Garlinge Primary School and Nursery

Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure

This policy shows what everyone in Garlinge Primary School and Nursery will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

This policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2026 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2026.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)	
Anna Northrop	Head of School (Lead DSL)
James Williams	Executive Headteacher
Stephen Cope	Head of School
Kelly Cooke	Safeguarding Officer
Karen Moore	Family Liaison Officer

Safeguarding Governor	Jacqueline Messenger
Area Education Safeguarding Advisor	Catherine Holmberg

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Key Contacts

	Name	School Contact Information
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Anna Northrop Head of School	northropa@garlinge.kent.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Kelly Cooke Safeguarding Officer Karen Moore Family Liaison Officer Stephen Cope Head of School James Williams Executive Headteacher	cookek@garlinge.kent.sch.uk moorek@garlinge.kent.sch.uk copes@garlinge.kent.sch.uk williamsj@garlinge.kent.sch.uk
Executive Headteacher	James Williams	williamsj@garlinge.kent.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Jacqueline Messenger	messengerj@garlinge.kent.sch.uk
Senior Leadership Team Responsible for Behaviour	**James Williams** Executive Headteacher **Anna Northrop** Head of School **Stephen Cope** Head of School **Robert Bentley** Assistant Headteacher (EYFS) **Kayley Wasway** Assistant Headteacher (KS1) **Afroulla Goode** Assistant Headteacher (LKS2) **Deborah Pegden** Assistant Headteacher (UKS2)	williamsj@garlinge.kent.sch.uk northropa@garlinge.kent.sch.uk copes@garlinge.kent.sch.uk bentleyr@garlinge.kent.sch.uk waswayk@garlinge.kent.sch.uk goodea@garlinge.kent.sch.uk pegdend@garlinge.kent.sch.uk

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1. Introduction

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery, we recognise that bullying and other harmful behaviours can have a significant impact on a child's safety, wellbeing, confidence, relationships and ability to learn.

We are committed to providing an environment in which every child feels safe, valued, included and able to learn without fear of bullying, harassment, discrimination or intimidation.

Preventing and responding to bullying is the responsibility of the whole school community. We therefore seek to:

- prevent bullying wherever possible
- develop positive, respectful and inclusive relationships
- ensure children understand what bullying and harmful behaviour are and how to seek help
- respond promptly and proportionately to concerns
- challenge prejudice, discrimination and harmful language
- support children who experience bullying or other harmful behaviour
- support children whose behaviour has caused harm to understand its impact and make positive changes
- work in partnership with parents and carers
- monitor concerns so that patterns and emerging risks can be identified.

Our approach is consistent with the school's commitment to the school values**:** Perseverance, Aspiration, Respect and Teamwork and the school rules**:**

SAFE • CARING • READY

- **SAFE** – We keep ourselves and others safe.
- **CARING** – We are caring towards ourselves, others and our community.
- **READY** – We are ready to learn, make good choices and take responsibility.

2. Links with Other School Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Relationship and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- School Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Vision, Aims and Values

Together, these policies provide a consistent framework for preventing and responding to bullying, discrimination, harassment, prejudice, child-on-child abuse and other harmful or unacceptable behaviour.

Where behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies take precedence.

3. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy has regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Preventing and tackling bullying, Department for Education, updated July 2026
- Preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff, Department for Education, 2026
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance, as applicable from September 2026.

The DfE's current bullying guidance applies to schools in England and was updated on 9 July 2026. KCSIE 2026 is statutory guidance and came into force on 1 September 2026. It states that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that staff should act immediately on concerns and report safeguarding concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 is the current statutory multi-agency safeguarding guidance and applies to education providers and childcare settings.

Where bullying or harmful behaviour may amount to a criminal offence, including violence, assault, harassment, intimidation, criminal damage or a hate-related offence, the school will consider whether police involvement or advice from another relevant agency is appropriate.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Executive Headteacher and Heads of School

The Executive Headteacher and Heads of School are responsible for:

- communicating this policy

- ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place
- ensuring that concerns are responded to consistently and proportionately
- ensuring that safeguarding concerns are dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures
- ensuring that staff receive appropriate training and guidance
- monitoring patterns and trends
- ensuring that appropriate support is available
- reporting significant themes and concerns to governors as appropriate.

