



Manchester  
Communication  
Primary  
Academy

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# Manchester Communication Primary Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy 23-24

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## Approval History

This document has been prepared within	Manchester Communication Primary Academy (MCPA)
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## Revision History

Revision Date	Summary of changes	Owner/Editor

Anti-bullying policy

MCPA

Updated: October 2023

Next review: October 2025

## **Statement of intent**

This policy has a fundamental role to play in helping us realise our vision for all children here at Manchester Communication Primary Academy (MCPA); it provides a framework for all adults working with children to address all aspects of bullying.

Bullying, or any kind of discriminatory behaviour is unacceptable and must be addressed promptly and effectively; it should never be considered to be a typical part of growing up.

“Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental). They must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.” (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19)

At MCPA we are committed to providing a nurturing, stimulating, secure and safe environment for all our pupils.

MCPA is committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe environment in which all children are free from the fear of being bullied. As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously.

Bullying of any form is not tolerated in our school, whether carried out by a child or an adult. Staff, children and parents or carers will be made aware of the school’s position on bullying.

Bullying behaviour is unacceptable in any form. The school has high expectations of pupil behaviour and we consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

Any child who is a victim of bullying will be dealt with in a sympathetic manner. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff informed, and then discussed with the headteacher. A clear account of the incident will be recorded on CPOMS. All staff will be informed so that close monitoring of the victim and bully can begin. Parents of both parties will be informed.

## **Our vision and culture**

To be a school which provides the highest quality of education rooted in positive relationships; a school which collaborates, supports and advocates for our community. With a reputation for celebrating diversity and striving for success. To be a safe place which children, families and colleagues are proud to be part of one team; where we share in learning, laughter and love.

Our school’s vision is key to this policy. No child should ever feel unsafe or unwelcome in school.

We expect our pupils to be kind to each other, and to report any concerns which they may have. This includes if they see something unkind happening to someone else. All staff, pupils and families are guardians of our school’s culture.

## **What is bullying?**

We recognise that many children and young people will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and young people and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

At MCPA our definition of bullying is: “The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”



### **Generative artificial intelligence (AI)**

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

MCPA recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

MCPA will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our behaviour policy.

### **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

There is considerable evidence to show that bullying has both a short term and longer term impact on pupils. Bullying impacts on pupils' wellbeing, can impact on attendance and become a significant barrier to learning.

Bullying is associated with lower levels of school engagement and achievement both in primary and secondary schools and can lead to mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression. It is often cited as the primary reason for emotionally based school avoidance

Bullying is unacceptable. Our school will respond promptly and effectively to reported incidents of bullying.

In our school community:

- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe.
- No-one deserves to be a target of bullying.
- Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

National research has shown that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying these include pupils with SEND, looked after children, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths, young carers, LGBT pupils and those perceived to be LGBT.

### **Types of bullying behaviour**

Bullying can take many forms which include:

- Emotional (being unfriendly, threatening looks/gestures, tormenting such as hiding belongings);
- Physical (pushing, hitting, shoving or any form of physical violence);

- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours);
- Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures);
- Sexual and sexist (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or those which are sexist);
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (behaviour or language which makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, whether actual or perceived, or because of their association with people who are, or perceived to be, gay, bisexual or transgender (e.g. children of same-sex couples);
- Cyber (all forms of abuse involving the internet, social websites, chat rooms, mobile phones, email, text messages, photographs etc);
- Vulnerable groups (such as looked after children, gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, children from ethnic minorities, children entitled to free school meals, children for whom English is an Additional Language);
- Exclusion/ostracising (deliberately ignoring and refusing to allow someone to join in); Interference with possessions (hiding, stealing and destroying belongings).

These definitions are important as there is a need to make a distinction between things that may cause a young person distress during their time in school, and bullying. A friendship that has broken down for example, and has led to insults being exchanged, though distressing, would not be considered bullying as it was neither deliberate nor repeated. There are occasions in school when a young person is quite unaware of the hurt that they have caused to a fellow pupil, as the 'victim' had kept their feelings to themselves. The definitions outlined above must be sensitively and thoughtfully applied; a hasty classification helps neither the 'victim' nor the 'perpetrator'.

