provide an environment that is safe, fun, stimulating and challenging to all children.
- promote an awareness of and respect for a diversity of cultures, values, beliefs, and abilities.
- encourage parents to take an active role in policy development where appropriate.
- ensure all relevant risk assessments are in place to ensure a safe school environment.
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality.
- provide guidance, support, and training to all staff.
- Consider providing remote learning to children in circumstances when in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government guidance in accordance with school risk assessments and safeguarding guidance. This might include occasions when:
 - We decide that it is not possible for the school to open safely, or that opening would contradict guidance from local or central government.
 - individual children, for a short period, are unable to physically attend school but are able to continue learning.
- monitor and evidence the effectiveness of this policy.

Teaching and learning support staff will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy.
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes.
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination.
- attend appropriate training sessions.
- report any concerns they have about any aspect of the school community.
- receive relevant training, periodically and ongoing as required, according to their role.
- have equal chances of training, career development, and promotion.
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Children will:

- be aware of and contribute to all appropriate policies through the school council.
- work with and support the school council on all agenda items.
- strive to take pride in their work and work to the highest standard that they are capable of.
- listen carefully to all instructions given by the teacher, ask for further help if they do not understand and participate fully in all lessons.
- participate in discussions concerning progress and attainment.
- treat others, their work and equipment with respect.
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school.
- talk to others without shouting and or using physical aggression and will use language which is neither abusive nor offensive.
- hand in homework properly completed and on time.
- wear correct uniform.

Parents and Carers will be encouraged to:

- be aware of and comply with all school policies including this one.
- be encouraged to become involved in policy development by taking part in parent engagement opportunities and by maximising learning opportunities between home and school.
- Keep informed via termly newsletters of the children's curriculum.
- be encouraged to take an active role in the life of the school by attending parent-teacher consultations / Parent Open Days / fundraising and social events.
- ensure regular and punctual attendance of their child.
- notify school on the first day of child absence.
- have holidays out of term time and authorised by school.
- encourage effort and achievement.
- encourage completion of homework and return it to school on time.
- provide the right conditions for homework to take place.
- ensure correct school uniform is worn.
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school.
- speak with children and staff respectfully and expect the same in return.

Linked Policies and documents:

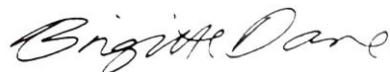
Acceptable use of ICT / Complaints / Safeguarding / Risk management / Whistleblowing / Supervision of children / Children's risk assessments

Policy Location

This policy can be found:

- on SharePoint within the staff and master's folder
- on the school website www.libraschool.co.uk
- available upon request from the office: admin@libraschool.co.uk / 01598 740044

Lead Assessor: Brigitte Dane



Date: 30.07.26

