Policy for Anti-Bullying

Adopted : Sep 2026
Review : Sep 2027

Introduction

At Crossdale Primary School, we aim to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which every pupil can learn, belong and reach their potential. We expect pupils to behave safely and respectfully, both in school and where behaviour outside school affects pupils or school life. Bullying is unacceptable.

We recognise that, as children learn and grow together, friendship difficulties and relational conflict can occur. We will support pupils to resolve these difficulties and remain alert to situations that may develop into bullying. If bullying or other harmful behaviour occurs, pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident to raise concerns and know that they will be taken seriously, responded to promptly and followed up appropriately.

At Crossdale, we encourage open discussion about difference, actively challenge prejudice and discrimination, and celebrate diversity. We take a contextual and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child harm, considering the circumstances, relationships and needs of the pupils involved. We work with families and, where appropriate, external agencies to support pupils and reduce the risk of further harm.

This policy reflects current national and local guidance, including **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**, **Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)**, **Behaviour in Schools (2024)**, the **Equality Act 2010**, and the September 2026 Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council anti-bullying guidance. It should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Policy Development

This policy is developed and reviewed with input from staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils. Pupil voice is gathered through surveys and relevant activities, including Anti-Bullying Week, with other consultation undertaken as appropriate.

Policy Availability

This policy is published on the school website. A paper copy is available on request from the school office.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board, as academy proprietor, is responsible for ensuring that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented. The Local Governing Body provides local scrutiny within the Trust's agreed governance arrangements.

All staff have a responsibility to help prevent and respond to bullying. Staff should be alert to bullying that takes place in school, online or outside school where it affects pupils or school life. They are expected to model respectful and inclusive behaviour, respond to concerns, make appropriate records and follow safeguarding procedures where a child may be at risk.

The Headteacher, Peter Cresswell, has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy, working with the Local Governing Body, parents/carers, the Trust, Local Authority and other agencies as appropriate.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Peter Cresswell, Headteacher
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Sam Seedhouse, Head of School and SENCO

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The school ensures that the DSL or DDSL is available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. Staff must report safeguarding concerns without delay and follow the Child Protection Policy. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL or DDSL is not immediately available, staff must not delay appropriate protective action and must follow the school's safeguarding procedures, including seeking advice or support from a senior leader or children's social care where necessary.

The **Anti-Bullying Coordinator is Sam Seedhouse, Head of School and SENCO**. She has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating and overseeing the school's anti-bullying arrangements. This includes:

- coordinating the implementation and review of this policy, including opportunities for pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers to contribute;
- overseeing the response to and follow-up of concerns reported as possible bullying, including appropriate recording on CPOMS;
- monitoring patterns, including whether particular groups appear disproportionately affected, and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's response, so that findings inform prevention, support and future policy review;
- identifying and coordinating relevant training and support for staff and, where appropriate, parents/carers;
- coordinating strategies to prevent bullying and working with the Headteacher, safeguarding team and other staff or agencies where appropriate;
- ensuring that the needs of pupils with SEND or communication difficulties are considered in prevention, reporting, support and follow-up.

All adults are expected to model respectful, professional and inclusive behaviour. Concerns about an adult's conduct towards a pupil must be reported through the safeguarding and staff-conduct procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy and relevant Trust procedures.

The **Safeguarding Link Governor is Helen Holmes**. As part of this role, she provides local scrutiny of the school's anti-bullying arrangements through the agreed Local Governing Body monitoring arrangements, including consideration of anonymised information about patterns, effectiveness and emerging issues. The Link Governor does not become involved in the operational management of individual cases.

What is bullying and how does it differ from relational conflict?

At Crossdale Primary School, we use the definition of bullying provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance and adopted in the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council guidance:

"Bullying is 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."

In deciding whether behaviour is bullying, staff consider the whole context and any pattern over time. In particular, we consider whether the behaviour is repetitive, whether there is an intention to hurt or cause distress, and whether there is an imbalance of power. Power can arise in different ways, including through group dynamics, social relationships or a pupil's particular vulnerability. We do not

decide whether something is bullying simply from the label used by a pupil, parent/carer or member of staff.

Bullying can affect any child and may be connected to actual or perceived differences between pupils. This can include prejudice or discrimination relating to race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or SEND, as well as differences relating to appearance, family circumstances, being adopted or in care, or having caring responsibilities.

