



Donhead Preparatory School

Anti-Bullying Policy (including EYFS)

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Donhead, considerate behaviour towards each other is essential if we are to create a positive social and learning environment. Every child has the right to be treated with dignity, respect and kindness.

As a Jesuit school, members of our community should always show concern for one another, treating each other with consideration for feelings, individuality and personality. We are committed to creating a culture where pupils feel safe, valued, included and able to speak openly.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Donhead promotes a talking culture where hurtful behaviour is brought into the open, discussed and addressed promptly. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported and empowered when concerns are raised.

We recognise that discrimination exists in wider society and that this can lead to discriminatory bullying in schools. We actively work to prevent this and to promote respect for all.

This policy applies to:

- behaviour in school
- behaviour on educational visits and school transport
- wraparound care and after-school provision
- bullying between pupils outside school where it affects school life
- online behaviour, including cyberbullying
- child-on-child abuse where bullying may form part of wider safeguarding concerns

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- RSHE Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- SEND Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Missing Child Policy

2. LEGAL AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is written in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (DfE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE, updated July 2026)
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and Independent School Standards guidance (April 2026), including the requirement for an effective anti-bullying strategy to be drawn up and implemented
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance, effective 1 September 2026
- Prevent Duty Guidance
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another child or group physically or emotionally. It often involves an imbalance of power, whether real or perceived. A serious one-off incident is not normally described as bullying, but it will still be addressed promptly under the Behaviour Policy and, where relevant, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying may be:

- physical
- verbal
- emotional or psychological
- relational or social
- discriminatory or prejudice-based
- sexualised
- online (cyberbullying)
- image-based abuse
- coercive or controlling behaviour

Bullying may involve an imbalance of power and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, disability, special educational needs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, as well as family circumstances, gender questioning or perceived difference.

Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery. It undermines confidence and self-esteem, affects attendance and attainment, marginalises vulnerable groups and can have a lasting negative impact.

Staff must not wait for behaviour to be repeated before acting. Serious one-off incidents, discriminatory abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour and other forms of child-on-child abuse must be addressed immediately under the relevant behaviour and safeguarding procedures, even where the behaviour does not meet the usual definition of bullying.

4. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Some incidents of bullying may also constitute child-on-child abuse and must be treated as safeguarding concerns.

This includes:

- sexual violence
- sexual harassment
- harmful sexual behaviour
- sexist, misogynistic or sexualised bullying
- initiation or hazing-type abuse
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images, including AI-generated images
- online sexual abuse
- coercive behaviour
- abuse linked to exploitation

Staff must never dismiss abusive behaviour as banter, growing up, or part of school life.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, staff must follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy immediately.

Every report will be taken seriously and assessed promptly. Where the behaviour indicates that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm, it will be managed as a safeguarding concern in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The needs and wishes of the child will be considered, alongside the school's duty to protect all pupils.

The school will consider whether bullying behaviour indicates that a child is being harmed themselves, affected by trauma, exploitation, abuse, unmet safeguarding needs or adverse childhood experiences. Where appropriate, additional safeguarding assessments and support will be put in place for the pupil displaying the behaviour as well as for the child who has experienced harm.

5. PREVENTION & SCHOOL CULTURE

The main aim is to create an anti-bullying ethos which is consistently reinforced by all adults.

Pupils need to be aware that both staff and parents disapprove of bullying behaviour and will act if it is brought to their notice. All pupils must be encouraged to bring such behaviour to the attention of staff.

Preventative work includes:

- an open and honest anti-bullying culture
- use of curriculum opportunities to raise awareness, particularly through RSHE
- Friendship Week and Anti-Bullying Week
- assemblies, chaplaincy and pastoral work
- pupil voice and pupil mentoring
- professional development of staff
- strong parental engagement
- celebration of diversity and success
- clear behaviour expectations and visible supervision
- developing self-esteem and resilience among pupils

Above all, pupils are reminded constantly that bullying is unacceptable and that reporting concerns is the right thing to do.

6. RSHE AND PREVENTATIVE EDUCATION

Bullying prevention is taught explicitly through RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education), assemblies, RE, chaplaincy, pastoral work and the wider curriculum.

Children are taught, in an age-appropriate way, that all people deserve dignity, respect and kindness and that bullying, discrimination and abusive behaviour are never acceptable.