### **Key responsibilities**

#### **Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Create and implement an anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that staff create a climate of respect, responsibility and positive relationships.
- Create an ethos where children are confident to tell an adult about bullying behaviour experienced or witnessed.
- Ensure that all instances of bullying are investigated, through restorative approaches, recorded and that any necessary actions are taken as a response.
- Inform parents/carers of any bullying affecting their child. This can be through telephone calls, letters and emails or at a meeting.
- Ensure that children and their families understand the difference between bullying and other behaviours.
- Provide training and guidance on anti-bullying, policy and implementation, including digital and online information.

#### **All other adults will:**

- Ensure that they are fully aware of the anti-bullying policy and approaches to be taken.

- Build capacity in children to recognise and challenge bullying.
- Create an ethos where children are confident to tell an adult about bullying behaviour experienced or witnessed.
- Deliver preventative work on bullying to children, including the use of technology and online safety.
- Follow up promptly and effectively any allegations of bullying.
- Supporting any appropriate follow up actions or interventions as a result of bullying.
- Ensure that they promote acceptance and create an ethos which respects diversity and values difference.

**Children are responsible for:**

- Challenging bullying behaviour if they feel able to do so.
- Telling a trusted adult if they have any worries about bullying.
- Keeping themselves and others safe by their own actions, choices and behaviours.
- Undertaking any follow up actions related to bullying situations.
- Following the positive behaviour approaches and expectations including the use of mobile and online technology.

**Parents/carers are responsible for:**

- Ensuring and promoting their children's health and wellbeing.
- Encouraging and promoting safe and responsible use of mobile and online technology.
- Communicating any concerns with school and working in partnership.
- Attending any training offered by the school in relation to awareness raising around bullying policies and approaches including building resilience and online safety.
- Encouraging participation in out of school activities, particularly in support of transition points. (going to secondary school)
- Modelling and supporting the adoption of a restorative approach when supporting their children.

**Governing Body:**

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the Senior Leadership Team to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies.

**Signs of bullying**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied; adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate if a child:

- exhibits a change in attitude/feeling towards school.

- becomes frightened of coming to school, attending specific lessons or entering specific areas of the school.
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- feels ill in the morning; becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- is bullying other children or siblings.
- is frightened to say what's wrong; change their usual routine.
- becomes more withdrawn or anxious than previously.
- threatens to run away or actually runs away; threatens to/or self harm(s); begins to underperform at school; becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable; is reluctant to discuss reasons for any of the above.

### **Vulnerable Pupils**

Some pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may be severely affected by it, such as those with special educational needs or disabilities. Others may be particularly vulnerable because they are going through a personal or family crisis, suffering from a health problem.

Children in care that move frequently may be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer and may lack peer support and positive social networking. Those with caring responsibilities may be vulnerable because they are socially isolated. These vulnerable young people may also be at risk of turning to social media for consolation or to get their own back by cyberbullying. T

here will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others. The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the Social, Emotional and Mental Health of the child.

### **Actions to Prevent / minimise bullying**

We work diligently as a school to prevent bullying. We do however acknowledge that it 'could happen here', and that bullying is a feature of most schools to some extent. We do not accept this, and will continually seek to improve our approach, learning from each case to further reduce future likelihood.

As a school we recognise that all behaviour is communication; it's important therefore to ensure that the ethos of anti-bullying is embedded in day-to-day practice and that nurturing approaches support the building of caring relationships and consistently reinforce that bullying is never acceptable.

Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; by adopting a whole school nurturing approach which places positive respectful relationships at the centre of our practise we reduce bullying incidents. MCPA incorporates the Anti-Bullying Policy into staff and governor handbooks, staff induction, the school curriculum, whole school assemblies, and whole school staff training as well as taking on board other opportunities to raise awareness e.g. Anti-Bullying Week, Black History Month, Mental Health week and targeted group work.

