

BULLYING AND BOUNDARIES

Practical Guidance for Primary-Age Children (Ages 7–12)

Last Updated February 2026

Purpose

This document supports children in recognising repeated unkind behaviour, responding calmly, and involving adults early.

It is intended for parents, carers, and primary-aged pupils. It supports school safeguarding procedures and does not replace them.

What Bullying Often Looks Like

Bullying is usually repeated behaviour that is intended to upset, exclude, or intimidate.

It may include:

- Repeated teasing or name-calling
- Deliberate exclusion from games or groups
- Pushing, grabbing, or unwanted physical contact
- Being pressured to do something uncomfortable
- Unkind messages sent privately or publicly

If behaviour continues after being asked to stop, it should be reported.

Clear Boundaries: What Children Can Say

Children benefit from practising simple, direct phrases.

Examples:

- “Stop.”
- “That’s not okay.”
- “I don’t like that.”
- “Leave me alone.”

Delivery matters:

- Stand still
- Face the person
- Speak clearly
- Avoid arguing

Calm and direct responses reduce escalation.

When Words Are Not Enough

If behaviour continues, children should:

- Move away promptly
- Stay close to friends
- Position themselves near a visible adult
- Avoid reacting physically

Moving towards visibility and support reduces escalation.

Involving Adults Early

Children should understand:

- Reporting concerns is responsible behaviour
- Repeated behaviour should not be handled alone
- If one adult does not respond, another trusted adult should be told

Early reporting prevents escalation.

Online Behaviour

If online messages or behaviour are repeated or upsetting:

- Do not reply in anger
- Keep evidence where appropriate
- Show a parent, carer, or teacher

Online concerns should always involve adult awareness.

What Adults Can Reinforce

Adults can support healthy boundaries by:

- Practising calm phrases with children
- Encouraging early reporting
- Avoiding advice that promotes retaliation
- Remaining composed when concerns are raised

Children often mirror adult responses.

Perspective

Most peer conflict resolves more quickly when addressed early and calmly.

Clear words.

Early support.

Consistent adult involvement.

These are the most reliable protective factors for children.

Safeguarding

Any ongoing concerns should be reported in line with the school's designated safeguarding lead procedures.