

Gad's Hill School

Anti-Bullying Policy (including EYFS)

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2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 PRINCIPLES

This policy has been drawn up with regard to DfE Guidance *Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies* (July 2017) and *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff* (2014). The policy should also be read in conjunction with the latest edition of *Keeping Children Safe In Education*. This policy is written to meet the requirements of Part 3 of the Independent School Standards Regulations (Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils).

Bullying of any description is not acceptable and will be taken most seriously. Gad's Hill School aims to provide a community in which each person is respected as an individual and is valued. It is our belief that every person has the right to education and to work here in a safe and secure environment free from intimidation, threat or harm from any other person.

Bullying must never be dismissed as being "banter" or "a joke".

2.2 RELATED POLICIES

Behaviour management policy which includes the General School Rules

Safeguarding policy and appendices

E-Safety

2.3 POLICY AIMS

1. To ensure that all people (children and adults) in the school community are able to work in a safe and secure environment free from humiliation, harassment, oppression and abuse.

2. To clarify for all members of the school community that bullying is not acceptable and must be discouraged. Everyone must act in a positive way to ensure that bullying is challenged and reported.

3. To ensure that all pupils, parents, staff, governors and others are aware of this policy and know that appropriate action will be taken.

4. To recognise that bullying can take place off-site and that the school will endeavour to respond appropriately as if it had happened on site by involving external agencies.

The School's anti-bullying work contributes to the promotion of Fundamental British Values, particularly individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

3 WHAT IS BULLYING?

3.1 DEFINITION

Bullying is behaviour that is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted, looked after or is a carer, or is vulnerable due to family dynamics e.g. single sex parents, or a pupil who is already receiving support coordinated by several agencies. Bullying may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Bullying makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened whether this is intended or not. Bullying is about power. Victims feel powerless to stop it. Others, such as parents for instance, may feel powerless to know how to help.

3.2 FORMS OF BULLYING

Bullying can take many forms but may be:

- Physical: pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting etc;
- Verbal: name-calling, gossiping, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Emotional: tormenting, humiliating, ignoring, excluding

- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, comments of an unwanted sexual nature. This includes misogynistic behaviour, sexist abuse, sexual harassment, sexualised bullying and hostile behaviour directed towards an individual because of their sex.
- Cyber: harassment, alarm, distress or humiliation that uses internet, social media, gaming platforms, artificial intelligence, image manipulation technology, mobile phones or other digital technologies (see E-safety policy)
- Bullying may include the creation, sharing or threatened sharing of AI-generated or digitally manipulated images, videos or audio recordings, including deepfakes and other synthetic media.

Bullying may be directed towards people or pupils viewed as “*different*” as a result of their protected characteristics (for example; race, religion, sexuality, gender, disability, etc).

Bullying may also be “silent” and without obvious overt activity but result in a pupil / person being isolated or excluded from group activities, or friendship groups.

It is important to bear in mind that many behaviours, which in the school context are called bullying, may be defined in law as threatening behaviour, criminal damage, theft, assault, sexual harassment, or hate crime. It is the right of pupils and parents to report such incidents to the Police.

Bullying does not occur solely between pupils. From time to time accusations of bullying of pupils by adults (this could include a parent of a pupil) in school are raised, pupils bullying adults or indeed adults bullying adults.

The School recognises that bullying may form part of wider child-on-child abuse. Incidents will therefore be considered alongside safeguarding information and may require intervention under the Safeguarding Policy where concerns extend beyond bullying behaviour alone.

4 CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING

The School recognises that bullying can negatively affect mental health and wellbeing and may contribute to anxiety, self-harm, suicidal ideation, school avoidance and other safeguarding concerns.