4.2 Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the school has an effective approach to preventing and responding to bullying
- monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy
- consider relevant information about bullying and discriminatory behaviour
- ensure that safeguarding and equality responsibilities are appropriately reflected; and
- review the policy regularly

4.3 Senior Leaders and Staff

All staff are expected to:

- model respectful and inclusive behaviour
- promote the school's SAFE • KIND • CARING • READY values
- challenge bullying, discrimination and harmful language
- listen to children who raise concerns
- respond promptly and appropriately
- record concerns on CPOMS
- report safeguarding concerns without delay
- follow the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures
- support children involved
- contribute to monitoring and preventing patterns of harmful behaviour

4.4 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- support the school's approach to respectful relationships
- talk to their child about bullying, online safety and appropriate behaviour
- encourage their child to report concerns
- work constructively with the school
- model respectful communication, including online
- raise concerns with the school as soon as possible

4.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- treat others with kindness and respect
- follow the school's SAFE • KIND • CARING • READY values
- tell a trusted adult if they experience or witness harmful behaviour
- support others appropriately
- avoid joining in with bullying or harmful behaviour
- follow the school's behaviour and online safety expectations

Children will not be expected to resolve bullying or harmful behaviour themselves.

5. Definition of Bullying

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery, we teach children explicitly what bullying is, what it can look like and how to seek help. This teaching takes place through assemblies, PSHE/RSHE, the wider curriculum and everyday conversations.

The current Department for Education definition recognises that:

> **Bullying is unwanted behaviour that can be repeated, or a one-off incident causing harm, intimidation or offence. It often involves a power imbalance, although this is not always the case.**

This reflects the DfE's July 2026 guidance.

Bullying may be:

- physical
- verbal
- psychological or emotional
- relational or social
- threatening or intimidating
- exclusionary
- discriminatory or prejudice-based
- online/cyberbullying

It can take place:

- face-to-face
- online
- through social media or messaging
- through gaming
- through group chats
- through images, videos or other digital content
- across a combination of online and offline environments

Examples may include**:**

- repeated or serious name-calling, teasing or mocking
- racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist or otherwise discriminatory language
- comments relating to disability, SEND, appearance, religion or belief
- hitting, kicking, pushing or spitting
- damaging, taking or interfering with belongings
- deliberately excluding or isolating someone
- spreading rumours or malicious information
- threatening or intimidating behaviour
- humiliating or degrading another child
- sending threatening or abusive messages
- deliberately sharing embarrassing or harmful images or information
- creating or participating in harmful online groups
- using gaming platforms or messaging services to target another child; or
- other behaviour intended to cause, or having the effect of causing, harm, intimidation or offence.

Not every disagreement, argument, friendship difficulty or instance of unkind behaviour will constitute bullying.

However, a **one-off incident** can constitute bullying under the current DfE definition where it causes harm, intimidation or offence.

Regardless of whether behaviour meets the definition of bullying, the school will respond appropriately to behaviour that is harmful, discriminatory, abusive, unsafe or unacceptable.

A single incident may therefore require action under:

- the Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- the Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure
- the Equality Act 2010
- the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies
- another relevant school procedure

Staff should consider:

- what happened
- the impact on the child
- whether the behaviour was unwanted
- whether there is a pattern or repetition
- whether a power imbalance is present
- whether prejudice or discrimination is involved
- the age and developmental stage of the children
- SEND, communication or other individual needs
- the context
- whether there are safeguarding concerns

Staff should not wait for behaviour to be repeated before recording or responding to a concern.

