

<b>Local Procedure Title</b>	<b>Anti Bullying</b>
<b>Service</b>	<b>Unsted Park School</b>
<b>ACS Policy number and title</b>	<b>ACS 03 Anti Bullying</b>
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<b>Local Procedure Author(s)</b>	Jamie Dowsett
<b>Local Procedure Ratification</b>	Checked and Approved by: Shane Kenny

**1. Introduction**

At Unsted Park School, we believe in creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students, regardless of their differences. This Anti-Bullying Policy is designed to protect and advocate for the well-being of students with autism, recognising that they may face unique challenges that can make them more vulnerable to bullying.

Students with autism may communicate, socialise, or behave in ways that differ from their peers, which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or exclusion. Our goal is to foster a culture of empathy, understanding, and respect by promoting awareness about autism, encouraging positive interactions, and ensuring that any instances of bullying are addressed swiftly and effectively.

Through this policy, we are committed to providing equal opportunities for learning, personal growth, and social development for students with autism, and we encourage all members of our school community—students, staff, and parents—to work together in preventing and responding to bullying in all its forms.

**2. Ethos and aims**

At Unsted Park School, we are dedicated to creating a safe and inclusive environment where all students feel valued and supported. Guided by our core values of **Believe, Respect, and Succeed**, we ensure that every student’s individual needs are met, fostering a community where everyone can thrive.

- **Believe:** We believe in the potential of every student. By cultivating self-confidence, we empower all students to overcome challenges and achieve their best.
- **Respect:** Respect is central to our school. We celebrate diversity and promote understanding, ensuring every student is treated with kindness and empathy. We educate our community about the importance of acceptance and stand firmly against bullying.
- **Succeed:** Success is built on support and safety. We are committed to providing an environment where every student, regardless of their specific needs, can succeed both academically and personally.

By living these values, Unsted Park School stands united against bullying, ensuring every student is respected, supported, and given the opportunity to succeed.

**Aims of Our Bullying Policy:**

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- **Prevention:** To proactively create an environment where bullying is less likely to occur through awareness programs, education, and fostering positive relationships among students and staff.
- **Identification:** To ensure that all instances of bullying are promptly identified and reported. We encourage open communication and provide clear channels for students, parents, and staff to report concerns.
- **Intervention:** To respond swiftly and effectively to any reported incidents of bullying. We implement a range of strategies to address the behaviour, support affected students, and work with the individuals involved to resolve conflicts.
- **Support:** To offer appropriate support to both victims and perpetrators of bullying. We provide counselling, guidance, and resources to help all parties involved heal and learn from the experience.
- **Review:** To regularly review and update our bullying policy and practices to ensure their effectiveness. We involve the whole school community in this process to continuously improve our approach to preventing and addressing bullying.

### 3. Links to legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for school/colleges in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Independent School Standards (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986

### 4. Roles and responsibilities

The Head Teacher – Has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies and appointing an Anti-bullying coordinator who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

The Anti-bullying Coordinators in our school is Jaimie Aspinall (Residential and Education). As the anti-bullying coordinator she is supported by Jamie Dowsett (Deputy Head Teacher) and her responsibilities include:

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies.
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice.
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review.
- Managing bullying incidents.
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents.
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate.
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour.

**All staff** at Unsted Park School have a shared responsibility to actively monitor, report, and address any incidents of bullying. They are expected to be vigilant, ensure the safety and well-being of students, and offer support to those who may be affected. Staff must intervene when necessary, report concerns to the appropriate channels, and work collaboratively to create an environment where students with autism feel understood, protected, and empowered.

## 5. Definition of Bullying

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.

Anti-Bullying Alliance

*Definition of bullying*

For students with autism, identifying and defining bullying can sometimes be difficult. Due to differences in communication and social understanding, they may struggle to recognise subtle forms of bullying, such as teasing, social exclusion, or manipulation. Likewise, they may not always be able to express when they feel bullied, or they might interpret well-intentioned actions as negative. As a school, we are committed to educating our staff and students to recognise these unique challenges, and we work closely with students with autism to help them understand what bullying is and how to report it.

## 6. Types of bullying

The UK Department for Education recognises several types of bullying. These are categorised to help schools and educators identify and address bullying in its various forms. The types of bullying include:

### **Physical bullying:**

- Involves physical harm or the threat of physical harm. This includes hitting, kicking, pushing, and damaging someone's belongings.

### **Verbal bullying:**

- Includes name-calling, mocking, offensive remarks, and threats. It often focuses on personal characteristics like appearance, disability, or ethnicity.

### **Emotional or psychological bullying:**

- Involves actions intended to harm someone's self-esteem or relationships. This could be through spreading rumours, excluding someone from a group, or using humiliation.

### **Cyberbullying:**

- Occurs online via social media, text messages, or emails. It involves posting harmful, threatening, or embarrassing content, or sending hurtful messages.

