



Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy approved by Local
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1. Policy statement

Flax Bourton Primary School is committed to creating an environment where children, staff and families know that they belong as part of our wider community; a sense of being somewhere where they are known and know others, are valued for who they are and know that they can make a valuable contribution to the school and beyond.

All members of our community are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct that enables others to belong at our school, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same. Our Anti-Bullying policy echoes our core values with a heavy emphasis on respect, a partnership approach to managing behaviour and delivering education and restorative interventions that support staff and children. Our motto of 'growing together towards life in all its fullness' highlights the significance of community, belonging and togetherness that supports effective relationships, brilliant behaviour and progress in children's learning. Collectively, through the choices of individuals at all levels, everyone has a part to play.

2. Our intent

- To foster effective partnerships between staff, children and families; promoting community cohesion, togetherness and inclusion
- To ensure all children have a voice to share any concerns and for them to see that our staff listen and respond appropriately
- To develop a strong belief across the school that bullying is not welcome at Flax and will not be tolerated
- To ensure that all children and members of staff are treated fairly and with respect
- To ensure that children and staff do not experience discrimination linked to the protected characteristics and that all of the British values are promoted through our school culture and curriculum
- To enable children to take charge of their choices and take responsibility for their actions

3. Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff, 2016](#)
- [Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2022](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

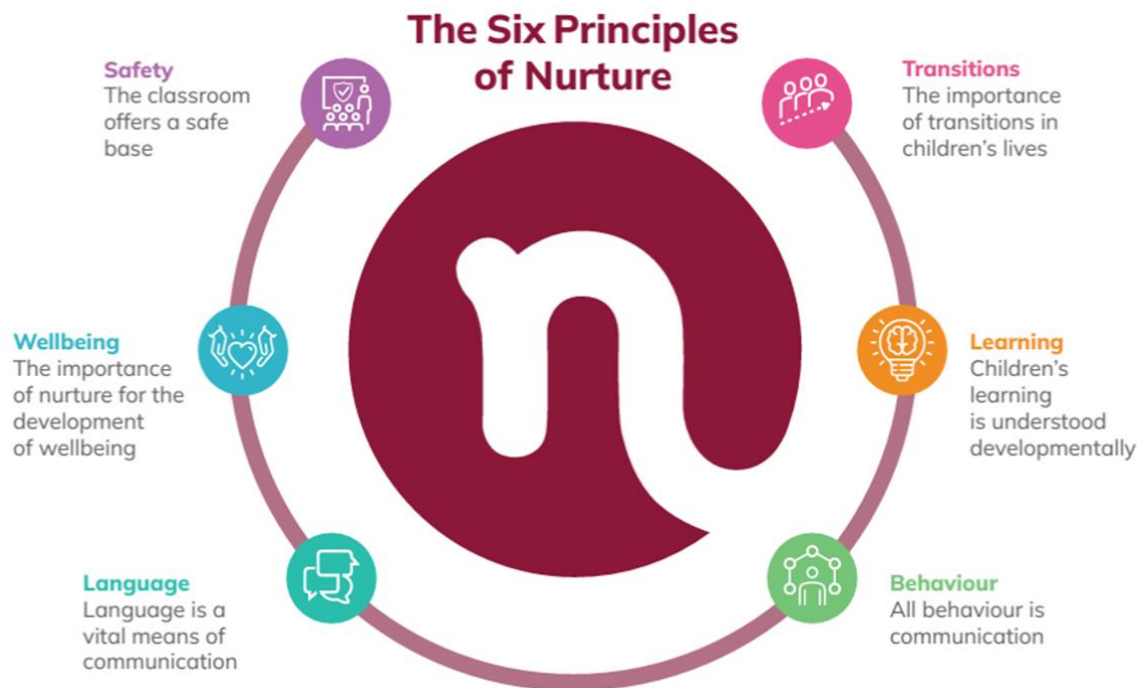
It is also based on the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- [DfE guidance](#) explaining that academies should publish their behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy

This policy should be read in conjunction with our school's Belonging & Behaviour policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection policy and our SEND policy.

The implementation of this policy should be aligned to the 6 principles of Nurture UK.