Teaching includes:

- respectful relationships and healthy friendships
- kindness, empathy and inclusion
- consent, personal boundaries and appropriate touch
- privacy, body autonomy and respect for others
- online behaviour and digital citizenship
- cyberbullying, image sharing and the risks of social media
- harmful sexual behaviour and sexual harassment
- misogyny, sexism and harmful gender stereotypes
- discrimination, prejudice and protected characteristics
- racist, faith-based, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, bullying aimed at pupils who are questioning their gender
- peer pressure, coercive control and inappropriate influence
- harmful online influencers and extremist content
- misinformation, conspiracy theories and online radicalisation risks
- resilience, confidence, self-esteem and seeking help

Friendship Week combines the qualities of the Jesuit Pupil Profile with the aims of Anti-Bullying Week and reinforces these themes annually.

Pupils are regularly reminded that reporting concerns is responsible, not disloyal, and Pupils are taught safe bystander strategies including reporting concerns to adults, supporting peers appropriately and avoiding retaliation or escalation.

7. ONLINE SAFETY, AI & CYBERBULLYING

Bullying may occur directly or through cyber technology and online behaviour. Cyberbullying can be particularly harmful because it may be continuous, anonymous and shared widely and quickly.

Cyberbullying may include:

- hurtful or threatening text messages
- abusive emails
- harmful comments on social media
- exclusion from group chats or online groups
- sharing embarrassing or harmful images or videos
- fake accounts or impersonation
- online humiliation or intimidation
- pressure to share personal information or images
- abuse through gaming platforms or messaging apps
- AI-generated content such as deepfakes, manipulated images, AI-generated nude or semi-nude images, impersonation content or fake conversations

With increasing access to electronic devices and unrestricted internet use, all children are taught about online safety as part of safeguarding, RSHE and Computing lessons.

Pupils are taught:

- how to stay safe online
- how to report online abuse
- the dangers of image sharing and inappropriate contact
- how to respond safely to harmful content
- how online behaviour can affect others
- the risks linked to harmful influencers, misogynistic content and extremist messaging

The school recognises that generative artificial intelligence tools such as chatbots and image generators can support learning, but may also facilitate bullying, grooming, harassment and safeguarding harm.

Any misuse of AI or technology to bully, threaten, humiliate or exploit pupils will be managed under this policy, the Online Safety Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Any misuse of AI to create, possess, share or distribute AI-generated nude or semi-nude images of children will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy and relevant statutory guidance.

The school's filtering and monitoring systems help to identify safeguarding risks online and reduce access to harmful content. Staff understand that filtering and monitoring support safeguarding but do not replace professional vigilance.

Where online concerns raise wider safeguarding issues, including radicalisation concerns under the Prevent Duty, staff will follow safeguarding procedures immediately and refer concerns to the DSL.

Parents are supported through guidance, talks, newsletters and shared information to help reinforce safe and respectful online behaviour at home.

In addition:

- only school cameras, iPads or school mobile phones may be used by staff for photographs
- personal phones and cameras must not be used unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher
- nothing may be stored on a personal device
- pupil mobile phones brought to school must be handed in at the School Office on arrival

- parental consent for images is maintained and reviewed regularly

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

- approve and review this policy annually
- monitor bullying trends and safeguarding outcomes
- challenge leaders on effectiveness
- ensure legal and safeguarding compliance
- ensure appropriate staff training is in place

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for implementation of this policy and serious incident oversight.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- oversee safeguarding concerns linked to bullying
- determine when incidents meet child protection thresholds
- liaise with external agencies where required
- ensure accurate recording on CPOMS
- review patterns and trends

Assistant Head Wellbeing

- lead operational response
- Lead pastoral intervention
- Monitor approaches to bullying
- Lead anti-bullying week
- Audit the behaviour policy to ensure bullying is mitigated

All staff

All staff have a part to play in preventing bullying and online bullying.

Staff must:

- remain vigilant
- challenge inappropriate behaviour immediately
- report concerns without delay
- record incidents on CPOMS
- support both victims and pupils displaying bullying behaviour
- model respectful behaviour at all times

Never allow a child to sneer at another, laugh at another's failure or dismiss unpleasantness as harmless.

Be extra vigilant during break duty. Stop play fighting immediately. Be aware of which children are together and how they are interacting. Do not be a passive supervisor.

Be punctual for every class, duty and activity. The role of supervision in preventing bullying cannot be underestimated.

9. REPORTING BULLYING

We make it as easy as possible for children to report bullying, including cyberbullying and bullying outside school.

Reports may be made to:

- Form Teacher
- Assistant Head Wellbeing
- DSL
- Headteacher
- any trusted member of staff

Any safeguarding concern or allegation about a member of staff, supply staff member, volunteer or contractor, including a low-level concern, must be reported without delay and managed under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Concerns that may meet the harm threshold must be reported to the Headteacher; concerns about the Headteacher must be reported to the Chair of Governors. Staff must not investigate such concerns themselves.

Parents are encouraged to report concerns early and work in partnership with the school.