Those being bullied may show signs of physical harm or emotional changes in behaviour such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to others for support. Their work may deteriorate. They may lack concentration or be absent from school. In the most serious cases, bullying can lead to psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

5 ENCOURAGEMENT TO TELL (DISCLOSURE BY PUPILS BEING BULLIED)

It is important that we create an atmosphere in school where anyone who is being bullied, or others who know about it and bystanders, feel that they will be listened to, and that action taken will be swift and sensitive to their needs. Pupils will be taught through assemblies and the PSHE

curriculum and SMSC programme about their choices when they believe they have witnessed bullying. They will be encouraged to tell a teacher, another member of staff or a senior prefect or their mentor. Disclosure (telling someone) can be direct and open, or indirect and anonymous. Worry boxes are available for indirect/anonymous disclosure. Everyone, including bystanders to bullying who do not disclose the issue must understand that, through their inaction, they are allowing bullying to continue.

6 PROCEDURES

The exact course of action will vary with each situation but the main objectives should be that bullying is curtailed by the behaviour being brought into the open, discussed and strategies put in place to resolve the problem. It is always important to make clear that the bully's behaviour is unacceptable and the bullying must stop, but also that revenge is not an appropriate option for the victim.

6.1 FOLLOWING A REPORT OF POSSIBLE BULLYING:

- 1. A record of the report or incident should be made by the teacher on Isams under the most appropriate heading. Teachers should not list the incident as a bullying incident unless it is clear that the incident fits the definition of bullying (see page 1). Claims of bullying made by pupils or their parents are not necessarily so – but must always be taken seriously and logged on isams for proper investigation.**
- 2. Head of Lower and Upper School will review Isams records every day to monitor pupil behaviour and will monitor or investigate potential bullying incidents as necessary. If, on investigation, an incident of bullying has not been recorded as such then SLT will re-categorise it as appropriate to the circumstances.**
- 3. Incidents of potential bullying investigated by the Senior Leadership will also be logged by the appropriate member of SLT on the restricted-access Potential Bullying log on the SIS.**
- 4. The teacher should take some form of action to resolve the incident if that is possible, in line with the School's Behaviour Management Policy. If the situation is complex it should be referred to a member of the SLT for their action. Any action taken should be recorded as an update to the original Isams report or, when bullying is apparent, this should be recorded on CPOMS and added to safeguarding files, as well as a note being made on the Potential Bullying Log.**
- 5. An accurate record must be maintained of any interview with any of the involved parties (victim, witnesses, and alleged bully).**

6. **If a child alleges that they are being bullied, they should be updated (as far as is reasonable) on the investigation and actions of the school.**
7. **Other staff will be informed of events, as appropriate, to enable future monitoring. Depending on the nature and scale of events parents are likely to be informed by the form tutor or SLT.**
8. **The behaviour of any pupil suspected of bullying will be monitored through use of Isams, form book, report cards and feedback from pupils and staff. Colleagues have opportunities to raise bullying concerns at weekly staff briefings.**
9. **A bullying incident will be addressed as a serious safeguarding concern when there is *'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'*. Where this is the case, the DSL will report their concerns to the relevant Children's Services. If a criminal offence is thought to have occurred the school may inform the Police.**
10. **Where concerns arise regarding threats of violence, possession of a weapon, coercive behaviour or intimidation involving weapons, the matter will be treated as both a safeguarding concern and a behaviour matter and referred immediately to the DSL.**

Our anti-bullying policy is designed to integrate with the school's behaviour management policy. The application of sanctions will depend on the individual circumstances of each incident. When pupils are involved the school will provide support to both the victim and the bully to help change his/her behaviour and to overcome the issues involved. The school may draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

7 CYBER BULLYING

Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

Cyberbullying may include financially motivated sexual extortion (FMSE), whereby a child is coerced into sharing images or videos before being blackmailed for money, further content or other demands.

The creation, possession, sharing or threatened sharing of self-generated intimate images, whether authentic, manipulated or AI-generated, may constitute bullying, child-on-child abuse and/or criminal behaviour and will be managed accordingly.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Guidance for the appropriate use of mobile electronic devices in the school setting is detailed in the E-safety policy.

