



# Anti-bullying Policy

Policy (Including EYFS)

Policy Review Date: September 2021  
Reviewed By: M Ashton & SLT  
Next Review: September 2022 (or  
following incident, legislation or  
interim guidance)

## Distribution

Please note that 2 copies of this policy are printed as standard and distributed to the following areas:

- 1) Staff Room
- 2) School Office

This policy is also made available on the school website.

## Updates and Amendments to Policy

Date	Section Heading	Update Details	Page N°
Sept 2017	Policy statement	Updated to reflect DfE guidance ' <a href="#">Preventing and Tackling Bullying</a> '. (July 2017)	4
September 2021		Updated following review in green	

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## Policy Statement

This policy applies all staff, volunteers and pupils in the school, including in the EYFS & Wraparound

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This policy has regard to the DfE guidance [‘Preventing and Tackling Bullying’](#). (July 2017), and [Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School staff \(2014\)](#)

*“It is a basic entitlement of all children that they receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. Education is compulsory in our society and therefore it is the responsibility of all adults to ensure that it takes place in an atmosphere which is caring and protective.”*

DP Tattum

## Aims

The overall aims of this policy are the prevention of bullying and, should instances of bullying occur, to help staff and pupils to deal with it effectively.

In this respect the school seeks:

- ✿ To ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied
- ✿ To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of the nature and types of bullying that may occur, both in and out of school, and their causes and effects
- ✿ To ensure high expectations of pupils’ behaviour, as detailed in the school’s behaviour policy.
- ✿ To implement disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect (strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe or persistent bullying)
- ✿ To use all pupils, staff and parents as a positive resource in the elimination of any form of bullying, through education and awareness
- ✿ To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware that bullying is totally unacceptable
- ✿ To ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities in addressing bullying issues
- ✿ To provide staff with appropriate training in relation to the prevention of and response to bullying
- ✿ To develop effective strategies to prevent bullying
- ✿ To provide a consistent school response to any bullying and have clear procedures for dealing with incidents
- ✿ To provide support for both victim and bully

## Definitions of bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, by an individual or a group. It may be repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

It can happen anywhere, both in and out of school. Bullying can have a negative life-long impact. It can make it difficult for children to learn and can have a lasting detrimental effect on their lives. Young people who have been bullied can become anxious and withdrawn, depressed or aggressive. Some turn to substance misuse as a way of dealing with it emotionally and, at worst, bullying has been a factor in suicide. (Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour).

## Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Bullying can take various different forms, including:

- ✿ Racial/Religious/Cultural – where someone is made to feel inferior because of their background, culture or religion.
- ✿ Sexual/sexist - bullying based on something specifically linked to gender.
- ✿ Homophobic - bullying based on sexual orientation
- ✿ Special Needs or Disability - any exploitation of a particular aspect of a child's disability and/or special educational need
- ✿ Cyber-bullying via technology. For example, internet/mobile phones, email, social networks, text messages, photographs.
- ✿ Bullying can include name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, inappropriate touching, producing offensive graffiti, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours or regularly excluding someone from groups or games. It is also bullying when a young person is pressured to act against their will by others or is harassed by unwanted conduct, which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment.

## Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

✿ Age

✿ being or becoming a trans person

- ☞ being married or in a civil partnership
- ☞ being pregnant or having a child
- ☞ disability
- ☞ race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, including Gypsy, Roma, Traveller heritage
- ☞ religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- ☞ sex /gender
- ☞ sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident.

Other vulnerable groups include

- ☞ young carers
- ☞ looked after children
- ☞ bullying related to home circumstances
- ☞ bullying related to appearance or health

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying - all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

### Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are perceived to be different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers are perceived to be different. Dismissing such language as banter is not helpful as it is being used to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.


### Hate crime and bullying


There is no legal definition of a hate crime. However, the police and the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) have an agreed definition of hate crime as: "Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation;


disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender."


There is a distinction between a hate crime and a hate incident. "A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender." However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law.

Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence, and is based on one of the five protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime.


 The type of conduct which will be considered as a hate incident is wide ranging and includes the following:


 verbal abuse;


 harassment;


 bullying or intimidation;

 physical attacks;


 threats of violence;

 hoax calls, abusive phone or text messages, hate mail;

 online abuse;

 displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters;

 graffiti;

 arson;

## Behaviours often associated with bullying

### Baiting

"Baiting" 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 antagonize 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 into trouble.