These principles are broad and emphasises that creating a culture of belonging and supporting effective behaviour takes a holistic approach that considers the individual child, their context and place in our community and evolving journey through education and life. Through our approach and use of Nurture UK principles, we acknowledge all types of behaviour, both positive and negative, as a way of communicating how a child may feel.

4. What is bullying? Our definition

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.

Anti-Bullying Alliance

See appendix 1 for more detailed explanation of our definition of bullying.

5. Relational conflict

Not all situations in which children and young people are involved in conflict or relationship difficulties can be understood as bullying. 'Relational conflict' is one way of describing such non-bullying situations. Relational conflict usually involves individuals and groups who are relatively similar in power and status. It is generally behaviour which happens occasionally and offence might be accidental. In cases of relational conflict, there is also generally a willingness to make things right, to reflect on what went wrong and to try to plot a way forward.

Even if an incident does not have all of the elements of bullying, we know that this does not mean it is something to ignore. For example, a relational conflict that goes unresolved can easily turn into bullying

so should be monitored. Another example would be that a one-off verbal or physical attack, whilst not bullying, would still need involvement from adults in the form of consequences and/or support.

6. Who is most at risk of bullying?

Research shows that some groups of children are more likely to experience bullying than their peers. This includes:

- children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- young carers
- looked after children (LAC) or previously looked after children (PLAC)
- children who are or perceived as LGBT
- some faith and race minorities
- those on free school meals

7. The roles involved in bullying

In order to prevent and tackle bullying, our school believes it is vital to understand the roles involved. The traditional view is that there is a clear 'bully' role and a 'victim' role. We avoid using the term 'bully' to describe a young person because it implies it is something the child is, rather than a behaviour choice. We also avoid, where possible, using the term 'victim' to describe a child, because it can reinforce negative feelings and make it harder for those experiencing bullying to seek support from others.

The school uses the terms: target, leader, reinforcers, assistants, defenders, bystanders.

See appendix 2 for a further explanation of each role.

8. School duties in relation to bullying and safeguarding

Some incidents of bullying may constitute a child protection issue. All schools must make arrangements for ensuring they exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are children at the school. This means the school may need to address bullying as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989.

In these cases the school's safeguarding policy must be followed.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' is statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment. In the guidance it says that 'serious bullying (including cyberbullying)' could constitute emotional abuse.'

Where children involved, either as target or lead, are looked after by the Local Authority, it is essential that their Social Worker is involved at the earliest opportunity. The school would communicate with the social worker if a child involved was subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need plan.

Where an instance of adult or child bullying by a member of staff is reported to the school, appropriate measures should be taken in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy and will be reported to the LADO (local authority designated officer).

9. Our key principles for preventing and responding to bullying

Our school:

1. **listens** - all children and families are listened to and influence strategies and approaches to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.

2. **includes us all** - all children, including those with SEND, are included, valued and participate fully in all aspects of school life.
3. **respects** - all school staff are role models to others within the school in how they treat others.
4. **challenges** - all forms of discriminatory language – including disablist language – is challenged taken seriously
5. **celebrates difference** – difference is actively and visibly celebrated and welcomed across the whole school.
6. **understands** - all school staff, children and families understand what bullying is and what it isn't.
7. **believes** - all children, including disabled children and those with SEN, and their family are acknowledged, believed and taken seriously when reporting incidents of bullying.
8. **reports bullying** - all children within the school and their family understand how to report incidents of bullying.
9. **takes action** - we respond quickly to all incidents of bullying. Children, including disabled children and those with SEN, participate fully in decisions made about them and help to formulate appropriate action to respond to incidents of bullying
10. **has clear policies** - our school's anti-bullying policy reflects these principles. They are widely and actively promoted to school staff, children and their family.

10. Our school rules

Our three school rules provide a common language that is applied to behaviour, in praise and consequence, for all children across the school and work together against bullying:

Be ready

Be respectful

Be safe

11. The role and responsibility of families

The school recognises that families make a crucial difference to children's outcomes and are children's first and most enduring educators. The school uses the term 'family' or 'families' when referring to the wider term of 'parent'.

