



The Banda School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



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1. Our Commitment

At The Banda, we are committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive environment in which every pupil feels valued, respected and able to learn and thrive.

Our school community is based on respect, kindness, good manners, fair play and consideration for others. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Everyone in the school community has a responsibility to help prevent bullying, to speak up when they see or experience it, and to help create an environment in which pupils feel safe to seek help.

This policy applies to all pupils from Pegasus Early Years to Year 8 and to all members of the wider school community. It applies to behaviour occurring in school, on school activities and trips, while travelling to and from school, online, and outside school where the behaviour has an impact on the safety, wellbeing or relationships of members of the school community.

2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to hurt, intimidate, humiliate, isolate or undermine another person. Bullying may involve a real or perceived imbalance of power and may be physical, verbal, social, emotional or online.

Bullying is often repeated or persistent, but a single serious incident may also constitute bullying, particularly where there is significant harm, intimidation, discrimination or a safeguarding concern.

Bullying may include:

- physical behaviour such as hitting, kicking, pushing or deliberately damaging belongings;
- verbal behaviour such as name-calling, insults, threats or repeated hurtful comments;
- social or relational behaviour such as deliberate exclusion, spreading rumours, humiliation or encouraging others to isolate someone;
- intimidation, coercion or threatening behaviour;
- racist or discriminatory behaviour;
- behaviour relating to a pupil's religion, culture, nationality, ethnicity, disability, SEND, appearance, family circumstances or other personal characteristics;
- sexual harassment or sexualised bullying;
- bullying through social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms or other online spaces;
- sharing or creating harmful images, videos, audio or other content;
- impersonation, fake accounts or deliberately misleading digital content;

- using artificial intelligence or other technology to create or manipulate content intended to harm, humiliate, threaten or distress another pupil.

Bullying may be obvious or subtle. It may take place between individuals or involve a group.

3. Bullying, Conflict and Unkind Behaviour

Not every disagreement or incident of unkind behaviour is bullying. Children may experience friendship difficulties, arguments, disagreements, rough play or one-off incidents of inappropriate behaviour that do not meet the definition of bullying.

However, all behaviour that is harmful, unsafe, disrespectful or inappropriate will be taken seriously and addressed appropriately.

Staff will consider:

- what happened;
- whether the behaviour was targeted;
- whether there was repetition or persistence;
- whether there was an imbalance of power;
- the impact on the pupil;
- the age and developmental stage of the pupils involved;
- whether discrimination or prejudice was involved;
- whether the behaviour involved intimidation, coercion or threats;
- whether there are safeguarding concerns.

Where a serious one-off incident causes significant harm or involves a safeguarding concern, the School will respond appropriately even if it does not meet the usual definition of bullying.

4. Types of Bullying

Physical Bullying

This includes hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, tripping, physical intimidation or deliberately damaging or taking another pupil's belongings.

Verbal Bullying

This includes repeated name-calling, insults, threats, taunting, humiliating comments or other deliberately hurtful language.

Social and Emotional Bullying

This includes deliberate exclusion, spreading rumours, encouraging others not to associate with a pupil, humiliation, manipulation, intimidation or other behaviour intended to isolate or distress someone.

Racist and Discriminatory Bullying

The School does not tolerate bullying or other harmful behaviour based on race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, religion or belief, disability or SEND, sex, appearance, family circumstances or other personal characteristics.

Racist behaviour may include racial slurs, derogatory comments, stereotyping, racist jokes or banter, mocking accents or cultural practices, or using racial or cultural characteristics to humiliate another pupil. Such behaviour is unacceptable regardless of whether it is described as a joke or whether the person responsible claims that no harm was intended.

Sexual Harassment and Sexualised Bullying

This includes unwanted sexual comments, jokes, gestures, messages, images, touching, sexualised name-calling, sharing sexualised content or other behaviour of a sexual nature that causes another pupil distress or makes them feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be addressed in accordance with the Behaviour and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and may constitute child-on-child abuse.

