



Anti-Bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy (Including EYFS)

Policy Review Date: September 2025

Reviewed By: J Callaway, SLT & Board of Governors

Next Review: September 2026 (or following incident, legislation or interim guidance)

September 2025 Reviewed & ratified by:

Headteacher: Mrs J Callaway

Chair of Governors: Dr Catherine Kidd :

This policy is available on the school website and up on request.

Updates and Amendments to Policy

Date	Section Heading	Update Details	Page N°
Sept 2017	Policy statement	Updated to reflect DfE guidance ' Preventing and Tackling Bullying '. (July 2017)	4
September 2021		Updated following review	
September 2022		Updated following review in green	
September 2024		Updated following review	
September 2025		Updated following review highlighted changes in yellow	

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Aims

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

DSL & Headteacher : Mrs Joanna Callaway

DDSL: Martin Ashton and Alison Prandle

(for EYFS: Alison Prandle)

Governor for Safeguarding: Dr Catherine Kidd

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

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

1. Legislation

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- UK Council for Internet Safety (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.
- Bullying 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).

3. Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Bullying another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Types of bullying:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

These can include:

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and bi-phobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socio economic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate training within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Appointing a safeguarding governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.
- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when bullying incidents occur.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the pupil's heads of year of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- informing a member of staff should they fall become aware of cyberbullying.

5. Statutory requirements

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have actions brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene, or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment, or intimidation, and hate crimes.

6. Prevention

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the PSHCEE and Relationships and Health Education curriculum.

The curriculum will explore and discuss issues at age-appropriate stages such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference, and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural activities.

Seating plans will be considered carefully, and when deemed necessary, will be altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying. Potential victims of bullying will be placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

The 'Calming Corner,' a safe space room, supervised by a teacher, will be available for pupils to go to if they feel worried, upset, concerned or wish to be alone. The teacher supervising will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.

School will use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems. School can draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying. Each year

Avalon school takes part in 'Anti Bullying Week' and supports the work of organisations such as The Anti Bullying Alliance, Young Minds and Place2Be, which supports children and young people to understand the importance of anti-bullying strategies.

Pupils deemed vulnerable will meet with their form teacher / or designated listener, on a regular basis where appropriate, to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly. Form teachers will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

A new pupil's form teacher will ensure that suitable 'buddies' will be made available to a new pupil to help them settle into school. Where a new pupil is deemed vulnerable, this strategy may involve further observation or intervention on the part of the DSL.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

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 which fosters and promotes positive behaviour and respect as set out in the children's behaviour code (known as the **Be Smart** code. 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 annually.
- Furthermore, parents have the opportunity to discuss any potential issues, either through formal parents' appointments or by 'open door' informal arrangement with the teacher, or form teacher.
- 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 their child's form teacher to discuss the matter if they 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 “designated listeners” a system whereby staff make themselves available for children who are considered more vulnerable and will “check in” with them regularly.
- ‘Daily Check in’ mechanisms are used in each class, as a way for pupils to register their emotions and feelings at routine points in the day. This aids development of pupils’ own emotional literacy, but also enables staff to identify if there is an issue / concern, or to spot patterns or trends in individual pupil’s emotional well being which may need further support.

7 Signs 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 (not an exhaustive list) and should investigate if a child is:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions

- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional, or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Staff will be alert to the signs as possible underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been the victim of abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall, and they are showing signs of stress

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's form teacher and the DSL (currently also the Headteacher), who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

8. Staff procedures

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision and that an ethos of good behaviour is created where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, however if there is a safeguarding concern, or if a member of staff believes a pupil is at risk, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9. Child-on-child abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the [prevention](#) section of this policy.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school.
- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- Never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour, and any that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting.
- Deliberately brushing against someone.
- Displaying images or video of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence).
- Online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or report to a trusted adult – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children’s social care

services and potentially the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that pupils may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Pupils being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy outlines the school's stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school's approach to preventing and managing instances of child-on-child abuse can be found within the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

10. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Support for staff and schools can be found at: [Cyberbullying Guidance | Childnet](#) and at

[Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff](#)

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating, or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a fake or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

All members of staff will receive training on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'Signs of bullying' section of this policy; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer or mobile device
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

Parents will also be invited to attend 'Digital Safety' sessions, as well as receive updates and information around this aspect, (such as publications and advice from sources like: [Keep Children Safe Online: Information, advice, support - Internet Matters](#) and the NSPCC) to educate them on the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying and will be advised to report to the headteacher if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of pupils staying safe online and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising

- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

Avalon school has an acceptable use of technologies policy for pupils and staff that addresses cyberbullying. Agreements on the responsible use of technology include:

- Rules on the use of school equipment, software and access routes when used on or off the school premises within school hours: for example, internet access, tablets, lap tops and mobile phones.
- Acceptable behaviour for pupils and employees, including behaviour outside school: for example teachers' and pupils' use of social networking services and other sites, so as not to harm others or bring the school into disrepute.
- School staff should expect the school to react quickly to reported incidents or support the member of staff concerned to do so. It is also important that staff who are harassed in this way receive support and information enabling them to access appropriate personal support. The school should endeavour to approach internet providers or other agencies on their behalf in order to request that the inappropriate material is removed. The internet provider may only accept a request from the victim. However, the school may want to take action if it is on a school website or email address.
- If it is necessary for the person being bullied to contact the service providers directly, the school may provide support. This might apply, for example, in cases of identity theft, impersonation or abuse via a mobile phone service

Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Staff will report incidents to the headteacher / DSL for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided.

Pupils will be encouraged to report incidents of cyberbullying in person to a trusted member of staff. Pupils will be informed that, when reporting cyberbullying incidents, they should keep hold of the evidence, e.g. text messages, dates and times, and speak to a trusted adult at school who may contact the police about the incident, if a risk of immediate danger to them or someone else.

Where offensive content is posted online targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted (or parent, as appropriate) will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and deal with any material found, involving the DSL or police as appropriate.

11. 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.

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 online use
- 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

12. Procedures

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be used:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately

- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately for first aid or medical attention
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- The headteacher will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete
- All pupils involved are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils
- involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home

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 Logging a concern 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
- Discuss with the DSL or 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 deputy
- Ensure that the incident continues to be fully recorded on the Logging a concern form, together with details of what action has been taken.

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

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider the need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

13. Sanctions

If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. The headteacher will inform the perpetrator of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, and future sanctions if the bullying continues. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable

If possible, the headteacher will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

Parents will be informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.

The school will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

The school will remain mindful of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour and will not exclude pupils unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with the Exclusion Policy.

14. Support

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from the school (this could include a designated listener, or a mental health first aider)
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken
- Liaison with their parents to ensure a continuous dialogue of support
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and report it to a trusted adult immediately
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate

their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online

- Discussion with their parent on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents)

The headteacher will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary.

Staff, particularly the DSL, will work with the victim, e.g. by offering emotional support.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems and may need to access further support.

15. Follow-up support

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by form teachers. One-on-one sessions to discuss how the victim and perpetrator are progressing may be appropriate.

Pupils who have been bullied will be offered continuous support with designated staff to support and check in with them on a regular basis. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

Pupils who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents

Pupils who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHS or for other agency support.

Where a pupil who has been the victim of bullying has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the pupil, their parents, the headteacher and DSL will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

16. Bullying outside of school

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Child-on-child Abuse section contained within the policy.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only sanction the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

17. Parental involvement

Parents of Avalon School are encouraged to follow 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 for more information on Internet Safety.

Workshops about online safety for parents are held periodically at school 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, as well as on the school's weekly newsletter.

18. Record keeping

The DSL will ensure that robust and consistent records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.

19. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed every two years by the headteacher / DSL, or upon changes to legislation, or following review of incidents. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

20. List of Approved Resources:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/research-and-resources/>
- [Keep Children Safe Online: Information, advice, support - Internet Matters](#)
- <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/what-we-do/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>