Some incidents between pupils do not meet the definition of bullying but still require support or intervention. These are often described as relational conflict or friendship difficulties.

Relational conflict will usually involve pupils or groups who are relatively similar in power or status. The behaviour may be occasional, reactive or accidental rather than forming a deliberate and repeated pattern of harm, and pupils may show a willingness to resolve the difficulty or repair the relationship. These are indicators rather than a checklist: staff will consider the circumstances of each situation carefully.

Not meeting the definition of bullying does not mean that no action is needed. A one-off incident may still be harmful, discriminatory, sexualised, aggressive or otherwise serious and may require a behaviour, equality or safeguarding response. Equally, unresolved relational conflict can develop into bullying if patterns of intentional harm or imbalance of power emerge.

Bullying and relational conflict can involve wider peer groups as well as the pupils most directly involved. Staff will therefore consider the role of other pupils, including bystanders, and help them understand how to respond safely and responsibly.

Whether a concern is ultimately assessed as bullying, relational conflict or another form of harmful behaviour, the school will:

- listen carefully to the pupils involved and consider the wider context;
- consider immediate safety and any safeguarding concerns;
- respond proportionately to the behaviour and provide appropriate support;
- involve parents/carers as appropriate;
- record concerns and actions in accordance with this policy and the Behaviour Policy; and
- follow up and monitor where necessary to check that the behaviour has stopped and that pupils feel safe.

We avoid labelling children as a “bully” or “victim”. Instead, we describe the behaviour and refer, where appropriate, to the pupil who has experienced bullying or harmful behaviour and the pupil who is alleged to have displayed it. This reflects our expectation that behaviour can change while ensuring that harmful behaviour is addressed clearly.

What does bullying behaviour look like?

At Crossdale, we consider the whole context in which behaviour occurs. This includes what has happened, its impact, any pattern over time, the relationships and power dynamics involved, the age and developmental needs of the pupils, and any particular vulnerabilities or additional needs. We may also consider what appears to be contributing to the behaviour. Understanding context does not excuse harmful behaviour; our first consideration is the safety and welfare of the children affected.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- **Physical** – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching or other physical harm.
- **Verbal** – name-calling, threats, teasing, belittling, spreading rumours, gossiping or repeated hurtful comments.
- **Emotional or relational** – deliberately isolating or excluding others, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, threatening gestures, hiding belongings, manipulation or coercion.
- **Sexual or sexualised** – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, sexualised comments or other harmful sexualised behaviour. Such behaviour may also constitute a safeguarding concern and will be dealt with under the Child Protection Policy where appropriate.
- **Online / cyber** – harmful messages or posts, deliberate online exclusion, sharing images or personal information, or creating or sharing harmful manipulated or AI-generated material.
- **Indirect** – encouraging others to target or exclude someone, manipulation, exploitation of a relationship or a **false friendship**, where someone appears to be a friend but uses the relationship or a power imbalance to cause harm.
- **Baiting or deliberate provocation** – intentionally provoking a pupil in order to cause an angry, distressed or dysregulated response, including where this is then used to embarrass them or get them into trouble.
- **Prejudice-related or discriminatory** – derogatory language or behaviour relating to actual or perceived difference, including race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or SEND. This may include sexist behaviour, including misogynistic or misandrist language or attitudes. It can also include behaviour directed at a pupil because of their association with a family member or friend.

Any bullying is taken seriously. The school's response will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, its impact, any safeguarding risk and the needs of the pupils involved.

Banter and bullying

Friendly, reciprocal banter can form part of positive relationships between pupils. However, describing behaviour as “just banter” does not determine whether it is acceptable, and harmful or bullying behaviour must not be dismissed on that basis.

When considering whether an exchange is positive banter, inappropriate behaviour or bullying, staff will consider:

- **whether it was welcome and reciprocal** – were all those involved willingly taking part and experiencing the exchange positively?
- **intention** – was the apparent purpose playful, or was there an intention to hurt, humiliate, provoke or exclude?
- **impact** – how was the behaviour experienced by the pupil concerned?
- **content and topic** – did it target a vulnerability, difference or protected characteristic, or contain discriminatory or objectively offensive material?
- **context and audience** – did it happen privately or publicly, online or face to face, and who else saw or received it?
- **power** – was there an imbalance arising from friendship groups, popularity, numbers, age, vulnerability or other circumstances?
- **pattern** – was this an isolated exchange or part of repeated behaviour?