10. PROCEDURES WHEN BULLYING IS REPORTED

Immediate Response

Staff must:

1. ensure the child is safe
2. listen carefully and calmly
3. reassure the child they have done the right thing
4. avoid promising confidentiality
5. record concerns promptly on CPOMS
6. inform the Assistant Head Wellbeing and DSL where appropriate

Investigation

The following approach should be adopted:

1. establish the facts promptly, fairly and proportionately
2. speak separately with the child who reported the concern, the pupil alleged to have displayed bullying behaviour and any witnesses
3. take account of the age, understanding, communication needs and any SEND of the pupils involved, making reasonable adjustments where required
4. gather and preserve relevant written or digital evidence where appropriate, without asking pupils to forward intimate images
5. consider whether the matter indicates child-on-child abuse, significant harm, a criminal offence or a need for wider safeguarding or external-agency action
6. consider whether the behaviour is repeated, targeted, discriminatory, group-based or linked to an imbalance of power
7. record decisions, actions, reasons and outcomes, and determine suitable support, protective measures and proportionate action
8. consider whether concerns indicate wider patterns affecting a group, location, year group or protected characteristic

The pupil alleged to have displayed bullying behaviour must be given a fair opportunity to explain what happened and must be helped to understand why any substantiated behaviour is unacceptable. No child will be humiliated or subjected to retaliatory treatment. Restorative work will be used only where it is safe, appropriate and agreed by the child who has experienced harm; it will not replace safeguarding action or a proportionate sanction.

The Assistant Head Wellbeing should be informed and will inform the Headteacher.

Parents or carers of the pupils involved will normally be informed promptly and kept appropriately updated. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis, with due regard to confidentiality, data protection and any safeguarding reason not to share particular information. The school will not disclose confidential information about another child.

Response

Sanctions will be proportionate, reasonable and consistent with the Behaviour Policy.

These may include:

- restorative conversations
- pastoral intervention
- parental meetings
- behaviour monitoring
- loss of privileges

- internal sanctions
- suspension
- permanent exclusion in serious or persistent cases

Where criminal behaviour is suspected, the police may be involved.

11. SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS

While every effort must be made to help the pupil responsible to modify behaviour, we must not lose sight of the child who has experienced bullying.

The welfare of the child is the immediate priority.

Support may include:

- pastoral support
- ELSA support
- regular check-ins
- mentoring
- friendship support
- supervision adjustments
- RSHE support
- safeguarding intervention where necessary

Children must be encouraged to say no to bullying, to tell an adult and to understand that what has happened is not their fault.

As much as possible should be done to raise confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing.

12. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

The school seeks both accountability and behavioural change.

Pupils displaying bullying behaviour will be helped to:

- understand the impact of their actions
- take responsibility
- repair relationships where appropriate
- access pastoral support
- address underlying needs or vulnerabilities

Sanctions and support work together.

13. VULNERABLE PUPILS

All staff must remain alert to pupils who may be more vulnerable to bullying, abuse or discrimination.

National research shows that some groups of children are at greater risk of being bullied, including those with protected characteristics and those whose differences may make them more visible to others.

This includes:

- pupils with SEND or disabilities
- looked after and previously looked after children
- pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds
- pupils from minority faith communities
- young carers
- adopted children
- pupils experiencing family difficulty, bereavement or social disadvantage
- pupils with speech, language or social communication difficulties
- pupils affected by mental health difficulties
- pupils who are, or are perceived to be, LGBT+
- pupils who are questioning their gender, or who are perceived by others to be doing so
- pupils who may be vulnerable because of appearance, body image or perceived difference

Staff must be particularly alert to:

- racist bullying
- faith-based bullying
- sexist or misogynistic bullying
- homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying
- disability-related bullying
- bullying linked to SEND
- prejudice-based bullying connected to family circumstances or protected characteristics

The school recognises that discriminatory bullying can cause significant harm and may require immediate safeguarding intervention.

Additional pastoral support, supervision and proactive monitoring may be required for vulnerable pupils.

14. RECORDING AND MONITORING

All incidents must be recorded on CPOMS.

Records must include:

- date and time
- nature of concern
- pupils involved
- actions taken
- parental communication
- sanctions and support
- review outcomes
- whether the behaviour involved discrimination, safeguarding concerns, online abuse or child-on-child abuse

Leaders and governors will monitor patterns to identify repeated concerns, vulnerable pupils, areas of risk and the effectiveness of interventions.

15. ADVICE FOR PUPILS

If you feel you are being bullied:

- stay calm
- be firm and clear where safe to do so
- move away from danger
- tell a trusted adult immediately
- tell your family
- keep speaking until someone helps
- do not blame yourself

If you witness bullying:

- do not join in
- do not laugh or encourage it
- get help from an adult
- support the child being hurt safely

Reporting bullying is the right thing to do.

16. ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Parents should:

- contact the Form Teacher first
- be as specific as possible about concerns
- provide dates, places and names where possible
- ask what action the school intends to take
- stay in communication with school
- encourage children to speak openly
- support respectful online behaviour at home

The school and parents work best in partnership.

17. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body or sooner if statutory guidance changes, serious incidents occur or inspection recommendations are made.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed through safeguarding monitoring, pupil voice, parental feedback and governor oversight.

18. IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP 2026–2027

This roadmap translates the policy into senior leadership priorities, operational actions and evidence for assurance across the remainder of the 2026–2027 school year. The Headteacher retains overall accountability; the DSL and Assistant Head Wellbeing coordinate implementation and report progress, themes and emerging risks to the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body.

Period	Strategic priorities	Operational actions	Lead / oversight	Evidence and review point
Michaelmas 2026: October–December	Secure a consistent whole-school understanding of bullying, harmful one-off incidents and child-on-child abuse.	Brief all staff, including EYFS, wraparound, visiting and temporary staff, on reporting routes, CPOMS recording and immediate	Headteacher: accountability. DSL and Assistant Head Wellbeing: delivery and quality assurance. Phase leaders,	Staff briefing and attendance records. Supervision and curriculum audit with actions completed. Baseline CPOMS

	Establish a reliable baseline for patterns, locations, pupil groups and online concerns.	safeguarding escalation. Audit supervision, transition points, playground zones, transport, clubs and online reporting routes; address identified gaps. Teach age-appropriate anti-bullying, respectful relationships and online safety content through RSHE, assemblies, chaplaincy and Friendship/Anti-Bullying Week. Gather pupil voice, including from pupils with SEND and other potentially vulnerable groups; remind pupils how to report safely. Issue concise parent guidance on signs, reporting routes, cyberbullying evidence and appropriate communication with the school.	Computing lead and EYFS lead: implementation. Safeguarding governor: challenge and oversight.	analysis by type, location, time, protected characteristic/SEND link and repeat involvement. Pupil voice summary and December SLT evaluation. Autumn safeguarding report to governors, using anonymised and proportionate information.
Lent 2027: January–March	Embed consistent practice and test whether prevention and response arrangements are effective. Strengthen targeted support and early intervention where patterns emerge.	Complete a sample audit of incident records for timeliness, neutral language, decisions, rationale, parental communication, support and follow-up. Provide refresher training or coaching where recording, investigation or restorative practice is inconsistent. Review support plans for children who have experienced harm and pupils displaying bullying behaviour; confirm reasonable	DSL and Assistant Head Wellbeing: audit and intervention. SENDCo, EYFS lead and form teachers: targeted support. Headteacher and SLT: cross-policy alignment. Safeguarding governor: mid-year review.	Half-termly trend dashboard and case-sampling record. Evidence that agreed actions and follow-up checks were completed. Training impact review and identified next steps. Mid-year report to SLT and governors, including progress against Autumn actions and any resource or staffing implications.

		adjustments and SEND input where required. Undertake focused pupil voice and supervision observations in any identified hotspot or vulnerable cohort. Review online-safety teaching, filtering and monitoring themes and any AI-related misuse with the Computing lead and DSL. Check alignment between this policy, the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, RSHE Policy and Online Safety Policy.		
Trinity 2027: April–July	Evaluate impact, address remaining weaknesses and prepare the policy and implementation plan for 2027–2028.	Repeat pupil, staff and parent feedback measures and compare findings with the Michaelmas baseline. Analyse the full-year picture, including recurrence, protected-characteristic and SEND-related concerns, hotspots, response times, support outcomes and any suspensions or exclusions. Review the effectiveness of curriculum provision, supervision, pupil leadership and parent engagement. Consult the DSL, Assistant Head Wellbeing, SENDCo, EYFS lead, Computing lead and pupil representatives on amendments. Update linked procedures, staff	Headteacher: annual evaluation and recommendations. DSL and Assistant Head Wellbeing: evidence and proposed revisions. Governing Body: scrutiny, approval and resourcing decisions.	Year-end impact report with comparison to baseline. Record of consultation and lessons learned. Approved 2027–2028 policy, staff training plan and first-term action plan. Named actions, owners and deadlines recorded in governing-body minutes.

		induction and training materials; schedule priorities for September 2027. Present the revised policy and annual impact evaluation for governing-body approval.		
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If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring ChildLine on Freephone 0800 1111. This is a confidential helpline. If you are hard of hearing, you can use the textphone 0800 400 222. You can also write to Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR. The phone call or letter is free.

Date reviewed: Michaelmas 2026 | Next review date: Michaelmas 2027, or earlier if required