The school's rules of being ready, respectful and safe applies to all members of our school community including children's families. To build an effective partnership and to bring about the best outcomes for children, the school expects families to:

Ready	Respectful	Safe
<p>Be ready to communicate with school staff should they have any questions or concerns and use the appropriate forum for raising these; seeking first to understand</p> <p>Be ready to work in partnership with the school; supporting the school's intentions and approach to building a culture that fulfils our values and rules</p>	<p>Be respectful to and about members of staff, other families and children; in person and online</p> <p>Be respectful that a school is a community of people; each doing their very best to support our children</p> <p>Be respectful that each child has rights and that all adults involved in a child's life must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all of their rights</p>	<p>Be safe in their interactions, in person and online, with staff, children and other families and expect their child to do the same</p>

Be respectful of each child's circumstances and unique context and respect the school's legal duty to provide confidentiality and data protection about all children

12. Preventing bullying

A whole school approach

We promote a whole school approach as we know this helps to consider all the different aspects of school life and how prevention strategies can be put in place to make it safer for the children of Flax Bourton Primary School. Important factors that will underpin our whole-school prevention approach are:

- A strong school ethos of kindness and respect
- All staff having access to regular anti-bullying training
- Teaching linked to British Values and Protected Characteristics
- A culture of celebrating difference in all
- A culture of inclusion

Our curriculum

Our curriculum, including PSHE, online safety and our Character Curriculum, is delivered throughout the school to educate children about bullying, including online bullying, and to provide opportunities for children to discuss anti-bullying strategies, for example in Relationships and Sex Education lessons. This is aligned with our education linked to British Values and Protected Characteristics.

Across the school

We consider carefully opportunities available to children to develop safe and secure experiences through social interactions, buddy strategies and strong supervision.

We also engage in Anti-Bullying Week.

13. Responding to bullying

Timely and well-planned responses to bullying can have a positive effect on lessening the negative impact of bullying on those who experience it. We consider the purpose of what we are trying to achieve through our actions when responding to bullying. Any process for responding to bullying needs to be clear on this as it is the basis for all planning (and assessment of effectiveness). We consider what the purpose of our response is at each specific timeframe: Immediate, short term, medium term, long term.

Our three priorities for responding to bullying are:

Priority 1: Secure the safety of those involved

Priority 2: Stop the behaviour reoccurring

Priority 3: Whole school learning

See appendix ... for further information on how we respond to bullying through these three priorities.

14. Resolution-based responses to bullying

Resolution-based (restorative) responses include the application of structured restorative interventions and emotion coaching conversations.

Examples of restorative interventions may include:

- Face-to-face meetings with those involved as a valuable approach in the first instance.
- Restorative conferences (emotion coaching) based on whole-school or intervention-based restorative approaches to behaviour and bullying.
- Less formalised resolution enquiry-type responses which involve structured problem-solving approaches.

Key to these types of strategy is a view that they allow the harm that has been done to be explored in a safe way - sometimes through acting on natural empathetic responses, with a point of final resolution to be reached by all parties which prevents the likely recurrence of bullying. A response to bullying doesn't have to be either resolution or consequence-based – it can be a combination of both, depending on the context of the school and the incident.

The aim of resolution-based and restorative practice is to develop community and to manage conflict and tension by repairing harm and building relationships.

It can have a very positive effect on:

- Providing children with a valuable opportunity to have their voice heard when drawing up responses to bullying incidents;
- Improving and sustaining positive behaviour;
- Improving and sustaining attendance, attainment and progress;
- Creating a safe and caring school environment.

This resolution-based approach ensures that the immediate conflict is addressed while promoting long-term behaviour change and a more supportive school environment. In our response to bullying, we may utilise one or more of the following strategies:

- Emotion coaching conversations in a safe setting
- Individual support
- Family involvement
- Restorative action
- Check-ins
- Positive reinforcement
- School-wide initiatives

15. Reporting & recording bullying

An upstander is someone who recognises when something is wrong and acts to make it right. One of the most important ways to do this is by reporting bullying behaviour. Some young people might worry that they are going to be called a 'snitch' or a 'snake' if they tell a teacher about bullying behaviour. Name calling, such as calling someone a 'snitch', is not respectful behaviour. It might even be verbal bullying behaviour if it is repeated.

Snitching is when someone purposefully tells an adult about something that someone has done to try to get them into trouble.

Reporting is when someone informs a trusted adult about bullying behaviour because they want to ensure that the target is safe and getting support. This is encouraged at Flax Bourton Primary School and we work to create a culture where children feel comfortable and confident to do this without any repercussions.

