



Edisford Primary School

Confidence. Persistence. Getting Along. Organisation. Resilience.

Anti-Bullying Policy

While we have a low incidence of bullying, we recognise that it is still a possibility. We maintain this awareness because it helps protect our children. By acknowledging that bullying could occur, we stay vigilant and attuned to the warning signs. This proactive approach allows us to act swiftly and address any issues before they escalate.

Philosophy

1. We do not tolerate bullying at Edisford.
2. We identify warning signs.
3. We remain vigilant.
4. We act swiftly to nip it in the bud.

What is Bullying?

It is important to acknowledge that one mean incident does not constitute bullying. We will always act to deal with incidents where children are mean or hurt each other. To clarify, bullying is repeated, intentional behaviour that hurts, threatens, or intimidates another person. It can take many forms, and the key characteristic is that it is done with the intention of causing harm or distress. Bullying often involves an imbalance of power, where the person bullying feels in control or superior, and the person being bullied feels vulnerable or powerless. It happens over time.

Types of Bullying:

- Physical Bullying: This includes actions like hitting, kicking, pushing, or damaging someone's belongings.
- Verbal Bullying: This includes name-calling, teasing, mocking, or making hurtful comments.
- Social/Relational Bullying: This involves spreading rumours, excluding someone from a group, or publicly embarrassing them.
- Cyberbullying: This happens online, through social media, texting, or gaming platforms, and includes things like spreading harmful messages, sending hurtful or threatening emails, or posting embarrassing pictures.

Key Characteristics of Bullying:

- Intentional: Bullying is meant to hurt or upset someone.
- Repeated: It's not just a one-time incident; bullying often happens over time.
- Power Imbalance: The bully uses their strength, social standing, or other advantages to control or harm the person they are bullying.

Bullying can have serious long-term effects on a person's emotional well-being, self-esteem, and sense of safety. Schools and communities play a vital role in creating environments where bullying is not tolerated, and where children feel safe and supported.

We look for the following in supporting our judgments:

- Evidence of physical injury to a child.
- Evidence of emotional stress beyond the incident.
- Other first-hand evidence from eye witnesses.
- The pupils concerned are not able to resolve the situation and it is likely to continue without intervention.
- The context of the incident i.e. other circumstances surrounding the incident.

If parents have a concern:

Parents know their children very well and should always contact school if they have any concerns.

As a school we need to remain neutral whilst we collect evidence. We will always perform a thorough investigation, keeping in communication with parents and will take the appropriate action.

We will collect the following information:

- the actual concern e.g. name-calling or physical assault;
- where the incident took place;
- when it took place;
- who was involved and who else saw the incident;
- if the child informed a member of staff and who this was.

What happens next?

1. The incident will be thoroughly investigated.
2. All children involved will be interviewed.

3. In most cases, all parties bear some or equal responsibility. In cases like this, we help the children to talk through the situation with each other to resolve it.
4. In some cases, the children have already resolved the incident themselves. We check this is the case and monitor from there on.
5. Occasionally, one child is more responsible for the mean or abusive behaviour. If this is the case, a suitable sanction will be applied. See High Level Disruptive Behaviour sanctions.
6. We will also consider further support for the child, including Child and Family Wellbeing Service, Social Services, School Nurse and in extreme cases, the Police.

Monitoring Procedures

1. In situations where it is decided to monitor, we ask that parents use the following procedure. This will be explained to the child.
2. That the child tells a teacher or if they prefer a named staff member of their choice.
3. This will be logged in the headteacher's behaviour log.
4. If a child discloses a concern to their parent, the parent should remind the child to tell the teacher.
5. If a parent is very concerned, they should contact the child's teacher in the first instance to make them aware of their concerns. The parent should bear in mind that there are always two sides to the story and they may not have the full picture. The teacher will monitor and escalate where necessary to the Senior Leadership Team.
6. School will investigate and respond to the parent.

Sexting

In the case of sexting incidents, we will follow the guidance set out by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety. At school, we would never ask a child to show us an image or ask them to share or download it as this is illegal. Click [here](#) for further information. We will take the appropriate action to deal with any such incidents.

Child-on-Child Abuse

When dealing with a possible bullying incident, we make reference to the school's Safeguarding Policy for child-on-child abuse. We consider child-on-child abuse to be any abuse from child to child. This may be similar age children or children of different ages. Where an incident is physically violent, we would use the guidance set out for us by the DfE: [Use of Reasonable Force](#). We are always committed to the safety of every child.

Use of Physical intervention and touching.

From Dfe July 2013 Use of Reasonable Force

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- *remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;*
- *prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;*
- *prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;*
- *prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and*
- *restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.*

Schools cannot:

- *use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.*

Power to search pupils without consent:

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for prohibited items.

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

Other physical contact with pupils?

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:

- *holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school;*
- *when comforting a distressed pupil;*
- *when a pupil is being congratulated or praised;*
- *to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;*
- *to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching;*
- *to give first aid.*

Updated July 2025.

Review date July 2026.