The policy is shared with all staff, pupils, parents, and governors, at their respective points of contact with the school; a child friendly bullying awareness leaflet (appendix I) is provided to pupils; information is also shared on the school website.



We take a zero tolerance stance on all forms of bullying and discriminatory language (e.g. the use of racist/homophobic/biphobic/transphobic language) and promote a climate of openness, trust, and support ensuring that all children in school are aware of both their rights and their responsibilities with respect to bullying.

This primarily takes place through the following structures:

- Clear Academy vision & shared school rules.
- Mental health training and curriculum
- Class community boards.
- Whole class charters.
- Community Qualities reward system.
- Good to be Green visual behaviour monitoring system.
- Community quality champions.
- Urban Crew.
- Personal development curriculum.
- The Pupil Council.
- Anti-bullying displays around school.
- Weekly and half termly assemblies.
- Inclusion programmes & specific interventions.
- Parent breakfasts and workshops
- E-safety training to combat cyber-bullying.
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy

### The Curriculum

At MCPA, we work hard to create and embed an ethos which respects diversity and values difference. The combination of our Personal Development curriculum and systems supporting Social, Emotional and Mental Health development aim to provide a clear progressive programme of learning about respect and valuing differences. They consistently give the message that bullying is never acceptable.

Our curriculum design creates effective learning environments in which:

- the contribution of all pupils is valued.
- all pupils can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately.
- stereotypical views and prejudiced language are challenged, and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability, disability or different family situations (e.g. children who are looked after or those with caring responsibilities).

- pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community and understand how their actions affect others.
- all forms of bullying and harassment are challenged.
- pupils are supported to develop their social and emotional skills. Underpinning our work at MCPA are our seven Community Qualities of; **Attitude, Behaviour, Courage, Determination, Enthusiasm, Friendship & Grit**; we utilise these to explicitly teach, support and nurture a positive whole school community that embraces difference and drives equality.

Children are taught about the impact of bullying at different ages and stages ensuring that they develop an awareness and understanding regarding all equality issues. Initiatives such as anti-bullying week and Black History Month are integrated as parts of our whole school ethos and are not stand-alone events.

### **Responding to incidents of reported bullying**

Any response to reported incidents must be child-centred and based on restorative approaches; seeking supportive, positive outcomes for all parties.

Investigations should be undertaken using a partnership approach (where possible) and co-operation and dialogue between parties should always be the starting point for resolution of incidents; it's important that all children are supported throughout any incidents of bullying.

When investigating allegation of bullying staff should;

- actively listen to children displaying and experiencing bullying behaviour and establish whether bullying has taken place.
- ensure details are recorded on CPOMS.

Many incidents where a young person is emotionally distressed by the behaviour of another pupil will have been observed by, or reported to, a classroom teacher. Being primarily responsible for children's well-being in the first instance, Class Teachers are responsible for investigating allegations/incidents and taking appropriate steps to resolve them in a prompt and personalised way.

Should incidents be confirmed as incidents of bullying the investigation will escalate to the duty senior leader to conclude.

All staff are to follow MCPA's 'Key Steps' when investigating incidents. (appendix 2) Those dealing with children in these instances should be mindful of best practice when comes to cases of bullying which are, in brief:

- avoiding the labelling of both parties in terms of 'bully' and 'victim' - it is the behaviour we criticise, not the child (the use of the term 'victim' & 'perpetrator' throughout this document is unavoidable)
- allow the victim to put to the perpetrator how they have been made to feel, if appropriate.
- allow the perpetrator the opportunity to put right any hurt they have caused.
- not to immediately resort to punishments or sanctions, depending on the degree to which the bullying has been premeditated, how long it has been going on and how many people are involved.
- resolutions/sanctions should focus on; the removal of the feeling of helplessness and fear that the victim is experiencing; the restoration of pride, dignity, and belonging.