Reporting tools

We aim to make reporting easier for everyone by having several reporting tools in place in school. This gives children a choice of how and when they can report. It can also protect the anonymity of the reporter; the person's identity is protected so that nobody else knows that it was them that reported the bullying behaviour.

At Flax, children can report bullying directly to a trusted adult or through leaving a note and adding it to their class SPEAK OUT box.

If the bullying behaviour is happening online, we encourage children to use the tools available on all apps and social media sites such as reporting comments or users to the social media company in the first instance. We have a duty of care to support a child's wellbeing even if the bullying behaviour did not take place on the school premises.

Families can report bullying by speaking in person to their child's teacher or emailing the class account.

Recording bullying

We record bullying using a robust recording system that is used consistently by staff. This is through our online system CPOMS. Recording the incidents can help to gather a clearer picture of what incidents are going on and to understand patterns of behaviour and bullying 'hot spots'. It also enables us to learn and review antibullying practice as a whole school.

16. Mental health

There is a strong link between bullying and mental health. While much of the research has focused on the impact bullying has on young peoples' mental health, there is also evidence that young people with mental health issues are more likely to be bullied.

Children who are experiencing difficulties such as bullying and mental health issues may display challenging behaviour or even start bullying others. Some signs to be aware of are:

- Changes in engagement, school performance and attendance
- Increased isolation
- Changes in behaviour

See our school mental health policy for more information and guidance.

17. Working with children displaying bullying behaviours

Any person is capable of displaying bullying behaviour. We know it is important to ensure we don't make assumptions about children and young people who are bullying others. [Department for Education](#)

[research](#) shows that restorative approaches mixed with sanctions (that include exclusions in serious circumstances) can be effective in schools.

18. Monitoring

The Headteacher will monitor the number and types of incidents of bullying and report this to the governing body and the LSP central team. The Headteacher will monitor the actions taken to resolve bullying and continually reflect on the school's practice to ensure it is of the highest standard. The school will seek feedback from children as part of this self-reflective process.

APPENDIX 1 - UNDERSTANDING THE DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Repetitive behaviour

This refers to a pattern of behaviour rather than a one-off incident. However, a one-off incident may still need action by the school and should be recorded to ensure that patterns of behaviour can be identified.

Hurtful

Behaviour which hurts an individual or group of individuals. For example, it may be:

- **Physical** – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- **Verbal** - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- **Emotional** – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- **Online/cyber** – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion.
- **Indirect** - Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Intentional

This is deliberate behaviour by an individual or individuals that is intended to cause hurt, whether it be physical, verbal or psychological.

Power imbalance

The imbalance of power is vital to understand when thinking about bullying and how to tackle it. As soon as a person says 'no' to something and that is ignored, there is an imbalance of power.

Other examples of situations where there may be an imbalance of power where the person/people who are the target of the behaviour:

- are in a smaller group than those experiencing it;
- are part of a minority group, e.g. a minority gender, race, or faith group;
- are a smaller stature or physical strength;
- are younger;
- have communication difficulties or a disability.

Bullying can be direct or indirect:

Direct bullying: Behaviour that hurts, harms, or humiliates and is overt, obvious, and apparent to anyone witnessing it. The actions and words are easy to identify, the identity of the person bullying is usually known, and the acts are focused toward the person being bullied – they know about the bullying as it is happening.

Indirect bullying: Behaviour that hurts, harms, or humiliates, which is often covert, subtle, and not always immediately acknowledged as bullying. The words and actions can be harder to identify, can be done anonymously and discreetly, and the target might not find out about the bullying until long after it has happened

Bullying can be a form of discrimination. This can come in one of the following forms:

- **direct discrimination** - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others
- **indirect discrimination** - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage
- **harassment** - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them
- **victimisation** - treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment

Types of discrimination (protected characteristics) include:

- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Age
- Religion or belief
- Homophobic
- Disability
- Sex/sexual orientation

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of these characteristics.

APPENDIX 2 – ROLES OF BULLYING EXPLAINED

Target: The person being bullied.

Leader: The leader's actions leads the majority of the bullying activity.

Reinforcers: They give power to the leader. They may not get involved directly in bullying but they incite the leader and gather others to see what is happening. They may laugh along with the bullying and give the leader encouragement.