### Banter

The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks' Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

### Types of Banter

Friendly Banter- There's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits

Ignorant Banter- crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry.

Malicious Banter- Done to humiliate a person-often in public

### Peer on Peer Abuse



All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- ☞ Bullying (including cyberbullying);
- ☞ Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- ☞ Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- ☞ Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- ☞ Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- ☞ Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. We will challenge and respond to any concerns related to the above.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying and peer on peer abuse. If the target or alleged perpetrator might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required including a safeguarding referral.

## Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

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

- ☞ Is unwilling to go to school
- ☞ Is frequently absent from school
- ☞ Regularly has homework which is not done or lost
- ☞ Changes his or her usual routine
- ☞ Becomes anxious, withdrawn or is lacking in confidence
- ☞ Starts stammering
- ☞ Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- ☞ Cries him - or herself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- ☞ Feels ill in the morning
- ☞ Begins to achieve less well in school work
- ☞ Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- ☞ Has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”
- ☞ Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- ☞ Has tuck money or other money continually “lost”
- ☞ Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- ☞ Stops eating
- ☞ Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- ☞ Is bullying other children or siblings
- ☞ Is frightened to say what's wrong
- ☞ Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- ☞ Is nervous or jumpy when an online message is received
- ☞ Is evasive or gives improbable excuses in relation to any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems or circumstances, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### **Procedures to Follow**

This policy only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands and recognises the seriousness of bullying and that it is not to be tolerated. The school also understands the steps that will be taken both to prevent and to respond to bullying.

### **Information and Guidance for Pupils**

- ✿ As a member of the school, we expect pupils not to have to put up with any form of bullying behaviour either in person or via any other means, such as over the internet.
- ✿ Staff and parents can and will help to put a stop to it.
- ✿ Pupils should know that they are free to speak out to any member of staff or their mum or dad if they feel they are being bullied.
- ✿ When someone else is being bullied or is in distress, pupils should report it to member of staff immediately. This may be following an incident on school grounds or outside of school.
- ✿ Children should not be afraid to report any incidents. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bully.
- ✿ Children should not put up with bullies in their group of friends. Bullies will soon stop if they are left out or are by themselves.
- ✿ Children should take care how they speak and act towards other pupils. They should always aim to be considerate and helpful.

### **Reporting bullying and / or cyber bullying**

- ✿ Pupils should know that they are free to speak out to any member of staff or their mum or dad if they feel they are being bullied.
- ✿ When someone else is being bullied or is in distress, pupils should report it to member of staff immediately.
- ✿ Children should not be afraid to report any incidents.

### **The Role of the Staff**

It is essential that all members of staff contribute to creating a school ethos which does not tolerate bullying and minimises the likelihood of incidents ever occurring.

- ✿ Staff must ensure that they have read and understand this policy.
- ✿ Staff must ensure that their training in taking action against bullying remains up to date.
- ✿ Staff will be aware of and exploit aspects the curriculum and wider aspects of school life where they can embrace the topic of bullying, including its dangers, how to prevent it and the steps to take when it occurs.

In any case where bullying is reported or suspected, staff must follow this procedure:

- ✿ In most cases the incident should be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who is approached.

- ☞ Listen carefully and intently.
- ☞ Reassure the child that you are sympathetic and that the problem will be resolved.
- ☞ Do not ask any leading questions.
- ☞ Do not promise to keep the issue confidential – it is important to maintain the pupils' trust by remaining honest.
- ☞ Make a clear account of the conversation on a contact form as soon as it has ended, but try to avoid taking notes during discussion.
- ☞ Report the matter as soon as is practical to the DSL or her deputy (ies).
- ☞ Discuss with the DSL or her deputy how to proceed with, for example, further interviews, liaison with parents and what action is to be taken, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- ☞ Continue to address the incident as agreed with the DSL or her deputy (ies)
- ☞ Ensure that the incident continues to be fully recorded on the contact form, together with details of what action has been taken.
- ☞ Liaise with the DSL or her deputy to ensure that all staff are kept informed of the incident and action taken, as appropriate

### **Staff action against Bullying**

It is essential that all adults in the school community know what to do when they suspect that a child is being bullied and which member of staff to contact. A contact sheet should be completed by staff if they are aware of any bullying within the school.

