

# ILLUMINATE MINDS TRUST

## ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT



Reviewed: Summer 2024

To be reviewed: Summer 2025

## Definition

Bullying is defined as,

'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)

Bullying is different from friends or peers arguing or falling out and, at Illuminate Minds Trust, we work carefully towards the goal of preventing bullying.

## **How are children involved in bullying?**

Though the roles of 'bully' and 'victim' are most commonly associated with bullying behaviours, research has identified a number of roles that people can fill in relation to bullying. These include those who assist or reinforce the bully's behaviour, those who defend the person experiencing the bullying and those who observe.

## **How do we work to reduce and prevent bullying?**

At Illuminate Minds Trust, we believe that adults have a responsibility to teach children about all aspects of school life, including managing interpersonal relationships, as well as academic learning. Working together to nurture positive behaviour is the key to reducing and preventing bullying.

For example, we teach children positive and safe ways to express their feelings, seeking to ensure each child has at least one adult in school with whom they can build a trusting relationship.

We teach children about being a good friend, including supporting children who are experiencing bullying and negative peer interactions to seek support from an adult. We help children to speak up for a child where they are aware that they are experiencing bullying, where it is safe to do so.

When bullying happens, we work with all children involved to understand what happened and why, and then put in place support with the aim of preventing reoccurrence. This work is bespoke to each incident, but is based on core principles outlined in our relationships and behaviour policy.

Examples include:

Where a child has acted in a bullying way towards another child, we work to understand why this happened and to address that need. For example if a child who has demonstrated behaviour which comes under the definition of bullying has recently gone through negative experiences, we might put in place sessions to help them think about and practice other ways to communicate their distress and need for support.

If a child becomes dysregulated in unstructured times, we might put in place small group support or structured activities for them during lunch so that they can have time to play in a way that they experience as safe and positive.

If a child has been bullied, in addition to listening and supporting their emotional response, we might think about putting practical support in place to help them build friendships.

Over 30 years of research into anti-bullying programmes has brought to light some key points, including...

- Bullying is best addressed by using an approach which runs through the school at different levels. For example including training for staff, work at a class level as well as supporting individuals.
- Effective intervention includes a balance of preventative work and support where bullying has occurred.

At Illuminate Minds, we take both of these points into account when supporting children. We work in a restorative way, supporting pupils to identify when their behaviour has not been acceptable, including where their behaviour meets the definition of bullying. We support children to understand and seek to put right any harm they have caused, and to think about other ways they are able to communicate their needs and feelings. This approach ensures we are not teaching pupils that by harming others they will be punished and should therefore avoid being discovered. Instead, we are helping them to become empathic, considerate members of society.