Assistants: The assistant joins in with the bullying even though someone else has started it and provides physical or other assistance to the leader.

Defenders: The defender supports and defends the target. They may do this openly by confronting the leader but may also do this more covertly for example, by telling a teacher or calling into question the power of the leader with the reinforcer and assistant. They may also provide friendship and encouragement to the target empowering them to 'say no' to the bullying happening to them.

Bystanders: A bystander stays removed from the bullying situation and either pretends not to notice or is not aware of what is happening. The bystander does nothing about the bullying.

The key to these roles is a shifting power balance. Whilst we focus the majority of our energy on changing the behaviour of the target and the leader who are often stuck in a pattern of this bullying behaviour, we also focus our attention on trying to change the behaviour of those wider roles. For example, we encourage those who are laughing to simply stop laughing and become bystanders or encourage assistants to stop joining in. We encourage bystanders to take an active role and tell a teacher.

All these things take the power away from the leader.

APPENDIX 3 - RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF BULLYING

Priority 1: Secure the safety of those involved

Our first priority is to make sure everyone is safe. This should be an immediate response. Have people been physically and/or emotionally hurt by the bullying? Are children safe in school? Some key things we consider:

- A. Are all children involved safe?
- B. Is anyone's physical health or wellbeing at risk?
- C. Have you needed to use the child protection and safeguarding policy?
- D. Did you access any outside support? E.g. NHS, police.
- E. Have you recorded the incident?
- F. Did you tell the child/ren being bullied that you are taking it seriously, it is not their fault and they don't have to put up with bullying?
- G. Have you asked the child/ren being bullied how they're feeling and how they think it can be resolved?
- H. Have you informed the child/ren being bullied what you will do next?

Priority 2: Stop the behaviour reoccurring

This step is about ensuring that the behaviour for the group will not continue. This could be a short- or medium-term response. This is where the ability to see bullying as a group behaviour will help, and we can use strategies to intervene such as restorative approaches, consequences and group work to develop empathy. This process will include:

- A. Record names based on the roles involved in bullying, how they were involved and what you could do to change their behaviour.
- B. Have you been clear what steps you are taking with those involved?
- C. Have you developed a strategy together with the target and are they happy with your agreed way forward?
- D. Have you sought agreement from all those involved about the way forward? Sometimes this could be done with a signed agreement by those involved or simply a conversation but it is important to record this agreement.
- E. Have you regularly checked in with the target/s? Do they have a discreet way to report to you about how they are feeling at school regularly? Have you talked to families?
- F. Is your response built upon changing the behaviour of the group and not solely on changing the behaviour of the target/s? This is important to avoid sending a message to the target that the bullying is their fault.

Priority 3: Whole school learning

This is an important step as it allows us to reflect upon the schools' approach and if there's anything we can do to prevent a similar situation in the future. This could be a medium or long-term response. This could also be done concurrently with priority 2.

- A. What has this incident taught us?
- B. Does this reveal any issues in school? E.g.
 - Do you have an issue with language in school or an area within the school which needs more adult supervision?
 - Do staff need any training? (We think across the whole staff team and include after school/breakfast club providers and lunchtime staff.)
 - Do you need to refresh your school policy and procedures? Have you identified any gaps?
 - Do families have a good understanding of what bullying is and is not? Do they know the school approach to anti-bullying?
- C. What needs to happen/who do you need to speak to in order to make this happen? By when and how

APPENDIX 4 – AIMING TO RESOLVE ISSUES OF BULLYING

It is essential that the first adult involved in the situation reassures the target and informs the member of staff nominated to deal with bullying as soon as possible. Currently the nominated person (NP) at Flax Bourton Primary School is the Headteacher and other senior leaders. The NP then takes the following steps:

Step one - interview with the target

When the NP finds out that bullying has happened, they start by talking to the target about what the target sees as the problem and how they feel about it. The NP makes notes about the bullied child's feelings - not wanting to come to school etc., as well as the version of events as described by the child. They will then discuss the next steps (as set out below) and will arrange a meeting with the leader of the bullying behaviour. A list of those involved is drawn up by the NP. The NP then tells the target that they will arrange a meeting with these children.