Cyberbullying and Online Bullying

Cyberbullying can take place through:

- messaging platforms and group chats;
- social media;
- gaming platforms and gaming chat;
- email;
- websites and forums;
- mobile phones and other digital devices;
- fake or anonymous accounts;
- shared images, videos or audio;
- other online or digital platforms.

Online bullying may include threats, harassment, exclusion, impersonation, sharing private information, humiliating images or videos, encouraging others to target a pupil, or creating or sharing harmful content.

The fact that behaviour takes place outside school does not mean that it is outside the School's concern. Where online behaviour affects the safety, wellbeing, relationships or education of pupils, the School may need to become involved.

5. Artificial Intelligence and Digital Manipulation

The misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) or other digital technology to deliberately harm another pupil is unacceptable.

This includes creating, altering, manipulating or sharing images, videos, audio, messages or other content with the intention of humiliating, threatening, deceiving, intimidating or causing distress to another child.

Examples may include:

- AI-generated or manipulated photographs;
- fake or altered videos;
- impersonation;
- fabricated messages or conversations;
- fake accounts;
- manipulated or misleading recordings;
- creating or sharing humiliating content about another pupil.

Where such behaviour takes place at school, involves school devices or systems, or has a significant impact on the school community, it will be addressed under the Behaviour Policy and, where appropriate, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Where an incident takes place outside school and is reported to the School, parents will be informed and the School will provide appropriate guidance and support. Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will follow its safeguarding procedures regardless of where the behaviour occurred.

6. Preventing Bullying

The prevention of bullying is everyone's responsibility. The School promotes positive relationships and respectful behaviour through:

- the curriculum, including PSHE and Computing;
- Form Time and class discussions;
- assemblies;
- age-appropriate work on friendship, relationships and online safety;
- modelling respectful behaviour by adults;
- positive reinforcement and recognition of kindness;
- opportunities for pupils to discuss concerns;
- School Council and pupil voice;
- appropriate pastoral support;

- close supervision and vigilance during less structured times;
- appropriate education for pupils about responsible digital behaviour;
- communication and partnership with parents.

Staff are expected to remain alert to changes in behaviour, friendship groups, mood, attendance, participation and relationships that may indicate that a pupil is experiencing difficulties.

Non-teaching staff are also encouraged to report behaviour that causes concern or pupils who appear anxious, isolated or unhappy.

7. Helping Pupils to Speak Up

Pupils are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if:

- they are being bullied;
- they see someone else being bullied;
- they are worried about something happening online;
- they receive a threatening or upsetting message;
- they are worried about a friend;
- they feel unsafe for any reason.

Pupils can speak to any member of staff they trust, including their Class Teacher, Form Tutor, Head of Lower School, Head of Early Years, Pastoral Leader, School Counsellor, Designated Safeguarding Lead or another trusted adult.

Pupils will be listened to carefully and sensitively. Staff will respect pupils' privacy wherever possible, but cannot promise confidentiality where information needs to be shared to keep a child or another person safe.

Pupils who witness bullying are encouraged to report it. They should not join in, encourage or share bullying behaviour.

8. If a Pupil Reports Bullying

When a concern is reported, staff should follow the following approach:

a. Listen

Listen calmly and take the report seriously. Thank the pupil for speaking up.

b. Make the pupil safe

Consider whether immediate action is needed to protect the pupil from further harm or distress.

c. Record

Make an accurate record of the concern in accordance with the School's recording procedures. Significant concerns should be recorded on CPOMS.

d. Inform

Inform the appropriate pastoral leader and, where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

e. Investigate

Relevant pupils should be spoken to separately and sensitively. Witnesses and other relevant information should be considered. Staff should avoid reaching conclusions before the available information has been considered.

f. Assess

The School will determine whether the incident is:

- bullying;
- unkind or inappropriate behaviour;
- a friendship or interpersonal conflict;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- child-on-child abuse;
- an online safety concern; or
- a safeguarding concern.

More than one of these categories may apply.

g. Respond

Appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and, where appropriate, the Safeguarding or Online Safety Policies. Responses will be proportionate and will take account of the pupils' age, developmental stage, SEND and individual circumstances.

h. Support and follow up

The pupil who has experienced bullying will be offered appropriate support. The School will also consider what support or intervention is required for the pupil responsible for the behaviour.