- consequences will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any SEND / SEMH needs that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.
- should the allegation of bullying be made for a second time, in relation to the same pupil, the investigation will be escalated to a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will follow the same procedure as above.
- suspension may be considered for more severe and persistent cases of bullying. The Senior Leadership Team will make a decision whether it is necessary to involve any other agencies to ensure the long-term emotional wellbeing of the young people involved.

### **Bullying outside school premises**

“Staff have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable” (Behaviour and discipline in schools, DfE, 2016).

This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town/city centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated utilising the procedures outlined in the policy. If the reported behaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police would always be informed. The school would always inform parents if this was the case, but does not require their consent.

### **Parental involvement**

MCPA actively nurtures open and supportive communication with parents/carers in relation to all bullying incidents and ensures that parents/carers know what measures are being taken to prevent bullying, as well as how incidents are responded to.

Parents/carers who are concerned that their child may be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the school immediately. Parents have a responsibility to support the School’s Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Our ‘Anti-bullying’ policy is accessible on the school website, paper copies are available on request and child friendly ‘Anti-bullying’ leaflets are produced, distributed to pupils and are also available on the school website.

Parent Focus Group meetings support parent/carer policy review opportunities. Parents/carers are informed and updated of any bullying investigation relating to their child.

Parent feedback is welcomed at anytime but formally requested through parent surveys.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

- The policy will be promoted and implemented across the school. Parent & pupil feedback will be obtained at regular intervals throughout the year.
- The Senior Leadership Team will monitor the operation and effectiveness of arrangements referred to in this policy at least once a term.
- Formal policy review will be undertaken every two years.

## Complaints

If parents/carers are not satisfied with the response to any reports of bullying, they should contact the Head teacher or Deputy Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedures.

## Relationships to other Academy Policies

- Behaviour Policy: The Academies behaviour policy outlines a range of strategies available to train staff in dealing with behaviour incidents which includes direct reference to incidents of bullying.
- Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy: In the event of a bullying disclosure, staff need to consider issues related to Child Protection and Safeguarding. Staff have a duty of care, and if the incident involves abusive or bullying behaviour by adults, the incident must be treated as a child protection issue.
- Confidentiality Policy: Children and young people have rights under the Children's Act 1989 and can thus expect bullying incidents to be treated sensitively. However, staff should not give guarantees of confidentiality where the safety and welfare of a child is at risk.
- E-Safety Policy: Safeguarding children and young people from abuse in any form on-line is paramount. The implications of new technology including the internet, mobile phones, email, instant messaging, camera phones and web cams in the context of anti-bullying is considered in the policies.

The Independent School Standards Regulations 2010 state that the proprietor of an Academy is required to ensure that effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented. In line with the Equality Act 2010 it is essential that the academy:

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advances equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Fosters good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. 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 immediately using the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

## Useful websites

<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk">www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</a>
<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>
<a href="http://www.each.education">www.each.education</a>	<a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk">www.youngminds.org.uk</a>
<a href="http://www.youngstonewall.org.uk">www.youngstonewall.org.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>
<a href="http://www.stoptextbully.com">www.stoptextbully.com</a>	<a href="http://www.beyondbullying.com">www.beyondbullying.com</a>
<a href="http://www.childnet-int.org">www.childnet-int.org</a>	<a href="http://www.cyberbullying.org">www.cyberbullying.org</a>
<a href="http://www.chatdanger.com">www.chatdanger.com</a>	<a href="http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk">www.thinkuknow.co.uk</a>

If you see bullying, **you must tell a trusted adult.**

*Bullying is when one or more of the following things happen repeatedly to someone who finds it hard to stop it from happening.*



## What is bullying?

Bullying is when a person or a group of people offline or online:



Make fun of / tease someone in a mean and hurtful way



Tell lies or spread nasty rumours about someone to try to make others not like them



Threaten or make someone feel afraid of getting hurt



Leave someone out on purpose or not allow them to join in



Hit, kick or push someone around

Post mean or nasty comments or pictures about others on websites e.g. Facebook or send these to others' mobile phones