Staff and pupils sign an age-appropriate 'acceptable user agreement' for the use of computer and mobile electronic devices when they join the school, and (for pupils) at the start of each new school division. These are updated when necessary, to take account of developments in technology.

Parents and pupils are expected to take all reasonable measures to curtail or limit e-safety incidents or cyber bullying. Abusive message sent via social media must be reported by parent/pupils to the social media organisation or CEOP. Parents and pupils must make full use of privacy settings to block comments from third parties that may be upsetting or inflammatory. The school limits exposure to the risk of cyber-bullying by banning the use of personal phones and internet-enabled devices during school days, as well as by educating children about e-safety through PSHE and Computer Science lessons and in assemblies.

Pupils must not respond or reply to anti-social messages with similarly inflammatory messages that are likely to perpetuate matters.

The School's E-Safety policy contains further details on the prevention of child-on-child abuse online.

8 BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises such as on school or public transport, outside local shops or in town or village centres.

Parents are responsible for their child's behaviour outside of school hours. If they consider another person or a pupil at the school has committed an offence against them or their family out-of-hours and off-site then they may wish to report the matter to the police who will deal with the matter as appropriate.

The school welcomes parents, pupils or individuals reporting incidents of poor behaviour by pupils and reserves the right to investigate and take action as appropriate. The school will take positive steps to investigate reports that are potential safeguarding issues likely to result in a referral to children's services or, involve an actual or risk of serious harm to an individual or, involve serious damage to property or, involve evidence of prolonged anti-social behaviour or bullying or, incidents of potential "hate crime".

The school will not usually get involved in investigating or policing minor disputes, petty behavioural issues, disagreements, or arguments, name-calling (including exchanges of social media) that occur out-of-school hours and off-site unless the behaviour and the individuals involved show a pattern of repeated incidents and therefore potential bullying.

Reported incidents that are identified by the school as bullying will be investigated and acted on. The Headmaster will consider whether to notify the police or local authority of action taken

against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or pose a serious threat to a member of the public the police will be informed.

In cases of misbehaviour or bullying, teachers may only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under lawful control of the staff member.

9 EVALUATION

A log of any bullying incidents is maintained on the School Information System and is monitored by SLT and reported on a termly basis to Governors, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted, and enable the identity of possible patterns of anti-social behaviour, such as:

- numbers of pupils/employees being bullied
- pupil/employees willingness to report incidents
- staff vigilance and response to bullying behaviour and
- numbers of pupils, staff and parents feeling secure about the school's response to bullying.

Bullying complaints and their subsequent investigations will be recorded. The Governor responsible for safeguarding will review bullying complaints via the termly Safeguarding Report to Governors and Safeguarding Sub-Committee meetings to ensure compliance with policy. The Governing Body has overall responsibility to review the number of bullying incidents each year and review the school's policy and its effectiveness.

10 TRAINING

The Headmaster is responsible for arranging a programme of staff development, which will include anti-bullying strategies. This will include training for teachers, support staff and governors and will ensure that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support available. It may also be necessary to invest in specialised skills to understand the individual needs of pupils with protected characteristics.

11 EDUCATION

Measures taken to prevent bullying include:

- raise awareness about bullying behaviour and about the school's anti-bullying policy.
- the education of pupils concerning bullying. This will be done within school assemblies and other subjects as appropriate to the curriculum.
- educating pupils about misinformation, disinformation, deepfakes, online scams, harmful online influences and other emerging digital risks.
- educating pupils about respectful relationships, consent, healthy boundaries, equality, mutual respect and appropriate online conduct.

- raising awareness of bullying and challenging attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school through the delivery of the SMSC programme, assemblies, tutorial activities, projects, drama, stories, group work, circle time, befriending, mentoring, mediation, assertiveness development and literature.
- the appreciation of differences between people, the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language and empathy with others is addressed in all key stages as shown in the SMSC programmes of study.
- enabling pupils and adults to inform staff of their concerns either directly or indirectly without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

12 SANCTIONS

12.1 FOR PUPILS

Any of the school's formal punishments can be used against bullies as appropriate and with regard to the behaviour management flow-chart (*Appendix within Policy S3 – Behaviour Management policy*) and will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of and special educational needs or disabilities that the pupil may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. The punishment will reflect the seriousness of an incident, convey a deterrent effect and demonstrate that bullying is unacceptable.

