



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY v 2.8

Policy Statement

At Town Close School, we are aware that pupils may be bullied in any school or setting, and recognise that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding to any cases of bullying should be a priority to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, it is essential that our school:

- Eliminates 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.

At Town Close School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their Local Authority's safeguarding team.

This policy is closely linked with our Behaviour Policy, and our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

We aim:

- To encourage all pupils to respect one another.
- To ensure that all targets of bullying are aware of the support available to them, i.e. class teacher/tutor, external providers
- To provide guidance and support for the pupil exhibiting bullying behaviour as we seek to modify their behaviour.
- To provide support to all those who may have been affected by bullying: target, bystanders, parents, pupil's exhibiting bullying behaviours, wider school community.

- To outline a variety of courses of action so that the School's response is appropriate to each separate incident, e.g. no blame policy.
- To structure the procedure in such a way that everyone knows what to do when an incident occurs.
- To ensure that everyone knows bullying is unacceptable at Town Close.
- To raise staff awareness so that the risk of bullying can be reduced.
- To raise children's awareness through the PSHE programme, "The Town Close Way", assemblies etc.

What is bullying?

Definitions

Bullying is a form of child-on child abuse (KCSIE, 2025). Bullying is the repeated wilful, conscious desire to harm, threaten or frighten someone - it can be physical or verbal.

Physical

Pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc

Verbal

Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling

Emotional

Isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual bullying', which can occur in and outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen beyond the school day into home and private space, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content.

Racist Bullying

This refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that make the person feel unwelcome marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity culture, faith community, national origin or national status.

Homophobic Bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual people.

Sexual

Unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments

Vulnerable Groups We recognise that some groups of pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Looked After Children
- Children having caring responsibilities
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- Children from ethnic minorities
- Children for whom English is an Additional Language
- Children who are perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transsexual
- Those suffering from health problems, including mental health

Throughout this policy, terminology when referring to bullying situations will be used as follows:

- **Target** – often referred to as the ‘victim’.
‘Victim’ terminology can imply that the person given this label has no power and is helpless to change what has happened to them.

At Town Close, we actively encourage children to be assertive and to speak out clearly if they are uncomfortable with a behaviour exhibited towards them.

- **Pupil exhibiting bullying behaviours** – often referred to as the ‘bully’.
‘Bully’ implies that the child’s behaviour is fixed and therefore unlikely to change. Recognising that the child is exhibiting certain behaviours, helps to support them to change such behaviours to more positive and respectful ones.
- **Bystanders** – anyone who witnessed the event, but whom, for whatever reason, felt unable to intervene.

What does bullying behaviour look like?

At Town Close School, we consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours of concern occur. We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age and stage of development of the pupils involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all children involved.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

What should I do?

On becoming aware of a potential bullying incident, a member of staff should:

- intervene immediately to ensure the protection of the target, pupil displaying bullying behaviours and bystanders.
- Report and record bullying incidents to the Deputy Head Pastoral. These records will be held on the schools bullying log.

Information regarding sanctions can be found in the behaviour management policy.

Help, Support and Counselling

All affected parties of bullying will be given support, including:

- Targets of bullying
- The pupil(s) exhibiting bullying behaviours
- Bystanders
- Parents of affected pupils
- Any other affected member of the school community

Targets of bullying are supported in some or all of the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher/tutor or another adult of their choice, and bring a friend for support
- By informing their parents / guardians
- By offering continuing support

Pupils exhibiting bullying behaviours are helped in some or all of the following ways:

- By talking about what happened to discover why they became involved
- By informing their parents/guardians
- By endeavouring to dispel their prejudices as far as possible

Consequences (see School Behaviour Policy and Pupils' Disciplinary Code)

- Their parents will be informed, by phone or in person
- They will be given an appropriate sanction in line with our behaviour policy

Last reviewed November 2025

Next review November 2026