Step two - convene a meeting with the people involved

The meeting takes place led by the NP. Those present will be the target (if happy to attend) and the child(ren) identified in Step 1. The first point made, even as the meeting is being set up, is that it is a meeting - not a telling off. The tone set should be a supportive one: "We have a problem here in school. Let's see if we can solve it." It is important to say that the people invited to the meeting are there because they may be able to help.

Step three - explain the problem

The NP tells them about the way the target is feeling, mentioning what has been told to him/her at the previous meeting. If appropriate, an example of the behaviour that led to these feelings may be mentioned and the group invited to comment on their perceptions. Question prompts from emotion coaching could be used here alongside language from the zones of regulation. At this stage, no blame is to be ascribed. With very young children it can be told almost as a story.

Step four - share responsibility

The NP does not attribute blame but states that s/he knows that the group could help resolve the situation.

Step five - ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the target could be helped to feel safe, secure and successful. The NP gives positive responses and guides the discussion as appropriate. A commitment to change from the group may be one outcome.

Step six – share out responsibility

The NP ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. The NP arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step seven - meet them again

About a week later, the NP discusses with each child including the target, how things have been going. This allows the NP to monitor the behaviour and keeps the children involved in the process. Further reviews may be decided on as necessary.

APPENDIX 5 - FEATURES OF CYBERBULLYING

Online bullying is often referred to as cyberbullying, meaning bullying via electronic means. This could be via a smart phone, computer, laptop, tablet or online gaming platforms. It can take place on a range of online or mobile services, such as text, email, social networking sites, video-hosting sites, messenger, photo sharing services, chat, webcams, visual learning environments and online games.

24/7 Contact

The contact and bullying behaviour can be 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Threats and intimidation

Threatening and intimidating messages can be sent via email, phone and other devices. Sometimes this can result in what is referred to as cyberstalking or trolling, for example.

Harassment and exclusion

Children and young people can be harassed and excluded just as easily online via online platforms and games as they can with face-to-face bullying.

Name calling

Emails, phones, online games and other devices can also be used to call people names, offend and insult them. Examples of terms to describe this behaviour may include Trolling, Baiting and Flaming.

Posting private information without consent

Sometimes photos, videos or other information can be posted online without the child or young person's permission. This can be shared, seen or commented on multiple times. Terms used to describe this behaviour might include Outing or Fraping, for example.

Hacking & Impersonation

Online accounts can be hacked into or new accounts created masquerading as or impersonating a child or young person. Examples of terms used to describe this behaviour might be Catfishing or Fraping.

Manipulation

Children and young people can be manipulated to do things or post things online that they don't want to. Photos and videos of young people can also be manipulated and shared online.

Sexual threats

This might include distributing sexual material (including pornography) or sending photos or videos of a sexual nature. It might also include making phone calls and sending texts or messages of a sexual nature.

Enhanced social pressure

For young people who access social media, so much of their lives are played out online. This can increase existing social pressures on young people to present themselves in a particular way and enhance feelings of exclusion and isolation, taking several different forms. For example:

- People purposefully not liking a young person's status update or photo they have posted, so they seem unpopular
- Exclusion from group chats
- Not being invited to group events

Anonymity

A young person facing online bullying may not always know who is bullying them, which can be very distressing. Also, young people may be more likely to bully others online if they believe they have anonymity. Often people will hide behind a pseudonym and indulge in behaviour they would never commit face to face.

Reach

The bullying context can be shared with a large audience very quickly, and can reappear again and again, which can make it harder to get 'closure'.

Increased involvement

Young people who may not bully others face to face may be drawn into bullying online – either by liking or sharing harmful content uploaded by others, because of the perception of anonymity online and because of the speed in which a message can be sent, or a post uploaded.

Global Identity

Bullying and harassment online often involves a large audience with a number of players. It's rarely limited to interaction between two individuals.

Evidence

Evidence of cyberbullying can be collected and retained – whether that's a text or screenshot from a social networking profile.

APPENDIX 6 – RESTORATIVE CONVERSATIONS

This script should be used to unpick and move forwards from a significant incident of dysregulation or conflict between a peer/adult.

1. What happened?
2. What were you feeling at the time? or On a scale of 1-10, how were you feeling? Can you think why?
3. What do you think was the size of the problem? What was the size of your reaction? Did they match? / How did they compare?
4. Who has been affected? How? How might they be feeling?
5. What could we do differently next time?
6. What could we do now to fix this?