Sanctions include verbal reprimand, demerit, detention, behaviour Pupil Improvement Plan (PIP) and temporary exclusion. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression a pupil could be permanently excluded.

12.2 FOR EMPLOYEES

Action may be taken within the context of the schools competency or disciplinary procedures.

12.3 FOR PARENTS

Sanctions may involve temporary or permanent exclusion from the school site or in extreme cases the required removal of their child from the school.

13 COMMUNICATION

This policy is communicated to staff, parents and pupils via the staff and student handbook located on the SIS and on the website under statutory information. It is made clear that bullying is not acceptable, will not be tolerated and action will be taken to prevent and, where it occurs, to discipline those who breach school policy. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others are a key part of the school ethos; these are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest of the school.

Assemblies are used within school to communicate specific issues to pupils; parents are periodically invited to attend an informative discussion on bullying and the prevention of cyber-

bullying; and staff discuss specific issues that arise among pupils to manage the situation and prevent escalation.

Staff and older pupils are to set an example of good behaviour and respect for others: the behaviour management policy promotes acceptable standards of behaviour, which celebrates success and creates a positive school environment.

14 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive approach to educating pupils to combat it. Details of the school's anti-bullying policy, behaviour policy, grievance procedures, can be found in the student handbook, which is available on the School Information System. Parents are encouraged to report any concerns that they have to their child's form tutor or to the Headmaster. Parents are encouraged to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

If a pupil or adult feels that they are being bullied, or as a bystander, if they witness anyone being bullied, or are aware of incidences of cyber-bullying, they should inform their form tutor or another member of staff, or use a pupil postcard. No accusation of bullying will be ignored. Individuals should not respond to bullying with violence.

15 RESPONSIBILITIES

15.1 SCHOOL STAFF

Any incidents of bullying, of a child or another adult must be reported to the Head of Department, Head of School or Headmaster as appropriate.

All staff will:

- know the policy and procedures;
- be observant and to ask pupils what is happening to them;
- deal with incidents according to the policy;
- never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity;
- teachers will participate in the delivery of SMSC in lessons or form time as appropriate.

15.2 GOVERNING BODY

The 'nominated governor' i.e. the chair of the safeguarding committee will liaise with the headmaster over all anti-bullying strategies and individual cases where appropriate. The governing body will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies on the initiative of the 'nominated governor'.

15.3 THE HEADMASTER

The Headmaster has a legal duty under the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998* to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils. The Head will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them;
- determine the strategies and procedures;
- discuss development of the strategies with the leadership group;
- ensure appropriate training is available;
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils.

15.4 THE HEADS OF LOWER AND UPPER SCHOOLS

Head of School will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies;
- keep the Headmaster informed of incidents;
- arrange relevant staff training;
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.

15.5 ASSISTANT HEADS / HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice; and
- know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

15.6 FORM TUTORS

- be responsible for liaising with (curriculum group leader or head of department) over all incidents involving pupils in their form;
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution; and
- help deliver the anti-bullying programme in the SMSC course.

16 BULLYING OF EMPLOYEES IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Bullying and harassment is behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.