6. Types of Bullying and Harmful Behaviour

Bullying and harmful behaviour can take many forms:

- **Physical**
  This can include:
  - hitting
  - kicking
  - pushing
  - tripping
  - spitting
  - physical intimidation
  - damaging property
  - interfering with another child's belongings

- **Verbal**
  This can include:
  - name-calling
  - insults
  - threats
  - mocking
  - repeated teasing
  - derogatory comments
  - harmful language

- **Emotional and Psychological**
  This can include:
  - humiliation
  - intimidation
  - deliberate isolation
  - threats
  - manipulation
  - spreading malicious rumours
  - deliberately undermining another child's confidence

- **Relational and Social**
  This can include:
  - deliberate exclusion
  - encouraging others not to play with someone
  - controlling friendship groups
  - spreading rumours
  - turning peers against another child
  - deliberately damaging relationships

- **Cyberbullying and Online Harm**
  This can include:
  - abusive messages
  - harmful group chats
  - threatening posts
  - humiliating images or videos

- exclusion from online groups
- impersonation or fake accounts
- harmful gaming interactions
- online rumours
- sharing information intended to embarrass or intimidate
- other online behaviour that causes harm, intimidation or offence

Online behaviour will be addressed even where it occurs outside school if it has an impact on the school community, the safety or wellbeing of a child, or the school's ability to safeguard pupils.

- **Prejudice-Based and Discriminatory Bullying**
  The school will challenge behaviour relating to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

  This includes behaviour relating to:
  - race
  - disability
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation
  - gender reassignment
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - marriage and civil partnership
  - age, where relevant

In the primary school context, the school will also challenge harmful stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory language relating to family circumstances, culture, nationality, appearance, caring responsibilities, socioeconomic circumstances, language, identity or other individual characteristics.

A child's additional needs, communication difficulties or SEND must never be used to excuse harmful behaviour towards another child.

Equally, SEND or other individual needs will be considered carefully when determining appropriate support and response for a child whose behaviour has caused harm.

7. School Ethos and Prevention

Garlinge Primary School and Nursery believes that preventing bullying is a whole-school responsibility.

We seek to develop a culture where:

- children feel safe to speak to adults
- children know how and where to seek help
- differences are valued
- prejudice and discrimination are challenged
- respectful relationships are explicitly taught
- children develop social and emotional skills
- staff model respectful communication

- children understand the impact of their behaviour
- children are encouraged to be active and responsible bystanders
- parents and carers understand how they can support the school's approach
- concerns are recorded, monitored and responded to consistently

The school will use:

- assemblies
- PSHE/RSHE
- the wider curriculum
- class discussions
- stories and literature
- online safety teaching
- Anti-Bullying Week
- pupil voice
- School Council activities
- displays and resources
- pastoral interventions
- staff training
- targeted supervision
- safe spaces and structured activities
- partnership with parents and carers

The revised RSHE guidance introduced from September 2026 includes teaching relevant to respectful relationships, bullying, discrimination and seeking help.

8. Responding to Bullying and Concerns About Harmful Behaviour

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery, all concerns about bullying, discrimination, harassment or potentially harmful behaviour are taken seriously.

Staff will respond promptly, proportionately and in a child-centred manner.

Staff do **not** need to establish whether behaviour formally meets the definition of bullying before taking appropriate action.

8.1 Reporting a Concern

Children are encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they:

- experience bullying or harmful behaviour
- witness bullying or harmful behaviour
- feel frightened, unsafe, intimidated, humiliated or excluded
- receive harmful or upsetting messages or content online
- are concerned about another child's behaviour

Children may report a concern to any member of staff.

Parents and carers may also raise concerns with the school.

8.2 Immediate Safety and Safeguarding

The member of staff receiving the concern should consider whether any child is at immediate risk.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the concern must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.

This includes concerns involving:

- serious physical harm
- sexual violence or sexual harassment
- child-on-child abuse
- discriminatory or prejudice-based abuse
- significant threats or intimidation
- online abuse or threats
- coercive or controlling behaviour
- any other circumstances in which a child may be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, harm

Safeguarding action must not be delayed while staff determine whether behaviour meets the definition of bullying.

KCSIE 2026 states that staff should act immediately on concerns and report safeguarding concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.

8.3 Recording on CPOMS

ALL CONCERNS ABOUT BULLYING OR POTENTIALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR MUST BE RECORDED ON CPOMS.