Deliberately damage, destroy or steal someone's things



Pretend to be someone else online to hurt them or make them look foolish

Send nasty or threatening messages using the Internet or via mobile phone



## Appendix 2: Key steps

### Investigating bullying

Once an adult has been made aware of a potential bullying incident, the following steps should be followed:

1. Speak with the 'victim' In the first instance the class teacher will speak with the 'victim' about his/her feelings. Teacher should explain that they understand that something has happened that needs to be resolved and that to do that as much information as possible needs to be collected. The child should then be given the opportunity to speak in as much depth as they feel comfortable to do so, "you talk and I will listen." Class teacher records all information on CPOMS.
2. Speak with alleged 'perpetrator': Speak with the 'perpetrator'. Start by asking if they know why you might want to speak with them. Considering the pupil's response go on to explain that a resolution needs to be found for the situation as feelings have been hurt and at MCPA we all have the right to enjoy our time in school and to feel safe. Make sure the child knows that it is the bullying behaviour that's not welcomed, not the child him/her self. "we all make mistakes, how can we put it right?"

If the class teacher/TA suspects at this point that the incident is bullying, it should be passed to the duty senior leader, to take the following steps:

3. Duty Senior Leader reviews information.

Having read through accounts from both parties the Leader must first identify if there were any bystanders, witnesses involved. Any additional statements must be added to the existing CPOMS record as actions. If there are no witnesses, proceed to step 4.

4. Inform parents/carers.

Ensure parents/carers of the 'victim' are aware of the situation and reassured that the situation is being dealt with and their child supported. Notify parents/carers of the 'perpetrator' that an allegation of bullying has been made and that it's school policy to investigate this. Reassure parent/carers that it is the alleged 'bullying behaviour' that is being investigated; that the behaviour is not the child. Highlight however that bullying allegations are taken very seriously. NB: During the investigation process, additional steps may need to be taken to ensure that the victim feels safe at unstructured times during the day until a resolution can be found. In particular, play times, lunch times and transition times may need to be carefully considered.

5. Reflective conversation

Leader will chair a meeting with the 'perpetrator' and any bystanders/witnesses involved to explore how the 'victim' may be feeling and to talk through how actions/words/behaviours have negatively impacted on one of our community members. Highlight that bullying behaviour is not accepted and that it's

essential that as a team we find a way to move forward to make a positive change. Help child/(ren) to understand that they are responsible and can do something about it.

#### 6. Update meeting with the 'victim'

Meet with the 'victim'; start by asking for an update on how they are feeling; have they had any new thoughts since the last meeting. Explain that in situations like this we need to work together in finding a solution, a way forward. Explain that you have talked with the other party/(ies) involved and outline their thinking. Highlight that everyone is capable of poor choices, of making mistakes, but that as a school it's important to look underneath the behaviour. Share that the next step should now be a 'restorative meeting' with all parties.

#### 7. Restorative Meeting

Gather group together, briefly outline the historical context but highlight that the purpose of this meeting is to move forward. Encourage each group member (not the victim) to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier, safer and secure in our school; then invite the 'victim' to share what they feel would be a positive resolution. Phase Lead summarises, clarifies positive responses and makes clear what behavioural/attitudinal changes are expected. This meeting and agreed action points all need to be recorded on CPOMS.

#### 8. Update parents/carers

Speak with each set of parents/carers and talk them through the resolution. Make sure parents/carers know that the situation will continue to be monitored and that follow up checkins with all parties will take place.

#### 9. Monitor

Leader closes the meeting by agreeing with all children that the situation and their next steps will be monitored and that they can expect check-ins at various points. Finish by reminding them of coping strategies and to speak with adults when challenging situations arise.

#### 10. Follow-up Meeting

During a scheduled follow-up meeting, talk with each pupil, including the 'victim. Enquire how things have been going and whether the positive changes discussed have been actioned appropriately. This further supports the raised profile of our 'anti-bullying' approach and keeps the children involved in the process.