Examples of bullying or harassing behaviour include:

- spreading malicious rumours
- unfair treatment
- picking on someone
- regularly undermining a competent worker

Bullying and harassment can happen: face-to-face, by letter, by email or by phone. Bullying itself isn't against the law, but harassment is. This is when the unwanted behaviour is related to one of the following:

- age
- sex
- disability
- gender (including gender reassignment)
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

16.1 WHAT SHOULD EMPLOYEES DO IF BULLIED OR HARASSED?

Employees should see if they can sort out the problem informally first. If they cannot, they should talk to their Head of Department, Bursar, or Headmaster. If the problem is not resolved, a formal complaint should be made using the grievance procedure or whistle-blowing procedure. If this doesn't work and they're still being harassed, they can take legal action at an [employment tribunal](#). They could also call the ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) helpline for advice: (Telephone: 030 123 1100; Text phone: 18001 0300 123 1100, Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm, Saturday, 9am to 1pm). ACAS has also produced a guidance leaflet on bullying and harassment. [Download 'Bullying and harassment at work: advice for employees' \(PDF, 209KB\)](#)

16.2 CRIMINAL LAW

It is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing, threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence. (e.g.: under the Protection from Harassment Act 2003, the Public Order Act 1986, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Equality Act 2010). If staff feel that an offence has been committed, they should seek assistance from the police.

17 RESOURCES

The following websites contain helpful further information and resources on anti-bullying:

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/>

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

<https://www.antibullyingpro.com/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/bullying/>

Place2BE is a leading UK provider of school-based mental health services, working in over 210 schools and providing emotional and therapeutic support to 80,000 children, their parents and carers. Whether they are facing bereavement, family breakdown, domestic violence, trauma or bullying, Place2Be helps children to grow up with prospects rather than problems.

Phone: 020 7923 5500

[Visit the Place2BE website](#)

BeatBullying is an international bullying prevention charity working and campaigning to make bullying unacceptable, in the UK and Europe. They work with young people to give them the knowledge and tools they need to tackle and prevent bullying. Those young people then mentor other children, giving them the peer-to-peer support they need to overcome bullying. Specialist adult advisers and qualified counsellors are on hand to provide expert advice and counselling support, in real-time, to those young people who access the website.

[Visit the BeatBullying website](#)

Kidscape was established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse, working with children and young people under the age of 16, their parents/carers, and those who work with them.

[Visit the Kidscape website](#)

The Cybersmile Foundation offers support, advice and guidance to people of all ages who have been affected by cyberbullying and online hate campaigns. Their services are used by schools, parents and young people all over the world and the helpline is open 24 hours.

Call: 0845 688 7277

[Visit the Cybersmile Foundation website](#)

BullyingUK is a leading anti-bullying charity in the UK. The charity provides practical information and advice to young people and their parents through its website and via email. Their support includes work with schools, youth organisations, police forces and health trusts, running workshops and speaking at conferences.

Phone: 0808 800 2222

[Visit the BullyingUK website](#)

PAPYRUS and HOPELineUK

If you're a young person and you're considering suicide, or you feel depressed or like you're not coping with life, HOPELineUK, provided by the organisation PAPYRUS, is a confidential helpline service staffed by trained professionals who can give support, practical advice and information.

PAPYRUS can also offer help and advice if you're concerned about someone you know.

Helpline: 0800 068 41 41

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Text: 07786 209 697

[Visit the PAPYRUS and HOPELineUK website](#)

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide exists to meet the needs and break the isolation of those bereaved by the suicide of a close relative or friend.

Phone: 0844 561 6855 (9am to 9pm daily)

[Visit the Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide website](#)

Community Advice & Listening Line offers emotional support and information/literature on mental health and related matters to the people of Wales. Anyone concerned about their own mental health or that of a relative or friend can access the service. The C.A.L.L. Helpline offers a confidential listening and support service.

Freephone: 0800 132 737

Text: "help" to 81066

[Visit the Community Advice & Listening Line website](#)

ChildLine is the UK's free, 24-hour confidential helpline for children and young people who need to talk. Trained counsellors are there to provide comfort, support and advice about any problem that's on your mind. Contact them 24 hours a day, every day, by phone or via their website.

Helpline: 0800 1111 (calls are free from all existing networks – landline and mobile)

[Visit the ChildLine website](#)

Samaritans is available for anyone struggling to cope and provide a safe place to talk 24 hours a day.

Phone: 08457 90 90 90

Email: jo@samaritans.org

[Visit the Samaritans website](#)