Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Code:	SW6
Policy Start Date:	September 2024
Policy Review Date:	September 2026

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR5 Acceptable Use Policy – ICT
- HR6 Data Protection Policy
- ICT2 Online Safety Policy (Staff)
- ICT3 Online Safety Policy (Pupils)
- SW2 Exclusion Policy
- SW4 Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SW9 Parental Communications and Complaints Policy
- SW17 Safeguarding Adults Policy
- TL6 SEND Policy

1 Policy Statement

1.1 This policy sets out the Trust's anti-bullying strategy and outlines the manner in which instances of bullying behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with DfE guidance *Preventing and tackling bullying* and the *Equality Act 2010.*

1.2 The Trust will not tolerate bullying of any kind. Each setting will endeavour to provide inspirational, happy and comfortable environments, which positively encourage children and young people to want to come and learn.

1.3 Respect for each other is vital. Everyone has a right to maintain their dignity and their values. Everyone is expected to acknowledge, understand and respect every other individual.

1.4 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all primary, secondary and special academies within the Trust, as well as the Early Years setting at the Priory Witham Academy, Priory Apprenticeships and Lincolnshire SCITT.

1.5 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2 Roles, Responsibility and Implementation

2.1 The Education and Standards Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of Welfare.

2.2 Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

3 Aims

3.1 To provide a caring and supportive environment for all pupils.

3.2 To enable all pupils to develop the personal skills necessary to deal with conflict and bullying if they encounter it.

3.3 To enable pupils to recognise actions that may lead to bullying and therefore prevent bullying behaviour.

3.4 To encourage pupils to take appropriate action if they see bullying behaviour.

3.5   To promote positive strategies to combat bullying.

3.6   To ensure that all staff are aware of policies and procedures related to bullying behaviour.

4   Strategy

4.1   The Trust's anti-bullying strategy seeks to reduce incidents of bullying and create an environment across our settings where children and young people feel safe, listened to, and secure in their ability to discuss sensitive issues.

4.2   Whilst the Trust recognises the unique nature of each of our settings, this strategy sets out a foundational approach to bullying and as such can be applied consistently. The strategy allows for contextualisation through implementation.

4.3   The Trust's strategy will be reviewed as appropriate, which may be outside of the review timeframe for this policy.

4.4   This strategy is based on our Trust Values, the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC).

4.5   In order to reduce incidents of bullying, the Trust will:

- ensure a culture exists, and is embedded, that celebrates diversity and promotes inclusion, creating an environment where prejudice/hatred are not accepted;
- have an agreed definition of bullying that is shared widely with all stakeholders (see Appendix A);
- set clear boundaries for acceptable behaviour (through the Trust's SW4 Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy) which are modelled by staff;
- provide routes for reporting unacceptable behaviour, which are clear and understood by all;
- ensure a consistent response to any reports of unacceptable behaviour, instilling confidence within children and young people in the reporting process;
- work with children and young people to understand their lived experiences and ensure they are part of any preventative measures, e.g., pupil mentors;
- embed a successfully designed and delivered Personal Development Curriculum covering bullying, boundaries, healthy relationships and managing conflict; and
- measure pupil wellbeing to review the effectiveness of this approach.

5 Equality and inclusion

5.1 The *Equality Act 2010* requires all settings to have due regard of the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, 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; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

6 Safeguarding

6.1 If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, **significant harm** because of bullying, staff will consult and refer such instances immediately to the setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a member of the safeguarding team. Please refer to SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

6.2 Even when safeguarding is not an issue, the setting's safeguarding team may consult and work with external agencies to support pupils who are being bullied, or are involved in bullying behaviour.

6.3 Child-on-child abuse can take many different forms, including serious bullying (including cyber-bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying). In the event that bullying behaviour becomes abusive, the setting's safeguarding team will be involved in supporting all involved parties. Please refer to SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

7 Harassment

7.1 Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassment or threatening behaviour – or communication – could be criminal offences under the following Acts:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- The Communications Act 2003
- The Public Order Act 1986

7.2 If a setting feels that an offence may have been committed, the safeguarding team (or a nominated member of SLT) may refer the incident to the police.
For example, under the *Malicious Communications Act 1988*, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety; or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message or image which is

indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

8 Preventative measures

8.1 Clearly the best way to deal with bullying is to prevent it occurring. The Trust actively seeks to prevent bullying and may use the following strategies:

- encouraging considerate behaviour and rewarding such behaviour with praise and rewards;
- actively engaging pupils in meaningful activities inside and outside the classroom to avoid boredom;
- staff being role models of considerate and anti-bullying behaviour;
- providing a physical environment which is secure, safe and appropriately supervised;
- reviewing pupil opinions of bullying through pupil perception surveys;
- reviewing parent/carer opinions of bullying through parent surveys;
- reviewing staff opinions of bullying through staff surveys or other means of gathering information;
- using the results of surveys to modify practice if appropriate and/or necessary;
- providing space for children to avoid overcrowding;
- providing a range of environments during break/lunch times;
- raising the awareness of pupils and staff about bullying and the consequences, for example, through personal development, curriculum, assemblies and the bulletin ICT systems;
- highlight information about appropriate outside agencies that pupils can use;
- keeping accurate records of bullying incidents, in all settings, and reviewing on a regular basis;
- providing education regarding 'cyber-bullying' and internet safety;
- providing education on Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ+) issues and the impact of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying; and
- each academy will have a distinctive ethos which promotes good citizenship and encourages pupils to take responsibility for themselves.