Intention is relevant but is not decisive. Behaviour intended as a joke can still cause harm, and claims of “banter” can sometimes be used to minimise or disguise harmful behaviour.
Staff will respond to concerning behaviour even where it does not meet the definition of bullying. Concerns reported or assessed as possible bullying, and repeated, harmful, discriminatory or

safeguarding-related behaviour, will be recorded on CPOMS. Other routine, one-off low-level behaviour will be dealt with and recorded in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Where does bullying take place?

Bullying can take place in school, on the journey to or from school, in the local community or online. Online bullying may occur through messaging services, social media, gaming platforms or other digital spaces, and harmful content can be shared quickly and reach a wide audience.
Crossdale will take reports of off-site or online behaviour seriously where they affect a pupil's safety, wellbeing, relationships or school life. We will consider the circumstances, provide appropriate support and take any safeguarding action that is required.
Where it is reasonable and appropriate, the school may respond to off-site behaviour through the Behaviour Policy. We do not assume responsibility for all behaviour that takes place outside school, but we will not disregard harmful behaviour simply because it occurred away from the school site or online.
Where concerns are particularly serious, persistent or may involve a criminal or safeguarding matter, the school will work with relevant agencies as appropriate, which may include the Local Authority, Children's Services or the Police.

How to report bullying concerns

At Crossdale, we want pupils, parents/carers, staff and visitors to feel confident in raising concerns about possible bullying and to know that these concerns will be taken seriously.

We are committed to supporting the pupils affected, including the pupil who has experienced the behaviour, the pupil alleged to have displayed it, and any witnesses or bystanders. Where patterns or wider issues are identified, we will also consider what action may be needed for the wider pupil group or school community.

Our reporting arrangements are intended to be clear and accessible. We review their effectiveness and make reasonable adjustments where pupils need additional support to recognise, communicate or report a concern.

Pupils, including witnesses and bystanders

Pupils may report a concern to **any trusted member of staff**, including a class teacher, teaching assistant, Headteacher, Head of School, lunchtime supervisor or member of the office team. We regularly remind pupils about trusted adults and how to seek help.

The adult receiving a concern will:

- listen carefully and take the pupil seriously;
- establish the essential information without asking unnecessary or leading questions;
- explain what will happen next and not promise to keep the information secret;
- consider whether any immediate action is needed to keep a pupil safe; and
- make a prompt CPOMS record where the concern is reported or assessed as possible bullying.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL or DDSL without delay and managed in accordance with the Child Protection Policy. Where a child may be in immediate danger, staff must take appropriate protective action and must not wait for a named safeguarding lead to become available.

We recognise that some pupils may find it difficult to recognise bullying, speak directly to an adult or explain what has happened. Each classroom has a worry box**,** and pupils may also be supported to report concerns in another suitable way, for example through a familiar adult, written or visual

communication, or an individually agreed method. Staff will make appropriate adjustments for pupils with SEND or communication needs and will not rely solely on pupils being able to report concerns independently.

A concern will still be addressed where it is subsequently assessed as relational conflict or another form of harmful behaviour rather than bullying.

Parents and carers

We recognise that it can be difficult for a parent or carer to learn that their child may have experienced bullying, displayed harmful behaviour or witnessed it.
Parents/carers who have concerns should normally contact their child's class teacher in the first instance. They can do this through the school office by emailing contact@crossdale.notts.sch.uk or telephoning 0115 974 8088. A parent/carer may also raise a concern with the Headteacher or Head of School where appropriate.
Staff will listen to the concern, gather the information available and explain what will happen next. Where the matter is reported or assessed as possible bullying, it will be recorded promptly on CPOMS and relevant staff will be informed. Safeguarding concerns will be referred to the DSL or DDSL without delay.
Parents/carers can help the school by sharing relevant information or evidence, particularly where concerns involve online or off-site behaviour. We ask parents/carers to raise concerns directly with school rather than attempting to investigate or resolve the matter themselves. Parents/carers must not approach, question or challenge another pupil about an alleged incident.
Parents/carers will be kept appropriately informed about the response affecting their own child. The school cannot normally disclose confidential information about another pupil, including personal circumstances, support or consequences applied to them.