Staff will have a range of appropriate strategies on which to call:

- ☞ Skilled observation to recognise and respond to the symptoms noted above.
- ☞ Read receipt of reports of bullying behaviour, which are then investigated, acted upon and the information relating to the alleged bully and their victims reported as appropriate.
- ☞ Use of the school curriculum, for example in subjects such as PSHCEE, Circle time, story time, drama, English and history, to embrace the topic of bullying, including its dangers, how to prevent it and the steps to take when it occurs.
- ☞ Use, as above, of other elements of school life, including assemblies, form periods, house meetings, school council and visiting speakers.
- ☞ Use, as above, of focussed projects, for example in safe use of the internet.
- ☞ Availability of this policy on the school's website to enable parents to understand the school's approach and work together with staff.
- ☞ Close parent/teacher liaison to ensure that both home and school work together to help and support the victim and moderate the behaviour of the bully.
- ☞ Where appropriate and following discussion with the headteacher, engagement with outside assistance, such as an educational psychologist, social worker or the police - in helping children who bully others.
- ☞ Ensuring that staff are fully aware of times and places when bullying is most likely to occur;
- ☞ Organisation of the school day and supervision arrangements reduce the likely incidence of bullying.
- ☞ This includes supervision of changing and showering areas, monitoring the use of washrooms and cloakrooms at break times and the regular coverage of secluded areas at break times by duty staff.
- ☞ All children given the opportunity to speak to their form teacher or tutor. This person is someone they feel comfortable with, who knows the child well and understands that the

child may turn to him or her. Where it is recognised that a child may not be comfortable turning to his form teacher or tutor, alternative arrangements will be put in place.

- ✿ Raising the awareness of all staff to the dangers of bullying and how to prevent it, through staff training and by regular discussion at staff meetings.

## **Bullying and Safeguarding**

Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched /assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

At Avalon we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school’s Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation

- ✿ is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- ✿ is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- ✿ raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- ✿ indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
- ✿ indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

If the abuse reported is by another child (whether in or out of school), it is important to follow the usual guidelines given above. A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm’.

## **The Role of the Head teacher as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

**A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. If the Headteacher or DSL, suspects that the incident that has been reported to suggests that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm In such cases the DSL will report the**

**concerns to the local authority social care department and all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, are treated as being 'at risk'.**

The Headteacher will be informed of any incidents of bullying and will ensure that all incidents are thoroughly investigated and properly logged. The Headteacher (as DSL) or her deputy will ensure that an investigation takes place in every case and each situation is treated seriously. If bullying is found to have definitely occurred, the parents of any children involved will be contacted and informed of what action the school is to take by the Headteacher as DSL, or her deputy. Following a report of bullying, the headteacher should also evaluate the effectiveness of the approaches adopted to enable patterns to be identified.

The Headteacher will ensure that the DSL or her deputy and all staff undertake appropriate training in taking action against bullying.

The main roles of the Headteacher as DSL or her deputy in respect of bullying are:

- ✿ Managing and monitoring practices to ensure alignment with the school anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- ✿ Maintaining a clear overview of the incidence of bullying and the school's anti-bullying prevention and response strategies.
- ✿ Liaison between all parties involved, including parents.
- ✿ Ensuring that contact sheets are completed by staff in all cases and that a copy is stored in the incident file.
- ✿ On a regular basis, analysis of the incident file so that patterns and trends can be identified and the analysis used to improve policy and practice.
- ✿ Promotion and co-ordination of anti-bullying initiatives and projects both within the curriculum and in the wider aspects of school life.
- ✿ Deployment of appropriate strategies to ensure that bullies change their behaviour.
- ✿ The DSL or her deputy will be fully briefed by the Headteacher, who will ensure that he or she receives appropriate training, guidance and information.

## Information and Guidance for Parents

- ✿ Avalon School will communicate policies about behaviour, rewards and sanctions and anti-bullying including cyber bullying to parents. Avalon School will also create an environment of good behaviour and respect as set out in the childrens' behaviour code (known as the golden rules For more information, see the behaviour, rewards and sanctions policy)
- ✿ Communication of expectations and procedures is done through a parental meeting at the beginning of the year and in the school handbooks that are distributed to parents.
- ✿ Furthermore, parents have the opportunity to discuss any potential issues, either through formal parents' evening appointments or by informal arrangement with the teacher or form tutor.
- ✿ Avalon School takes pride in the example that the staff and older pupils set for its school community and parents are encouraged to support this through a strong home / school partnership to foster good behaviour and respect.