The School will follow up with the pupil after an appropriate period to check that the behaviour has stopped and that the pupil feels safe. Further monitoring or support will be put in place where necessary.

9. Guidance for Pupils

If you think you are being bullied:

- tell a trusted adult;
- explain what has happened and who is involved;
- tell an adult if the behaviour happens again;
- keep any messages, screenshots or other evidence of online bullying where it is safe to do so;
- do not retaliate or respond with further harmful behaviour;
- remember that asking for help is not "telling tales";
- if you see someone else being bullied, tell an adult.

If something happens online that makes you feel uncomfortable, frightened or humiliated, tell an adult. You will not be blamed for asking for help.

10. Guidance for Parents and Guardians

If your child tells you that they are being bullied:

- listen calmly and take what they say seriously;
- reassure your child that they have done the right thing by telling you;
- ask for enough information to understand what has happened without repeatedly questioning or pressuring your child;
- keep a record of significant incidents;
- where appropriate, retain relevant screenshots, messages or other online evidence;
- contact the School promptly if the concern involves another pupil or is affecting your child's wellbeing or education;
- avoid contacting or confronting the other child or their parents directly;
- avoid retaliating online;
- work with the School to agree appropriate support and next steps.

Parents are encouraged to maintain open communication with the School. The School will listen to concerns, investigate appropriately and communicate with parents about significant incidents and the steps being taken.

Where an incident occurs entirely outside school and does not involve the School community, the School may provide guidance to parents but may not be able to investigate or impose school sanctions. Where the incident affects pupils, relationships, wellbeing or safety within the School community, the School may take appropriate action.

11. Guidance for Staff

When a pupil reports bullying, staff should:

- remain calm;
- listen carefully;
- take the concern seriously;
- avoid making assumptions or reaching immediate conclusions;
- reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by speaking up;
- consider whether immediate protection is required;
- avoid making promises of confidentiality;
- record the concern accurately;
- inform the appropriate pastoral leader and/or DSL;
- ensure that the matter is followed up.

Staff should speak separately with pupils involved and should not require a pupil who has experienced bullying to confront or mediate directly with the pupil responsible.

Staff should consider the possibility that behaviour may be linked to SEND, neurodevelopmental differences, communication difficulties, emotional regulation, developmental age or an unmet need. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments and additional support should be considered.

Staff should focus on the behaviour and its impact rather than labelling a child as "a bully".

12. Safeguarding and Child-on-Child Abuse

Some forms of bullying may also constitute child-on-child abuse or a safeguarding concern. This may include:

- serious physical violence;
- threats or intimidation;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- sexual harassment or sexual violence;
- discriminatory abuse;
- serious online abuse;
- sharing sexualised or intimate images;
- behaviour involving significant emotional or psychological harm;
- behaviour that places a child at significant risk.

Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The fact that an incident is described as "bullying" does not prevent it from also being treated as a safeguarding concern.

13. Responding to Pupils Responsible for Bullying

The School will respond to bullying in a way that is proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour and appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the pupil. Responses may include:

- discussion and reflection;
- restorative work where appropriate;
- education about the impact of the behaviour;
- pastoral support;
- parental involvement;
- monitoring;
- behaviour support strategies;
- appropriate sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The School's approach will be constructive and will seek to help pupils understand the impact of their behaviour, take responsibility and make positive changes. However, serious or persistent bullying may result in significant disciplinary action, including suspension where appropriate and in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and the School's disciplinary procedures.

Where a pupil responsible for bullying has SEND or other additional needs, the School will consider whether reasonable adjustments or additional support are required while maintaining appropriate behavioural expectations.

14. Supporting Pupils Who Experience Bullying

The School will consider the individual needs of any pupil who has experienced bullying. Support may include:

- regular check-ins with a trusted adult;
- pastoral support;
- support from the School Counsellor where appropriate;
- help to rebuild confidence and relationships;
- additional supervision or monitoring;
- support with online safety;

- reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- communication with parents;
- safeguarding support where required.