School staff

Staff should remain alert to changes in behaviour, relationships, attendance, wellbeing or engagement that may indicate that a pupil is experiencing difficulties. They should not wait for a pupil or parent to make a formal allegation where there are reasonable grounds for concern.

A member of staff who observes or receives information about possible bullying should:

- take any immediate action needed to keep pupils safe;
- make a prompt and factual CPOMS record of a concern reported or assessed as possible bullying;
- alert the Anti-Bullying Coordinator or another appropriate senior leader in accordance with the school's agreed arrangements; and
- report any safeguarding concern to the DSL or DDSL without delay.

Records should distinguish clearly between what has been reported or alleged**,** what staff have directly observed, and any subsequent findings or decisions.

Visitors

Visitors who witness or receive information about possible bullying or other harmful behaviour should report the concern to a member of school staff as soon as possible and, where practicable, before leaving the school. Where there is an immediate concern about a child's safety, this must be raised straight away.

The member of staff receiving the information will make the appropriate school record and ensure that relevant colleagues are informed. Any safeguarding concern will be referred to the DSL or DDSL without delay.

Concerns about an adult

A pupil who is worried about the behaviour of an adult can tell any trusted member of staff. The member of staff receiving the concern must take it seriously and pass it on promptly through the appropriate safeguarding route.
A parent/carer may raise a concern about the conduct of an adult with the Headteacher or DSL, as appropriate.
Concerns about an adult's conduct towards a pupil will not be managed solely through the pupil-to-pupil bullying process. They will follow the safeguarding, staff-conduct and allegations procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy and relevant Trust procedures.
Concerns about the Headteacher will follow the Trust route specified in the current Child Protection Policy.

How our school will respond to reports of bullying

At Crossdale, all reports of possible bullying are taken seriously and responded to promptly. An appropriate member of staff or leader will gather and consider the relevant information, assess what has happened and decide what response is required. Not meeting the definition of bullying does not mean that no action will be taken. Relational conflict, one-off harmful behaviour, discriminatory behaviour and safeguarding concerns will be addressed through the appropriate school procedures. Our first consideration is the immediate safety and welfare of the pupils involved. Where necessary, protective action will be taken before the school has reached a conclusion about whether the behaviour meets the definition of bullying.
The member of staff coordinating the response will consider the wider context, including any previous concerns or patterns, the relationships and power dynamics involved, the impact on pupils, and any SEND, communication or other individual needs. Relevant pupils will normally be spoken to separately where this is appropriate. The school will distinguish clearly between what has been reported or alleged, what has been established, and the conclusions reached.
Concerns reported or assessed as possible bullying will be recorded on CPOMS. Records will include relevant information about the concern, the school's assessment, actions taken, communication with parents/carers where appropriate, responsibility for follow-up and the outcome of subsequent review. Records are used to identify repeated concerns and wider patterns and to inform preventative work.

Depending on the circumstances, the school's response may include:

- providing immediate support and reassurance to the pupil who has experienced harm and considering whether any additional safety measures or an individual safety plan are needed;
- speaking with the pupils involved and with relevant witnesses or bystanders;
- involving parents/carers as appropriate and explaining the school's assessment and response insofar as it relates to their own child;
- providing support, teaching or pastoral intervention for the pupil who has displayed harmful or bullying behaviour, including consideration of any underlying needs or vulnerabilities;
- applying proportionate consequences in accordance with the **Behaviour Policy**;
- making reasonable adjustments and providing additional support where pupils have SEND, communication needs or other identified vulnerabilities;
- considering the emotional wellbeing of pupils who have experienced, displayed or witnessed harmful behaviour;

- using restorative or relationship-repair work only where it is safe and appropriate and no pupil is placed under pressure to participate;
- adapting supervision, teaching, groupings or other arrangements where these would help reduce risk or prevent recurrence;
- involving the DSL or DDSL without delay where there is a safeguarding concern and following the Child Protection Policy;
- seeking Early Help, Family Help or other multi-agency support where the assessment indicates that additional support would benefit a child or family;
- involving relevant external agencies, including Children's Services or the Police, where the nature or seriousness of the concern requires this; and
- reviewing the effectiveness of the action taken and providing further support or intervention where necessary.

