At Prettygate we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

# Anti-Bullying Policy

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| Staff consulted: Full Governing Body |
| Ratified by the Governing Body: 9th July 2024 |
| Review Date: Summer 2027 |

This document has been assessed for equality impact and is applicable to every member of staff or child within the school irrespective of their race, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, culture, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability.

# Prettygate Infant and Junior Schools
# Anti-bullying Policy

Reviewed every 3 years in summer term

## What is 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 grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power 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. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways: it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

(Department for Education, 2017)

At Prettygate we understand that pupils learn best in a safe and calm environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus. In support of this, first and foremost we aim to reduce the likelihood of bullying through a range of preventative strategies. However, where bullying does occur, action is taken to stop the behaviour reoccurring. Much of the school's approach to preventing and responding to bullying reflects the guidance offered by the Department for Education and the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA).

## Prevention

Our school aims to prevent bullying from occurring in a number of ways, taking a whole-school approach, co-ordinated by the headteacher, that involves the whole community. The school also has a governor who leads on anti-bullying activity, monitoring school action in this area. Examples of prevention strategies used by the school include:

- Upholding our core values of ambition, respect and kindness, which are explored and celebrated throughout the curriculum.
- Lessons and assemblies with a focus on valuing difference and diversity.

- Taking opportunities to explore bullying themes through book choices and lessons.
- An annual Anti-Bullying Week, designed to help children understand what bullying is, how it makes people feel and what to do if one experiences or witnesses it.
- Effective training for staff in understanding bullying and the impact it can have, and how to respond to bullying.
- A clear system for staff, children and parents to report bullying.
- Fostering an environment in which children feel safe to tell an adult if they are being bullied, trust that they will be listened to and believed, and be confident that the school will take action to support them.
- The use of circle time to prevent bubbling issues from becoming a problem.
- The operation of buddy schemes and peer listeners to support children at playtimes.
- Bystander defender training for children.
- Ensuring there is sufficient supervision during the more unstructured times of the day.

## Reporting bullying

Where bullying takes place, children are encouraged to report this to an adult so that action can be taken. School staff are clear that if bullying is reported to them, this is recorded on CPOMS and the 3 Step Response Model is followed (see below), chiefly by the class teacher but in some cases this may be a senior leader. Parents are encouraged to use the school's communication flowchart for reporting, which directs them to their child's class teacher in the first instance. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, this is investigated and acted on.

## Response to bullying

Despite the range of preventative measures in place, there are times when bullying may still occur. In these instances, it is important that the school takes swift action to support those involved, as well as apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. We aim to apply these measures fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have, and with consideration to the needs of vulnerable pupils. We recognise that in some cases the perpetrator of the bullying behaviour may need support themselves. It is for the school to use its professional judgement to determine the best course of action on a case-by-case basis.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance is clear on how children and parents want to see schools respond to bullying:

Children:

- Want to be listened to, believed and feel that something will be done to support them.
- Want to be consulted about how the bullying should be dealt with.
- Prefer non sanction-based (restorative) responses.
- Like the use of peer support.
- Believe that support should be for the bullied and the bully (to see how their behaviour is bullying).
- Do not want to be asked to change their behaviour.

Parents:

- Want schools to take action to support those involved, and ensure their safety.
- Want schools to educate children about differences.

- Want established support mechanisms, such as peer support.
- Want clear communication about a school's actions and the impact of these.
- Appreciate schools bringing in external support to extend knowledge of different needs.

As a school, we understand the importance of responding to bullying in line with the views of children and parents, as above.
The school follows, with some adaptations, the ABA's 'Three Step Response Model' when dealing with instances of bullying:

Step 1:
Listen to the victim and assure them that they have been taken seriously and swift action will be taken.
Secure the safety of those involved.
Investigate.
Consult the victim on how they would like the bullying to be dealt with.
Communicate with relevant parents and staff about the situation.

Step 2:
Make it clear to the perpetrator that the bullying behaviour needs to stop.
Stop the behaviour reoccurring through restorative approaches such as Circle of Friends or restorative discussion, and use sanctions as necessary.
Set up agreements among those involved about the way forward.

Step 3:
Update parents on the actions taken and the impact of these.
Monitor the situation.
As a school, reflect on any learning from the bullying incident:

- Has this highlighted any issues within our school?
- Is any further staff training needed?
- Do we need to refresh our policy?

## Record keeping

All bullying incidents are recorded on CPOMS and shared with relevant staff. Bullying behaviour across the school is monitored regularly by senior leaders and this feeds into whole-school strategies.

## Policy review

This policy is reviewed annually, taking into account reflections from any bullying incidents that have occurred, as well as pupil, staff and parent voice.