## What to do if a parent feels their child may be being bullied

- ✿ You may not recognise that your child is being bullied. However, changes in their manner, behaviour and general state of health can sometimes be explained by bullying.
- ✿ Encourage your child to talk about it, but be patient. It is quite natural for him or her not to want to discuss the matter and not to want you to do anything about it.
- ✿ Listen and try not to interrupt.
- ✿ Reassure them that you are sympathetic and that it is a problem that can be solved.
- ✿ Ask him or her if there are ways of changing things and help them to try to develop strategies to cope, strategies which should then be practised.
- ✿ Try to keep the situation in proportion and so remain good-humoured.
- ✿ Encourage your child to talk to their form teacher or tutor about the matter.
- ✿ Parents should contact your child's teacher to discuss the matter if you are concerned.

## Training for staff

- ✿ Avalon School will raise awareness of staff through training, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available; where appropriate, we can invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils. Training should also include professional development and training in online safety.

## Training for children

- ✿ Avalon School has an important role in ensuring children and pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying including when they find themselves as bystanders. This includes, but is not limited support the children in developing strategies to deal with incidences of bullying appropriately using educational elements such as personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education (PSHCEE), assemblies, projects, drama, stories, literature, with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language. We employ the use of "worry boxes" where children can give messages to the staff

with a degree of anonymity. We also use “listeners” a system whereby staff make themselves available for children who are considered more vulnerable and will “check in” with them regularly.

## Internet use and Cyber Bullying

Increasing availability to children of electronic devices that give unrestricted access to the internet, schools should consider online safety as part of both safeguarding and anti-bullying arrangements. Active management of hardware, software and connectivity and the vigilance of teachers and parents have a part to play in the safeguarding and protection of pupils.

All staff have a responsibility for online safety as part of the schools' wider safeguarding strategy. As liaison for e-safety, Mr Ashton has overall responsibility for the management of the networked ICT systems within school.

### Guidance on the use of technology

Avalon School believes in the educational benefits of the use of technology including curriculum Internet use. Good planning and management that recognises the risks will help to ensure appropriate, effective and safe pupil use. In delivering the curriculum, teachers need to plan to integrate the use of communications technology such as web-based resources and e-mail in order to enable pupils to learn how to locate, retrieve and exchange information using ICT. Computer skills are vital to access life-long learning and for future employment.

Most technologies present risks as well as benefits. Internet use for home, social and leisure activities is expanding and being used by all sectors of society. This brings young people into contact with a wide variety of influences, some of which could be unsuitable. It is important that Schools, as well as parents, adopt strategies for the responsible and safe use of the Internet.

The Internet has become as commonplace as the mobile phone or TV and its effective use is an essential life-skill. Unmediated Internet access brings with it the possibility placing of pupils in embarrassing, inappropriate and even dangerous situations. Significant educational benefits should result from curriculum Internet use including access to information from around the world and the ability to communicate widely and to publish easily. Internet use should be planned, task-orientated and educational within a regulated and managed environment. Directed and successful Internet use will also reduce the opportunities for activities of dubious worth.

### Regulation

The use of a limited and expensive resource, which brings with it the possibility of misuse, must be regulated. In some cases access within School is denied, for instance unmoderated chat rooms present immediate dangers and are banned. Fair rules, clarified by discussion and prominently displayed help pupils make responsible decisions for both School and home access.

### Children using the internet

- ☞ Children must ask permission before accessing the Internet.
- ☞ We expect all children to be responsible for their own behaviour on the Internet, just as they are anywhere else in School. This includes materials they choose to access, and language they use.
- ☞ Children must only use websites and search engines as directed by staff.
- ☞ Children are expected not to use any rude language in any email communications and contact only people the staff have approved.



- ☞ Children should not access other people's files unless permission has been given.
- ☞ Computers should only be used for schoolwork and homework unless permission has been granted otherwise.
- ☞ No program files may be downloaded to the computer from the Internet.
- ☞ No programs on disc, memory drives etc. may be brought in to School and used without approval from staff first.

Children not complying with these expectations will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy, and subsequently, may be denied access to Internet resources.