### **Racist bullying:**

- Targets someone based on their race, ethnicity, or cultural background. It includes racist insults, stereotypes, and discriminatory behaviour.

### **Homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic (HBT) bullying:**

- Directed at individuals because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. This includes derogatory comments or exclusion based on a person's real or perceived LGBTQ+ identity.

### **Sexual bullying:**

- Involves inappropriate comments, gestures, or actions of a sexual nature. It can include unwanted physical contact, sexual jokes, or spreading sexual rumours.

**Religious bullying:**

- Targets individuals based on their religious beliefs or lack thereof. It includes mocking or exclusion related to faith practices.

**Disability bullying:**

- Directed at individuals because of their physical or learning disabilities. It includes both verbal and physical abuse or excluding someone because of their disability.

**Sexist bullying:**

- Involves bullying someone based on their gender, reinforcing stereotypes, or demeaning someone because they do not conform to traditional gender roles.

In the UK, many types of bullying are linked to **protected characteristics** under the **Equality Act 2010**. These protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. Bullying based on any of these characteristics can be considered discriminatory and schools have a legal duty to address it.

**7. Reporting and responding to bullying**

At Unsted Park School, we take bullying very seriously. It is crucial to record and respond to all incidents of bullying to ensure a safe and supportive environment for every student. Accurate documentation helps us understand the extent of the problem, track patterns, and take effective action to prevent future incidents. By addressing bullying promptly and thoroughly, we can support the well-being of our students and maintain a positive school atmosphere.

Reporting Bullying

**Students:**

- **Online Reporting Form:** Use the "Help Yourself, Help Others" form, available on every desktop in the school. Simply open the form from the desktop shortcut and fill it out.
- **Speak to a Staff Member:** Report to a trusted teacher, school pastoral, or any other staff member.

**Parents/Guardians:**

- **Contacting the Tutor:** To report concerns directly, call the school office to obtain your child's tutor's contact information.
- **Call the Office:** You can also report incidents by calling the school office or the anti-bullying coordinator.

**Staff:**

- **MIS System:** Report the bullying incident using the MIS system, Engage.
- **Additional Reporting:** After completing the report on Engage, you may also talk to the anti-bullying coordinator or pastoral team for further discussion and support.

**Confidentiality and Support:**

- Reports will be kept confidential.
- Support will be provided to both the victim and the accused.

**Responding to Bullying**

**Initial Steps:**

- Acknowledge the report and ensure everyone's safety.

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- Assess the situation to determine immediate actions.

### Investigation:

- The response team, comprising the pastoral team and the anti-bullying coordinator, will investigate the incident.
- Interview all parties involved and gather evidence.
- Debrief All Parties: After gathering information, the response team will debrief each party to ensure they understand the process, their role, and the next steps.

### Resolution:

#### Determine Incident Stage:

The response team will classify the incident as Stage 1, Stage 2, or Stage 3 based on severity and impact.

**Stage 1:** Low-level incidents that can be addressed with minor interventions such as a warning or brief counselling.

- If, after a week, things have improved, no further formal action may be required. However, the response team will continue to monitor the situation.
- If things have not improved, the response team will escalate to Stage 2.
- If the incident appears to be Peer on Peer Abuse, the response team will treat it as a safeguarding incident.

#### Stage 2:

- If bullying is continuing, the response team will convene a meeting, which will likely include the children/young people involved, their advocates/keyworkers/link workers, and relevant staff to discuss resolution.
- The response team will develop an action plan that includes direct work with the children/young people involved and strategies to improve the situation.
- The response team will monitor the situation to assess progress. If, after a week, the situation has not improved, the response team will escalate to Stage 3.

#### Stage 3:

- Where Stages One and Two have proven ineffective and the continuing bullying is having an adverse effect on children and young people, the Headteacher, in liaison with their regional lead, should consider calling a professionals' meeting to review the situation. This may involve specialists such as teaching, therapy, and social work colleagues.
- Implement comprehensive interventions such as restorative justice, extended counselling, or more serious disciplinary measures as needed.

**Restorative Justice:** Restorative justice practices will be considered and used when appropriate at all stages. This may involve facilitated meetings where the victim and perpetrator can discuss the impact of the behaviour, make amends, and agree on steps to repair the harm and prevent future incidents.

For detailed information on each stage, refer to POLICY TITLE: Anti-Bullying ACS03 – England.

The response team will ensure the resolution supports the victim and addresses the behaviour of the perpetrator.

#### Follow-Up:

- The response team will monitor the situation to prevent further incidents.

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- The response team will provide ongoing support and regularly check in with those involved.

### 8. Record-Keeping and Training

The response team will maintain detailed records of incidents and actions taken.

All bullying incidents, including further actions, will be reported on the MIS system Engage.

