

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour that has no place at Courtlands School. Every member of our school community – adult or pupil – has the right to feel safe in school and to go home each day with their body, belongings and self-respect intact. As a school, we take bullying and its impact extremely seriously. Pupils and families can be confident that any known incidents of bullying will be responded to.

Bullying cannot always be defined by a single action, as different behaviours can be experienced differently by each child. Our school ethos promotes kindness, respect and positive communication, and we consistently challenge any words, actions or intentions that could be perceived as bullying. Bullying is when someone uses unkind words, actions or intentions, usually repeatedly over time, to deliberately hurt another person physically or emotionally. In other words, bullying at Courtlands is “unacceptable behaviour that happens lots of times, on purpose.” Bullying can be short-term or continue over longer periods. It can occur between adults and pupils, or between pupils themselves. Bullying can relate to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- Special educational needs or disability
- Appearance or health
- Home circumstances, including young carers or financial hardship
- Sexual orientation, sexism or homophobic language

Courtlands School is committed to reducing all forms of bullying. Staff remain vigilant to changes in pupils’ behaviour or presentation. Common signs that a child may be experiencing bullying include (but are not limited to):

- Becoming withdrawn or isolated
- Showing fearfulness or anxiety
- Sudden mood changes or outbursts
- A drop in engagement or progress
- Trying very hard to please more dominant peers

In a bullying situation, there is usually a perpetrator and a victim, although these roles can sometimes be complex or change over time. At Courtlands, pupils are encouraged to trust adults and share worries through strong, positive relationships. Staff supervise all unstructured times carefully, and classrooms have high levels of adult support.

We operate a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. When bullying occurs, we will:

- Always respond
- Ensure the pupil experiencing bullying is safe
- Address the behaviour of the perpetrator in line with our behaviour policy
- Support both the victim and the perpetrator
- Discuss the incident openly with those involved
- Involve parents and carers
- Monitor the situation closely

We will:

- Build a climate of trust where pupils feel confident to report concerns
- Maintain clear procedures for responding to bullying
- Keep a high level of awareness of the impact of bullying
- Strengthen pupils' confidence, resilience and social skills
- Support pupils who display bullying behaviours to understand the impact of their actions

Strategies we use to educate pupils and raise awareness include:

- Teaching pupils about kind behaviour, respectful language and how actions can affect others
- Creating learning opportunities that develop empathy and understanding
- Using assemblies, PSHE and class discussions to reinforce that bullying is not acceptable
- Encouraging staff and pupils to be alert around the school and to seek help when needed
- Promoting respect for all pupils, staff and visitors
- Ensuring clear reporting routes for pupils and staff
- Taking all reports of bullying seriously
- Providing opportunities for pupils to talk to trusted adults
- Using newsletters and school communication to ensure families understand our stance on bullying

Our school ethos encourages all pupils to show respect for themselves, each other and our environment. Kind and positive behaviour is regularly recognised and celebrated. Staff talk openly with pupils about bullying so they know we are committed to dealing with it. This helps build confidence and encourages pupils to share concerns about themselves or others.

Any report of bullying must be shared immediately with the class teacher, pastoral team or a senior leader. Courtlands School will not tolerate behaviour that is abusive, hurtful, violent or aggressive towards any member of our community. Everyone has the right to learn and work in a safe environment, and we will take all necessary steps to ensure this.