Staff should not make their own judgement that an incident is "too minor" to record.

Recording a concern does not mean that the incident has been formally classified as bullying.

It enables the school to:

- identify patterns
- identify repeated concerns involving the same children
- identify patterns by location or time
- identify prejudice-based behaviour
- identify online concerns
- monitor children's wellbeing
- coordinate support
- demonstrate appropriate follow-up

Records should be factual and objective and include, where known:

- date, time and location
- children involved
- what was reported or observed
- relevant words or actions
- impact on the child
- witnesses
- online information or evidence
- action taken
- support provided
- who has been informed
- decisions made
- reasons for decisions
- subsequent actions
- outcomes and review

Where information has been reported rather than witnessed, this should be made clear, for example: *"The child reported that..."* rather than presenting an allegation as an established fact.

KCSIE 2026 specifically identifies the importance of recording a summary, actions, decisions, rationale and outcomes for safeguarding concerns.

8.4 Assessment and Investigation

The appropriate member of staff will establish the relevant facts and consider:

- what happened
- who was involved
- the impact on the child
- whether there is a pattern
- whether there is a power imbalance
- whether prejudice or discrimination is involved
- the context
- SEND and communication needs
- online information
- previous related concerns
- whether safeguarding procedures apply.

Children should be spoken to separately where appropriate.

Staff should avoid:

- public confrontation
- unnecessary repeated retelling
- asking a child to confront another child
- asking children to resolve the situation themselves
- delaying action while attempting to categorise behaviour

9. Appropriate Responses and Support

The school's response will be proportionate and based on the individual circumstances and impact.

Possible responses include:

- increased supervision
- pastoral support
- a trusted adult
- safe spaces
- friendship support
- communication support
- emotional literacy
- social skills work
- support with regulation
- reasonable adjustments
- online safety support
- targeted intervention
- consequences under the Relationship and Behaviour Policy
- work with parents/carers
- restorative approaches where appropriate and safe
- safeguarding referral
- external agency involvement
- police involvement where appropriate

Restorative approaches

Restorative approaches may be used where appropriate, but they are **not automatic**.

They must only be used where they are safe, proportionate and in the best interests of the children involved.

A child who has experienced harm will not be required to participate in restorative work or direct contact with another child.

Accountability and support

The school recognises that accountability and support can happen together.

A child whose behaviour has caused harm may require support to:

- understand the impact of their behaviour
- develop empathy
- improve communication
- develop social skills
- regulate emotions
- understand boundaries
- make positive changes

This does not reduce the school's responsibility to protect other children.

10. Supporting Children Who Experience Bullying or Harmful Behaviour

Children who experience bullying or harmful behaviour will be offered appropriate support.

This may include:

- a trusted adult
- regular check-ins
- a safe space
- increased supervision
- friendship support
- pastoral support
- emotional literacy
- communication support
- online safety support
- reasonable adjustments
- appropriate external support

Children will be involved, wherever appropriate, in identifying what would help them feel safe and supported.

11. Children with SEND and Additional Needs

The school recognises that children with SEND or other additional needs may:

- experience increased vulnerability to bullying or exclusion
- communicate concerns differently
- find it difficult to interpret social situations
- use or understand language differently
- require additional support to explain what has happened
- require reasonable adjustments to reporting and support processes

Staff will therefore consider:

- communication needs
- processing time
- their use of language
- social understanding
- sensory needs
- emotional regulation
- accessibility of reporting mechanisms
- reasonable adjustments

SEND should never be used as a reason to dismiss or minimise a child's experience.

Equally, a child's SEND or communication needs should be considered carefully when responding to behaviour and determining appropriate support.

12. Informing Parents and Carers

Parents/carers will be informed where appropriate, taking account of:

- the nature and seriousness of the concern
- safeguarding considerations
- the child's wellbeing
- action being taken
- support required
- confidentiality relating to other children

The school will not disclose confidential information about another child.

Where a safeguarding concern is urgent, safeguarding action will not be delayed while arrangements are made to contact parents/carers.

Parents/carers should normally raise concerns through the child's class teacher, appropriate pastoral staff or the school office, unless the concern requires direct contact with the DSL or senior leader.