The appropriate preventative action may vary greatly. It could range from a talk/explanation, counselling from the EYFS Lead/Class Teacher/Form Tutor, to outside agency workshops.

9 Responding to bullying behaviour

9.1 Each setting should ensure that there are clear routes for reporting bullying behaviour. This should include, as a minimum:

- clear signposting to pupils so that they know who they can speak to if they have a concern; and
- a reporting system for pupils who may be unable/are not ready to report their concerns verbally.

9.2   Incidents of bullying behaviour should be investigated promptly and thoroughly by an appropriate member of staff. All involved should be given the opportunity to talk and be listened to. For further information, please see Appendix B.

9.3   Where bullying behaviour is identified, appropriate consequences will be considered and disciplinary steps may be taken, including:

- official warnings to cease offending;
- exclusion from certain areas of academy premises;
- supervision by staff;
- removal from lessons;
- internal suspension;
- suspension; and/or
- permanent exclusion.

9.4   Parents/Carers will be involved by the setting as appropriate.

9.5   Staff must ensure that feedback is provided to all parties involved in an appropriate format, and in a timely manner.

9.6   All aspects of bullying incidents should be dealt with in a way that fosters mutual respect, individual responsibility, resolution and support. Staff must be confident that a resolution has been reached and bullying behaviour has stopped. As part of any response to bullying behaviour, therefore, staff should ensure appropriate ongoing monitoring is in place to obtain reassurances of this.

9.7   Comprehensive records must be kept of all reported incidents, the advice and support given and the response of the bully and the victim.

9.8   All incidents of bullying will be reported and recorded by the member of staff dealing with it. All records of bullying will be kept on the Trust's safeguarding system.

9.9   The records of bullying incidents will be analysed to ensure repeat offenders are identified and supported. The effectiveness and impact of advice and support given in reducing the number of incidents will be evaluated regularly. Where appropriate, any analysis will be shared with the setting's Personal Development Lead, to enable an ongoing review of the curriculum to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

10   Bullying outside of school/academy premises

10.1   The Trust and thus each academy has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the academy premises. Section 89(5) of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives schools the authority to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on academy premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff.

This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the academy premises, such as on academy or public transport, outside the local shops or in a town or village centre, particularly if the effects of these incidents are being brought into school.

10.2   When bullying outside an academy is reported to staff, it will be investigated and acted on. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will also consider whether it is appropriate to report the incident to the Police if this has not already been done.

11   Help and support

11.1   The victims and the perpetrators of bullying will receive help and guidance from staff, and external agencies if appropriate. In all cases of bullying, parents/carers will be involved and appropriate support will be given to those pupils involved.

11.2   Pupils who have been bullied may be supported by:

- being provided with an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff of their choice;
- being provided with the opportunity to take part in restorative conversations with those involved in the bullying;
- being reassured about the circumstances of their situation;
- being monitored by the appropriate pastoral team to provide a programme of support to restore self-esteem and confidence;
- reporting to Children's Services when a child may be suffering or likely to suffer harm; and/or
- involving other external agencies to support when appropriate.

11.3   Pupils who display bullying behaviour may be helped by:

- discussing what happened and how to resolve the situation;
- discovering why the pupils became involved;
- establishing the wrongdoing and need to change;
- informing parents/carers to help change the attitude of the pupil;
- the implementation of a programme that aims to foster positive interpersonal skills. This may involve work with specialist outside agencies; and/or

- being provided with the opportunity to take part in restorative conversations with the victim(s).

12   Monitoring, evaluation and review

12.1   The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the settings according to their own pastoral management systems.

13   Policy change

13.1   This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.

The Priory Federation of Academies Trust
Anti-Bullying Policy

This Policy has been approved by the Education and Standards Committee:

Signed……………………………   Name...   Date:

Trustee

Signed……………………………   Name...   Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed……………………………   Name...   Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.

APPENDIX A

Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on groups of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. *Preventing and tackling bullying*

Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It often involves a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship, which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves.

It is important to distinguish bullying from other unkind, mean and harmful behaviour. A single incident of calling someone a name, pushing someone, being rude, expressing negative thoughts and feelings, leaving someone out or having an argument with someone is not bullying. Relationships between young people can break down from time to time and relational conflict occurs. To minimise the number of times these differences lead to bullying requires each individual to respect others.

Bullying, as per the above definition, has three common elements:
- It is deliberately hurtful.
- It is repeated, often over a period of time.
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves (a power imbalance).

Examples of behaviour that can become bullying behaviour include:
- verbal abuse, such as name calling and gossiping
- non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or text messages
- emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
- undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours
- controlling or manipulating someone
- racial, sexual, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying
- physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
- making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

APPENDIX B

A setting's response to a report of bullying