



# Policy Document

Alkerden Church of England Academy

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## September 2024

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This policy will be reviewed at **least annually**, and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedures

This policy is based on DfE guidance '*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*' July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' 2020 and '*Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges*' guidance. The setting has also read Childnet's '*Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools*'.



## 1. Policy objectives:

This policy outlines what Alkerden Church of England School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community.

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

## 2. Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- GDPR Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Curriculum policies

## 3. Links to legislation

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 Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

## 4. Responsibilities

### It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher 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.
- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

## 5. Definition of bullying

- 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 (homophobia, racist) 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.
- Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of child-on-child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. Children with SEND needs are more at risk of being bullied and they are signposted to the SENCO for disclosures and given quiet/safe space during social times. Children who identify as LGBTQ+/gender questioning are

directed to a safe space (library) during social times and have a safe person who they can disclose to if required.

## 6. Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

**Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying 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
- Harassment, touching, pushing, 'banter', gossip, coercion, isolation, social media, including those who fall under LGBTQ+/gender questioning category.
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- Prejudicial bullying/harassment (against people/students 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/biphobia bullying)
- Gender questioning bullying, including transphobic bullying
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)
- Anti-Racism

## 7. School Ethos

Alkerden Church of England School recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

### Our Community:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND, LGBTQ+ and gender questioning. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school and Child Centred Policing Team to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

- Selected staff have received safer handling training to be used in extreme circumstances (see Safer Handling Policy) All incidents are logged on passed to the Headteacher.

## 8. Responding to bullying

**The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:**

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The Pastoral Team/Community Leaders will interview all parties involved and feedback to the member of Leadership Team investigating
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- These concerns are all recorded on My Concern and the 101 form and in extreme cases reported to the police.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by students takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and referred to Kent Police as required. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing

support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.

- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

## Cyberbullying

### When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school systems;
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
  - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy.
  - Requesting the deletion of locally held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.

- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
  - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
  - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

## Anti-Racism

Any racial harassment that relates to an individual's race that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity and/or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. **These can include: -**

- Verbal conduct of a racist nature: derogatory name calling, being subject to racist jokes, 'banter' and pranks, malicious comments, hostile attitudes.
- Non-verbal conduct of a racist nature: display of racial material, graffiti, damage to personal property, denial of opportunities or exclusion from social activities because of ethnic origin, colour, nationality, or on the grounds of race.
- Alkerden Church of England School is committed to being an anti-racist school and will promote equality and actively tackle discrimination within all areas of school life.
- Alkerden Church of England School is committed to the elimination of racial discrimination, which includes direct and indirect (unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, white supremacy) racism, racial vilification, misogyny and harassment.
- Alkerden Church of England School will provide an environment which respects and values diversity and shows consideration for the traditions, cultures, and religious practices of people from different ethnicities and different geographical regions.
- Alkerden Church of England School will educate staff and students on issues, concepts and theories pertaining to racism such as white privilege and white fragility, unconscious bias, microaggressions, the history of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic Britain, racial literacy, colourism, cultural appropriation etc., so that all members of the community can recognise and report racism in all its forms. Alkerden Church of England School's approach to these issues, concepts and theories reflects

government guidance, professional guidance from recognised experts and external agencies as well as any examples of good practice.

- Any racist symbols, badges or insignia are forbidden in school.

## Supporting Students

### **Students who have been bullied will be supported by:**

- Reassuring the student and providing continuous pastoral support. Restorative conversations are encouraged to resolve conflict. Parental meetings are held with the student's pastoral Leader to discuss events and steps for moving forward.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents/carers and police. Accessing safe spaces in school within social times.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

### **Students who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change which may include restorative justice between all parties concerned.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.

- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- Education is delivered to students via external providers in Year Group assemblies on Hate Crime, Online Bullying and during Anti-Bullying Week. This is also addressed during PHSE. Child Centred Policing Team will work with students and families concerned around appropriate behaviours
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

### Supporting Adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by students, parents, or other staff members, is unacceptable. Further information about internal procedures can be found in the staff handbook.

#### **Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:**

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy and involve the Police as required.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.

- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

**Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened with a member of the Leadership Team and/or the Headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil, or legal action as appropriate or required.

## 9. Preventing Bullying

### Environment

**The whole school community will:**

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration, and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse).
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination, and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones, and social media, positively and responsibly.

- Work with staff, the wider community, and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

## Policy and Support

### The whole school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate, and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the schools' attention, which involves or effects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied which may include restorative justice.

## Education and Training

### The school community will:

- Train all staff, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.

- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

## 10. Involvement of students

### **We will:**

- Involve students in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise student voice in providing student led education and support
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

## 11. Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

### **Alkerden Church of England School will:**

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in develop policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.

- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

## **12. Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice**

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

## 13. Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- The BIG Award: [www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php](http://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php)
- PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)
- Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)
- The Diana Award: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)
- Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Young Carers: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)
- The Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools)

### SEND

- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)
- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: [www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying\\_and\\_send\\_-\\_module\\_final.pdf](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf)
- DfE: SEND code of practice: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)

## Cyberbullying

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

## Race, religion, and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)
- Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)
- Tell Mama: [www.tellmamauk.org](http://www.tellmamauk.org)
- Educate against Hate: [www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)
- Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srrc.org/educational](http://www.srrc.org/educational)

## 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](http://www.metrocentreonline.org)
- EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)
- Proud Trust: [www.theproudtrust.org](http://www.theproudtrust.org)
- Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)
- Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

## Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW)  
[www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk)
- A Guide for Schools:  
[www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf)
- Disrespect No Body: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters)
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related/preventing-and-responding-sexual](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related/preventing-and-responding-sexual)
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related)