The school will acknowledge concerns as promptly as reasonably practicable and will seek to provide appropriate follow-up.

13. Involvement of Pupils

Pupils will be taught:

- what bullying and harmful behaviour can look like
- how to seek help
- who they can talk to
- how to report concerns
- how to support others safely
- the importance of being a responsible bystander
- how online behaviour can affect others
- how to respond when they witness prejudice or discrimination
- how to make safe and respectful choices

Pupil views may be gathered through:

- School Council
- pupil voice activities
- PSHE/RSHE
- assemblies
- surveys
- discussions
- other appropriate mechanisms

Children will not be expected to act as mediators or resolve bullying themselves.

14. Parents and Carers

The school will:

- make this policy available to parents/carers
- provide clear information about how to raise concerns
- explain who parents/carers should contact
- work in partnership with families
- provide appropriate information about support available
- signpost to external advice where appropriate
- use the school's Complaints Policy where concerns remain unresolved

Parents/carers are encouraged to:

- model respectful behaviour
- talk to their children about friendships and respectful relationships
- discuss online safety
- encourage children to tell an adult about concerns
- avoid encouraging children to retaliate
- work constructively with the school
- share relevant information that may help the school safeguard their child

15. Behaviour Outside School

The school may respond to bullying or harmful behaviour that occurs outside the school premises or online where it:

- affects the safety or wellbeing of a pupil
- affects other members of the school community
- has an impact on school life
- creates safeguarding concerns
- affects the school's ability to maintain a safe environment

This may include behaviour occurring:

- on the journey to or from school
- during school trips or residential visits
- online
- through gaming or messaging platforms
- in the local community
- outside school where there is a clear connection to the school community

16. Staff Conduct and Bullying/Harassment of Staff

Garlinge Primary School and Nursery recognises that bullying, harassment, intimidation or abusive behaviour can also be directed towards school staff.

The school will promote a culture in which staff are treated with dignity and respect.

Concerns involving pupils and staff will be managed through the appropriate school procedures, including safeguarding, behaviour, complaints or staff procedures as appropriate.

Concerns involving parents/carers or other adults will be managed through relevant school policies and procedures.

The school will not tolerate abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour towards staff.

17. Prevention and Monitoring

The school will monitor bullying and harmful behaviour to identify:

- patterns involving particular children
- patterns by location
- patterns by time of day
- online concerns
- discriminatory or prejudice-based behaviour
- recurring friendship difficulties
- concerns affecting children with SEND or additional needs
- trends identified through pupil voice
- parent/carer concerns
- effectiveness of interventions
- areas requiring additional supervision, teaching or support

CPOMS will provide an important source of information for identifying patterns and informing appropriate action.

Information may contribute to:

- pastoral planning
- safeguarding reviews
- behaviour monitoring
- staff training
- curriculum planning
- supervision arrangements
- equality work
- school improvement planning