The School will avoid placing responsibility on the pupil who has experienced bullying to resolve the situation themselves.

15. Parental Involvement

Parents and guardians are important partners in preventing and responding to bullying. Where appropriate, parents of pupils directly involved in a significant bullying incident will be informed. The timing and nature of parental communication will depend on the circumstances and will be determined by the relevant pastoral or safeguarding leader. Where a safeguarding concern exists, communication will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The School will aim to communicate clearly and sensitively, while respecting the privacy of all pupils involved.

16. Recording and Monitoring

All significant bullying concerns will be recorded in accordance with the School's recording procedures. Relevant incidents will be recorded on CPOMS where appropriate and reviewed by the relevant pastoral and safeguarding staff.

Records will be monitored to identify:

- repeated incidents involving the same pupils;
- patterns in particular locations or activities;
- online patterns;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- patterns affecting particular groups of pupils;
- emerging safeguarding concerns.

The School will use this information to identify preventative action and determine whether additional support, supervision, education or changes to practice are required.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

The Head

The Head has overall responsibility for ensuring that bullying is taken seriously, investigated appropriately and addressed in accordance with School policy and applicable law.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads

The DSLs are responsible for ensuring that bullying incidents which raise safeguarding concerns are dealt with under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Pastoral and Teaching Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- modelling respectful behaviour;
- teaching and reinforcing positive relationships;
- remaining vigilant;
- responding promptly to concerns;
- recording and reporting concerns appropriately;
- supporting pupils;
- following up after incidents.

All Staff

All members of staff, including non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to report bullying or behaviour that causes concern.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- treat others with respect;
- not bully or encourage bullying;
- speak up when they experience or witness bullying;
- seek help when they are concerned about themselves or another pupil;
- behave responsibly online.

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- support the School's approach to respectful behaviour;
- encourage their children to speak to trusted adults;
- communicate concerns promptly;
- work constructively with the School;
- model respectful behaviour in their own communications with the School and wider community.

18. Relationship with Other School Policies

This policy should be read alongside the School's:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Acceptable Use Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Complaints Policy.

Where bullying involves safeguarding concerns, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy takes precedence in determining safeguarding action. Where disciplinary consequences are required, the Behaviour Policy will be followed.

19. Anti-Bullying Policy at a Glance

Our commitment

Bullying is never acceptable.

At The Banda, every pupil has the right to feel safe, respected and included.

We teach children how to develop positive relationships, recognise harmful behaviour, seek help and take responsibility for their actions.

Bullying may be:

Physical

Hitting, kicking, pushing, intimidation or damaging belongings.

Verbal

Name-calling, threats, insults or repeated hurtful comments.

Social or emotional

Exclusion, rumours, humiliation, isolation or intimidation.

Discriminatory

Behaviour targeting race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, religion, disability, SEND, sex, appearance or other personal characteristics.

Sexual

Unwanted sexual comments, behaviour, images or messages.

Online

Cyberbullying, threats, harassment, exclusion, fake accounts or harmful digital content.

AI-related

Creating or manipulating images, videos, audio or other content to humiliate, threaten, deceive or harm another pupil.

If something goes wrong

Listen → Make Safe → Record → Inform → Investigate → Respond → Support → Follow Up

Serious behaviour or safeguarding concerns may move directly to a higher level of response.

If you are being bullied:

Tell someone.

Speak to a trusted adult. You will be listened to carefully and sensitively.

If you see bullying:

Don't join in. Don't share it. Tell an adult.

If something happens online:

Save evidence where appropriate and tell an adult.

The School will provide guidance and support where an incident occurs outside school and is reported to us. Where the behaviour affects the safety, wellbeing or relationships of pupils within the School community, the School may take appropriate action.

Our approach

We listen.

We take concerns seriously.

We make pupils safe.

We investigate fairly.

We support pupils.

We work with parents.

We address harmful behaviour.

We follow up to make sure it stops.

Everyone has a part to play in preventing bullying.