The response team will track bullying incidents to highlight areas of concern and trends amongst the cohort. This tracking will be used to implement effective strategies to reduce bullying.

The response team will conduct regular training for staff and students on bullying prevention and response, sourced from the Anti-Bullying Alliance CPD programme.

### 9. Strategies to Prevent Bullying

#### **Awareness and Sensitivity Training:**

- At Unsted Park School, we conduct regular training sessions for staff and students to increase understanding and awareness of autism and individual learning needs.
- We use resources from the AET (Autism Education Trust) framework to provide accurate information.

#### **Clear Communication:**

- We ensure that communication methods are tailored to the needs of all students. This includes using visual supports, social stories, and clear, consistent language.
- Our routines are structured and predictable to help reduce anxiety and confusion for students who benefit from clear structure.

#### **Social Skills Training:**

- We offer social skills groups and interventions to help students develop appropriate interaction strategies and understand social cues.

#### **Safe Spaces:**

- We designate quiet, safe spaces within the school where students can go if they feel overwhelmed or need a break from social interactions.
- These spaces are clearly marked and known to all staff.

#### **Inclusion and Integration:**

- We encourage group work and collaborative projects that include everyone to build social connections.

#### **Monitoring and Support:**

- We implement regular check-ins with students to assess their comfort and safety within the school environment.
- We develop PBS plans with input from parents, teachers, and specialists to address specific needs and challenges.

#### **Empowering Students:**

- We teach self-advocacy skills and strategies to help students express their needs and seek help when necessary.
- We create a peer support network to empower students to stand up against bullying and support each other.

#### **Parental Involvement:**

- We work closely with parents to understand their child's needs and experiences.
- We provide resources and support for parents to help them address bullying issues and advocate for their child.

**Positive Behaviour Reinforcement:**

- We implement positive behaviour support systems that reward and reinforce appropriate social interactions and behaviours.
- We foster a culture of respect and inclusion where all students are encouraged to treat each other with kindness and empathy.

**10. Recognising the Signs of Bullying**

**General Signs of Bullying:**

- **Unexplained Injuries:** Frequent bruises, cuts, or other injuries that cannot be easily explained.
- **Changes in Behaviour:** Sudden changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn, anxious, or unusually quiet.
- **Reluctance to Attend School:** Frequent complaints about feeling sick, frequent absences, or reluctance to go to school.
- **Decline in Academic Performance:** A noticeable drop in grades or lack of interest in schoolwork.
- **Loss of Personal Items:** Missing personal belongings, such as clothing or school supplies.

**Signs of Bullying in Students with Autism:**

- **Increased Sensory Sensitivity:** Heightened sensitivity to sensory stimuli, such as noise or light, which may result from stress or anxiety due to bullying.
- **Changes in Communication:** Difficulties in expressing themselves verbally or through alternative communication methods, or a sudden increase in communication challenges.
- **Altered Routine Preferences:** Increased distress or anxiety when routines are disrupted, which may be exacerbated by bullying.
- **Unusual Behaviour:** Engaging in repetitive or self-soothing behaviours more frequently, or displaying unusual aggression or withdrawal.
- **Difficulty Interacting with Peers:** Struggles with social interactions, which might be intensified if they are being bullied or excluded.
- **Physical Symptoms:** Complaints of physical symptoms such as stomach aches or headaches, which may not have a medical cause but are related to emotional distress.

**11. Useful links and supporting organisations**

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

- The Restorative Justice Council: <https://restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools>

#### SEND

- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)
- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

#### Cyberbullying

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

#### Race, religion and nationality

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

#### LGBT

- Barnardo's LGBT Hub: [www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/our work/lgbtq.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm)
- Metro Charity: [www.metrocentreonline.org](http://www.metrocentreonline.org)
- EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)
- Proud Trust: [www.theproudtrust.org](http://www.theproudtrust.org)
- School/colleges Out: <http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

#### Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) [www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk)
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school/college staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: [Preventing sexual and sexist bullying \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](http://Preventingsexualandsexistbullying(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk))

#### Regular Review and Updates

- Annual Review: The anti-bullying policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant. This review will consider feedback from students, parents, staff, and any changes in legislation or best practices.



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<b>Contents Checklist</b> (Local Services may add additional items – this is a core list)			
How is information about preventing bullying communicated to children and young people?		How are records of bullying and interventions taken to prevent and manage them maintained, and who does this?	
How is information about preventing bullying communicated to colleagues?		How are incidents of bullying monitored?	
How are debriefs with children and young people facilitated and recorded following incidents of bullying or suspected bullying?		How and when are colleagues trained to prevent and manage incidents of bullying?	
How are debriefs with colleagues facilitated and recorded following incidents of bullying or suspected bullying?		How and when are colleagues trained to prevent and manage incidents of cyber-bullying?	

**Local Procedure Review History:**

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Summary of revisions</b>