Safeguarding action will not be delayed while the school decides whether behaviour meets the definition of bullying.
Parents/carers will be kept appropriately informed about concerns, actions and outcomes affecting their own child. The school cannot normally disclose confidential information about another pupil, including their personal circumstances, support or consequences.
The school will follow up with the pupils involved to check whether the behaviour has stopped, whether they feel safe and whether the support or action taken has been effective. Further concerns will be recorded and the response reconsidered where necessary.
If a parent/carer remains dissatisfied with the school's response, they may use the current Equals Trust Complaints Procedure, subject to any separate safeguarding or staff-allegation procedure that applies.

Strategies for preventing bullying

At Crossdale, preventing bullying is part of our wider work to create a safe, respectful and inclusive school culture. Through **The Crossdale Way**, our curriculum and the behaviour modelled by adults, pupils are taught how to build positive relationships, respect difference, seek help and respond safely when they see behaviour that causes harm.

We review our preventative work throughout the year, using pupil voice, reported concerns and emerging patterns to identify where additional teaching, supervision or support may be needed.

Our approaches include:

- The Crossdale Way, which establishes and reinforces clear expectations for kindness, safety and respect;
- a planned Relationships and Health Education curriculum through Jigsaw, supplemented by the Anti-Racist Education Programme (AREP) and other age-appropriate teaching about equality, difference and respectful relationships;
- age-appropriate online-safety education, including cyberbullying, harmful online behaviour and how pupils can seek help;
- participation in Anti-Bullying Week and Safer Internet Day, alongside assemblies and other teaching where these support identified needs;
- pupil voice through the School Council, surveys and discussions about relationships, safety and school culture;
- teaching pupils about the role of witnesses and bystanders, including how to seek help safely for themselves or others;

- targeted pastoral, teaching or mentoring support for individual pupils or groups where particular needs, vulnerabilities or patterns are identified;
- adapting anti-bullying teaching, pupil voice and reporting approaches so that pupils with SEND or communication needs can understand, participate and seek help;
- information and signposting for parents/carers through the school website, newsletters and other communications as appropriate; and
- appropriate training and professional development so that staff understand the school's approach, recognise bullying and harmful behaviour, and know how to respond.

All adults in school are expected to model the respectful, inclusive and professional behaviour that we expect pupils to show towards one another.

Breaches / Complaints

Behaviour or conduct that is contrary to the expectations of this policy will be addressed through the appropriate school or Trust procedure, according to the nature of the concern. Pupil behaviour will normally be addressed through the Behaviour Policy; safeguarding concerns through the Child Protection Policy; and concerns about the conduct of an adult through the relevant safeguarding, staff-conduct, allegations or disciplinary procedures.
If a parent or carer is dissatisfied with the school's response to a bullying concern, they may use the current Equals Trust Complaints Procedure, available on the school website or on request from the school office. Where a concern is subject to a separate safeguarding or staff-allegation procedure, that procedure will be followed as appropriate.

Links with other policies

It may be helpful to read this Anti-Bullying Policy alongside the following school policies:

Policy / document	How it links
Behaviour Policy	Sets out the school's expectations for behaviour and the responses and consequences that may be used when these expectations are not met.
Child Protection Policy	Sets out safeguarding procedures, including the school's approach to child-on-child abuse and harmful behaviour between pupils, and how concerns about children or adults are reported and managed.
Online Safety Policy	Sets out expectations for safe and responsible use of technology and the school's approach to harmful online behaviour.
Relationships Education / RSHE Policy	Explains how pupils are taught about healthy relationships, friendships, respect, difference and seeking help.
SEND Policy	Sets out the school's approach to identifying and meeting additional needs, including reasonable adjustments and support for pupils with SEND.
Equality Objectives	Set out the school's commitment to equality, tackling discrimination and promoting inclusion.

Policy / document	How it links
Equals Trust Complaints Procedure	Explains how parents/carers can raise a formal complaint if they remain dissatisfied with the school's response.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the academic year to ensure that it remains effective, relevant and consistent with current statutory and local guidance and school practice. It is formally reviewed at least annually, and sooner where changes to guidance, school circumstances, emerging patterns or learning from incidents indicate that revision is needed. Approval will be undertaken in accordance with the Equals Trust scheme of delegation.