### **Helping children protect themselves**

- ☞ Pupils will be taught what to do if they experience material that they find distasteful, uncomfortable or threatening. For example, to close the page and report the URL to the Computing Coordinator for inclusion in the list of blocked sites. More often, pupils will be judging reasonable material but selecting that which is relevant to their needs, for instance to answer a homework question. Pupils should be taught research techniques including the use of search engines. They will be encouraged to question the validity, currency and origins of information – key information handling skills. They should also use alternative sources of information for comparison purposes. Effective guided use will reduce the opportunity pupils have for exploring unsavoury areas.
- ☞ Using Internet derived materials in pupils' own work requires at least an understanding that straight copying is worth little without a commentary that demonstrates the selectivity used and evaluates significance.
- ☞ Respect for copyright and intellectual property rights, and the correct usage of published material needs to be taught.
- ☞ If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content must be reported to the Internet Service Provider via the Computing Coordinator.
- ☞ The use of Internet derived materials by staff and by pupils in School must comply with copyright law.
- ☞ Pupils are taught to be critically aware of the materials they read and shown how to validate information before accepting its accuracy.
- ☞ Pupils will be taught to acknowledge the source of information and to respect copyright when using Internet material in their own work

### **Staff use of the internet**

- ☞ If staff are accessing the Internet they must use it for legitimate School business only. Searching for or viewing or downloading web pages the content of which is offensive, obscene, or discriminatory will constitute gross misconduct.
- ☞ This staff handbook states unequivocally that downloading offensive, obscene or indecent material, or even visiting such websites, is forbidden and will generally result in dismissal.
- ☞ It is at the manager's discretion if internet use is allowed outside normal working hours or during lunchtimes, to websites which are not offensive but are also not work-related, e.g. weather or travel sites.

## Social networking

A social networking site is any website which enables its users to create profiles, form relationships and share information with other users. It also includes sites which have online discussion forums, chat-rooms, media posting sites, blogs and any other social space online. It includes but is not limited to, sites such as Facebook, Bebo, Ping, Twitter and Wikipedia.

### Staff must:

- ☞ Ensure that wherever possible their privacy settings on social media sites are set so that pupils cannot access information relating to their personal lives;
- ☞ Obtain the prior written approval of the Head Teacher, to the wording of any personal profile which you intend to create where the School is named or mentioned on a social networking site;
- ☞ Seek approval from the Head Teacher before they speak about or make any comments on behalf of the School on the internet or through any social networking site;
- ☞ Report to their Line Manager immediately if they see any information on the internet or on social networking sites that disparages or reflects poorly on the School;
- ☞ Immediately remove any internet postings which are deemed by the School to constitute a breach of this or any other School policy;
- ☞ Consider whether a particular posting puts their effectiveness as a teacher at risk;
- ☞ Post only what they want the world to see.

### Staff must not:

- ☞ Provide references for other individuals, on social or professional networking sites, as such references whether positive or negative can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the school;
- ☞ Post or publish on the internet or on any social networking site, any reference to the School, your colleagues, parents or pupils;
- ☞ Use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. Staff must exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterisations;
- ☞ Discuss pupils or colleagues or publicly criticize the School or staff;
- ☞ Post images that include pupils;
- ☞ Initiate friendships with pupils on any personal social network sites;
- ☞ Accept pupils as friends on any such sites; staff must decline any pupil-initiated friend requests;

Staff must also be aware of the particular risks to internet security that social media presents and so to comply with the existing School policy on internet security must take any extra measures necessary not allow any of their actions on social media sites to create vulnerability to any School systems.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Visitors' access to the internet**

Visitors to the school would not normally have access to the school's IT equipment and internet unless explicitly considered part of their visit (ie IT technician). If visitors do require access to the school's then they should be supervised by a member of school staff.

### **Management of data**

Avalon School has a responsibility to manage personal data such as digital records of children, email addresses of parents in line with statutory requirements.

### **Technical provision and infrastructure**

In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available via the Internet is unsuitable for pupils. The School will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material such as strong filtering. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of Internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a School computer. Monitoring of the school's filter and internet traffic is managed by an external agency (Obsidian Networks). They use Web Content Filtering Service (CFS) SonicWall Content Filtering Service (CFS) is a subscription-based add-on service for SonicWall firewall products. This web filtering service blocks inappropriate, unproductive and even illegal and malicious web content for SonicWall customers around the globe. Alerts to the possibility of access of inappropriate content or safeguarding issues are reported to the school immediately.

Methods to identify, assess and minimise risks will be reviewed regularly.

The Computing Coordinator (Mr Ashton) will ensure that the Internet policy is implemented and compliance with the policy monitored.

The School will work in partnership with parents, the DfES and our Internet Service Provider to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.

## Tackling Cyberbullying

Mobile phone, Internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide. But their popularity provides increasing opportunities for misuse through “cyberbullying”. It is crucial that children and young people, who are particularly skilful at adapting to new technology, use their mobiles and the Internet safely and positively, and that they are aware of the consequences of misuse. School staff, parents and pupils of Avalon School have to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying and tackle it whenever it appears.

