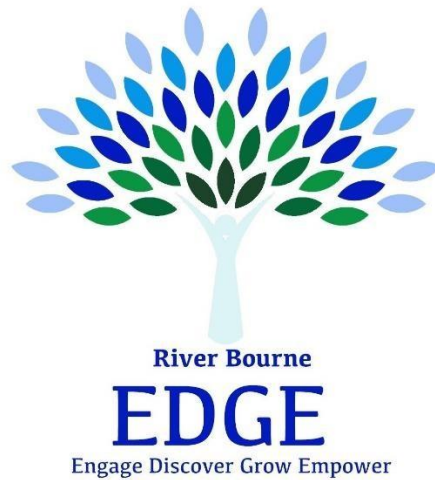




River Bourne Edge Alternative Provision

Anti-bullying Policy

Policy Owner: Head of Provision
Approved by: Senior Leadership Team
Policy Date: July 2026
Review Date: July 2027

1. Policy Statement

At **The River Bourne Edge**, we are committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where every student, member of staff and visitor is treated with dignity and respect.

Bullying of any kind is never acceptable. We recognise that bullying can have a significant impact on a person's wellbeing, confidence, attendance and ability to learn. Every allegation of bullying will therefore be taken seriously, investigated promptly and responded to appropriately.

We believe that every student has the right to feel safe.

2. Our Approach

The River Bourne Edge is founded on a **restorative, relational and trauma-informed approach**.

We understand that behaviour is a form of communication and that many of our students have experienced trauma, adversity or difficulties with relationships. Whilst we seek to understand the reasons behind behaviour, this never excuses bullying.

Our aim is to:

- protect those who have experienced bullying
- educate those displaying bullying behaviour
- repair relationships wherever appropriate
- develop empathy and understanding
- prevent bullying from happening again.

Where possible we use restorative conversations to help students understand the impact of their behaviour and rebuild positive relationships. However, where bullying is serious, persistent or places someone at risk, appropriate sanctions and safeguarding procedures will also be implemented.

3. Definition of Bullying

The Department for Education defines bullying as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally."

Bullying is different from occasional disagreements or friendship issues because it involves behaviour that is:

- deliberate
- repeated
- intended to cause harm, fear or distress.

4. Types of Bullying

Bullying may include:

Verbal

- Name calling
- Insults
- Threats
- Offensive language
- Taunting

Physical

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Damaging belongings
- Spitting
- Intimidation

Emotional

- Excluding others
- Humiliation
- Spreading rumours
- Manipulation
- Deliberately isolating someone

Online (Cyberbullying)

- Social media abuse
- Offensive messages
- Sharing images without permission
- Fake accounts
- Online harassment

Where online bullying outside provision affects a student's welfare or education, The River Bourne Edge will take appropriate action alongside parents, schools and other agencies where necessary.

5. Protected Characteristics

Bullying may relate to:

- disability or SEND
- race or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- culture or nationality
- gender
- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- appearance
- family circumstances

- being a young carer
- looked after children
- any other protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

6. Preventing Bullying

Creating a positive culture is everyone's responsibility.

The River Bourne Edge promotes respect through:

- positive relationships
- restorative practice
- trauma-informed approaches
- high levels of staff supervision
- clear expectations for behaviour
- PSHE and wellbeing education
- online safety education
- celebrating diversity
- encouraging students to speak up
- recognising and rewarding kindness and respect.

Students are encouraged to report concerns early before problems become more serious.

7. Reporting Concerns

Students can report bullying to **any trusted member of staff**.

Concerns may also be raised by:

- parents or carers
- referring schools
- professionals
- other students
- visitors.

Every report will be taken seriously.

Staff will:

- listen without judgement
- reassure the student
- record concerns where appropriate
- inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL where necessary
- investigate promptly.

No student should feel worried about reporting bullying.

8. Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- promote an anti-bullying culture
- ensure this policy is implemented consistently
- monitor incidents and identify patterns
- ensure staff receive appropriate training
- review the policy annually.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL and Deputy DSL will:

- oversee serious bullying concerns
- assess safeguarding risks
- liaise with external agencies where necessary
- ensure appropriate records are maintained.

Staff

All staff will:

- challenge bullying immediately
- model respectful behaviour
- support students appropriately
- report concerns promptly
- work with families and schools
- contribute to restorative solutions where appropriate.

Students

Students are expected to:

- treat others with kindness and respect
- report bullying
- support one another
- use appropriate language
- behave responsibly online.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- report concerns promptly
- work in partnership with staff
- support agreed actions
- encourage respectful behaviour at home.

9. Responding to Bullying

Every situation is different.

Depending upon the circumstances, staff may:

- investigate concerns
- gather information from everyone involved
- complete written statements if required
- assess any safeguarding concerns
- inform parents/carers
- inform the referring school
- provide support for the victim
- provide education and support for the student displaying bullying behaviour
- facilitate restorative meetings where appropriate
- implement behaviour sanctions where necessary
- involve external agencies if required.

Where bullying constitutes a criminal offence or safeguarding concern, the appropriate agencies will be contacted.

10. Supporting Students

Students affected by bullying will receive support appropriate to their needs.

Support may include:

- regular check-ins
- pastoral support
- restorative conversations
- emotional wellbeing support
- safeguarding intervention
- referral to external agencies where appropriate.

Support will continue until staff are satisfied that the bullying has stopped and the student feels safe.

11. Bullying Towards Staff

The River Bourne Edge recognises that staff can also experience bullying or harassment from students, parents, carers or visitors.

Such behaviour will not be tolerated.

Staff will receive:

- immediate support from senior leaders
- the opportunity to record concerns
- appropriate action to address unacceptable behaviour
- access to wellbeing support where appropriate.

12. Recording and Monitoring

Bullying concerns will be recorded where appropriate and reviewed by senior leaders.

Monitoring enables us to:

- identify patterns
- identify vulnerable groups
- evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- continually improve our practice.

13. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

14. Useful Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- Department for Education – *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Education and Inspections Act 2006

Further support is available from organisations including:

- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- NSPCC
- Childline
- YoungMinds
- Kidscape
- UK Safer Internet Centre
- Restorative Justice Council