18. Review and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed regularly.

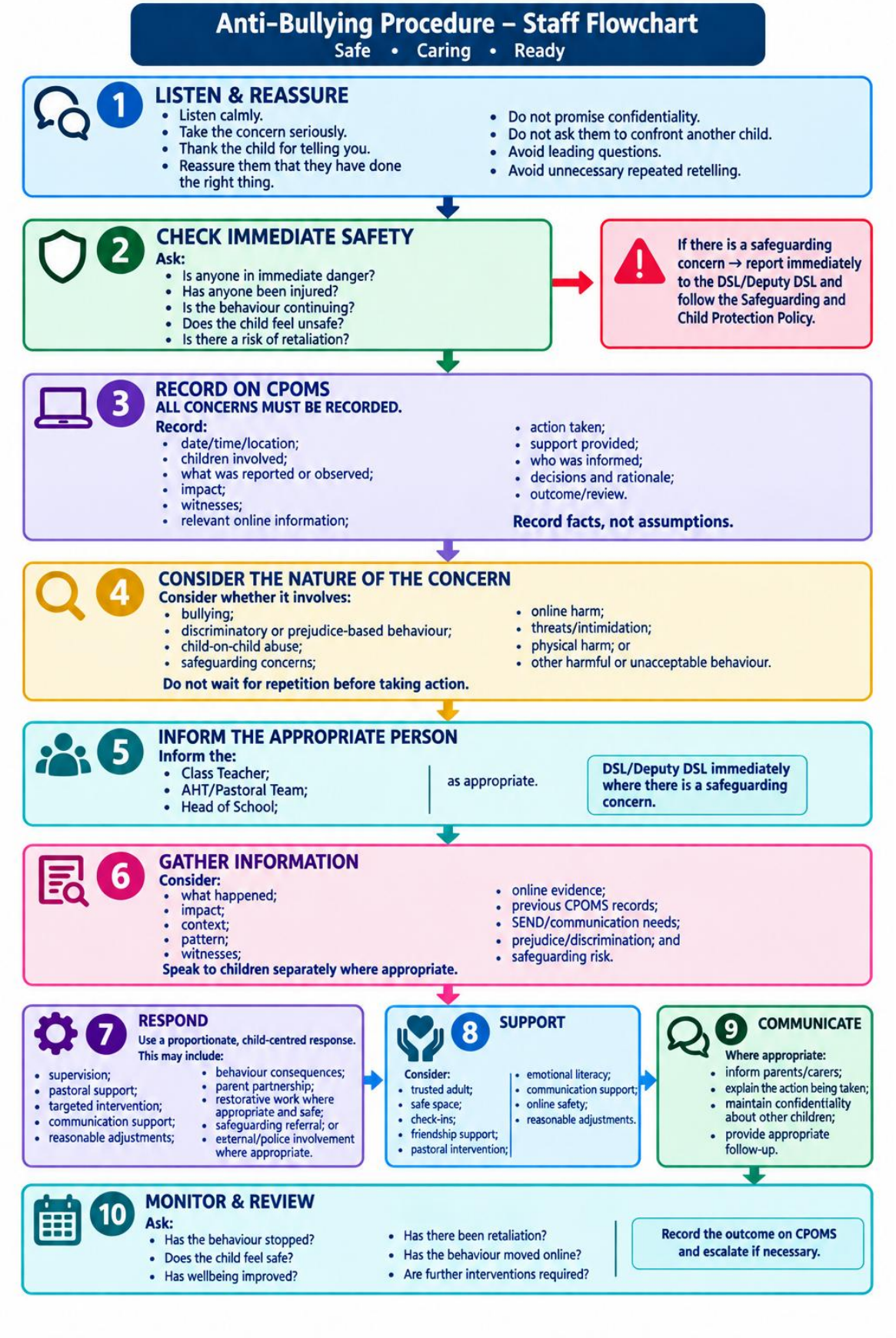
The school will consider:

- recorded incidents
- patterns and trends
- pupil feedback

- parent/carer feedback
- staff feedback
- safeguarding information
- behaviour data
- discriminatory incidents
- online concerns
- the effectiveness of interventions

The policy will be reviewed at least annually or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or school procedures.

Appendix 1 – Anti-Bullying Procedure – Staff Flowchart



Appendix 2 – Anti-Bullying Quick Staff Reminder



Appendix 3 - Useful Links and Sources of Support

The school will maintain a current list of appropriate sources of advice and support for pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Government and statutory guidance:

- DfE – Preventing and Tackling Bullying
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Equality Act 2010 – legislation.gov.uk
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education – DfE

General support:

- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Childline
- NSPCC
- PSHE Association
- The Diana Award – Anti-Bullying
- YoungMinds

SEND and disability:

- Changing Faces
- Mencap

Online safety:

- Childnet
- Internet Watch Foundation
- Thinkuknow
- UK Safer Internet Centre

Race, religion and hate-related concerns:

- Anne Frank Trust UK
- Kick It Out
- Stop Hate UK
- Tell MAMA
- Educate Against Hate
- Show Racism the Red Card

LGBTQ+ support:

- Stonewall
- The Proud Trust

The school will review external links periodically to ensure that resources remain current, appropriate and accessible.