The advent of cyberbullying adds new dimensions to the problem of bullying. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours; there is no safe haven for the person being bullied. Cyberbullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed, and can often remain unseen and unidentifiable.

### What is Cyber bullying?

- ☞ Text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts and can be threatening or cause discomfort.
- ☞ Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. ‘Happy slapping’ involves filming and sharing physical attacks.
- ☞ Phone call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person’s phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else’s phone to avoid being identified.
- ☞ Email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else’s name to pin the blame on them.
- ☞ Chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.
- ☞ Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online.
- ☞ Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber bullying. (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Tumblr for example).

### Protecting Staff

Staff in schools, as well as children and young people, may become targets of cyberbullying. Like other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can seriously impact on the health, well-being, and self-confidence of those targeted. It may have a significant impact not only on the person being bullied, but on their home and work life too. Career progression may be affected, and there have been cases where the person being bullied has chosen to leave the education sector altogether. Dealing with incidents quickly and effectively is key to minimising harm in potentially highly stressful situations.

## Advice for children

- ✎ Don't give out your personal details online – if you are in a Chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.
- ✎ Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.
- ✎ If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.
- ✎ There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying.

Avalon School has a duty to ensure that:

- ✎ Teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyberbullying in school. This means that training and professional development includes online safety
- ✎ The curriculum teaches pupils about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely
- ✎ All e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored
- ✎ Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked
- ✎ They work with pupils and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local and national guidance and good practice
- ✎ Security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside school
- ✎ They work with police and other partners on managing cyberbullying

## Teaching Staff:

Have responsibility in:

- ✎ Teaching children safe Internet etiquette
- ✎ Applying school policy in monitoring electronic messages and images
- ✎ Giving pupils key guidance on:
  - ✎ Personal privacy rights
  - ✎ Material posted on electronic platforms
  - ✎ Photographic images
- ✎ Taking action if a pupil is being cyberbullied or is bullying someone else
- ✎ Teaching pupils the value of e-communications and the risks and consequences of improper use, including legal implications

## Reporting cyber bullying

- ✎ Pupils should know that they are free to speak out to any member of staff or their mum or dad if they feel they are being bullied.
- ✎ When someone else is being bullied or is in distress, pupils should report it to member of staff immediately.
- ✎ Children should not be afraid to report any incidents.

## The Role of the Staff

In any case where cyberbullying is reported or suspected, staff must follow this procedure:

- ☞ In most cases the incident should be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who is approached.
- ☞ Listen carefully and intently.
- ☞ Reassure the child that you are sympathetic and that the problem will be resolved.
- ☞ Do not ask any leading questions.
- ☞ Do not promise to keep the issue confidential – it is important to maintain the pupils' trust by remaining honest.
- ☞ Make a clear account of the conversation on a contact form as soon as it has ended, but try to avoid taking notes during discussion.
- ☞ Report the matter as soon as is practical to the DSL or her deputy (ies).
- ☞ Discuss with the DSL or her deputy how to proceed with, for example, further interviews, liaison with parents and what action is to be taken, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- ☞ Continue to address the incident as agreed with the DSL or her deputy (ies)
- ☞ Ensure that the incident continues to be fully recorded on the contact form, together with details of what action has been taken.

Liaise with the DSL or her deputy to ensure that all staff are kept informed of the incident and action taken, as appropriate

## Parental involvement

Parents of Avalon School are encouraged to share these guidelines:

- ☞ Don't wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your child understands how to use these technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them
- ☞ Make sure their child knows what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied
- ☞ Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyberbullying. If they do have a problem, contact the school, the mobile phone network or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it
- ☞ Parental control software can limit who your child sends emails to and who s/he receives them from. It can also block access to some chat rooms
- ☞ Visit: [www.thinkyouknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk) for more information on Internet Safety.

Workshops about online safety for parents are held periodically and information about the school's policies and procedures are available via the school website. Information about online safety is also given out at the parent meetings at the beginning of the Autumn term and details can be found in the school handbooks.

Further information for parents about the importance of online safety can be found in the **E-Safety policy**

**Reviewed M Ashton September 2021**

**Next Review September 2022**

### List of Approved Resources:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/research-and-resources/>
- <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/what-we-do/resources/>
- <http://www.bullying.co.uk/anti-bullying-week/anti-bullying-week-resources/>
- <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week-all-different-all-equal>
- <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school>