



Policy
Approved
Approved by
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Reviewed by

Preventing and Tackling Bullying
Summer 2023
Education and Welfare Committee
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Deputy Head Pastoral

1. Introduction

At Old Palace of John Whitgift School all members of the community – teachers, support staff and pupils – are expected to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to be safe and secure, whether at school or elsewhere, and to be protected when vulnerable, so that they may flourish without fear of unfair treatment or harassment.

Bullying must be dealt with quickly and firmly because it is a very serious matter. The school acknowledges the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide. The whole school community has a responsibility to combat bullying. Action which is taken must take careful account of the needs of both the victim and the bully.

Failure by any member of the school community to treat others with courtesy and respect undermines the ethos and wellbeing of the whole school, and will always be regarded as a serious matter. The School's approach to bullying is clear: it is always unacceptable. It damages children and the School will, therefore, do all it can to prevent it.

Many experts say that 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.

Sometimes the perpetrator is just being thoughtless. Bullying causes fear and distress for the victim(s) and may distract them from their school work. It may also affect other pupils who witness it and it can damage the atmosphere in a class or even in the entire school.

The aim of this policy is therefore to describe what the School understands as bullying, establish the School's stance towards such unacceptable behaviour, indicate how it will be dealt with and how it may be prevented from occurring.

The statutory framework which governs anti-bullying strategy in all schools in England is provided in Appendix 1 of this policy. This policy pays particular regard to the 2010 Equality Act, the provisions of the 1989 Children's Act and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, whereby a bullying incident should be treated as a safeguarding concern when there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm."

The policy forms an integral part of the school's pastoral policy and promotion of pupil welfare. All pupils must be informed of this policy and be encouraged to see school as a safe place in which to make disclosures of bullying

2. Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group which is:

- repeated over time,
- intentionally hurtful to another individual or group
- difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves against

Bullying may be of a racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise personal nature such as commenting on a person's culture, religious background or disability, or holding up members of a person's family to ridicule on the basis of their race, gender, sexuality, religious belief, disability or appearance, or because of the fact of the person targeted by the bully/bullies being adopted, or looked after, or looking after others themselves.

At Old Palace, we respond to and record as bullying incidents where hurtful behaviour is repeated. Bullying behaviour which is repeated after a sanction or a warning about that behaviour is of particular concern and liable to serious sanctions.

While the school's definition of bullying requires that a behaviour be repeated for it to be treated as a bullying incident, a racist, homophobic, transphobic and or any other issues about a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act 2010 can be logged as such after a single instance of behaviour. For further details please see 'Responding to an Incident of Discrimination Policy'

2.1 Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms but the main types are:

2.1.1 Physical Bullying

This may include fighting, hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings, setting up someone else to get the blame for a breach of school rules; initiation ceremonies.

2.1.2 Emotional or Psychological Bullying

This may include excluding someone from a group, activity or place; spreading rumours, being deliberately unfriendly; unpleasant digital communication or telephone calls or unpleasant material placed on websites.

2.1.3 Verbal Bullying

This may include aggressive name calling, teasing, mockery, insults, use of homophobic, racist, sexist, and other types of discriminatory language. Any or all of the listed forms of bullying may, by some, be considered to be harmless 'banter' but will still be considered as bullying behaviour by the School.

2.1.4 Sexual Harassment

This may include making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery. The School also considers the showing of sexual and/ or pornographic material which could be upsetting to those who view it as a form of sexual harassment

NB The practice of 'upskirting' (taking a picture under someone's clothes) is now a criminal offence (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022)

2.1.5 Cyberbullying

This is the use of information and communications technology particularly mobile phones, email, social media, text messages, cameras and the internet, which could reasonably be seen to be unkind, whether intended or not. It may occur in or outside school and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially large audience and/or more accessories, since others are able to 'forward on' bullying content at a click.

3. Preventing Bullying and Promoting Positive Behaviour

The School, at all times, seeks to promote a culture of courtesy and mutual respect amongst all members of the School's community.

Positive values of mutual respect and consideration will be promoted within the school in a wide range of contexts from assembly and form periods to informal discussion. Old Palace School staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

The School implements disciplinary sanctions for bullying behaviour. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.

Information available in the DfE advice documents listed below will be used to inform the messages disseminated to the School community:

- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(DFE, July 2017\)](#)
- [Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff \(DFE, November 2014\)](#)
- [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(DFE, November 2014\)](#)

3.1 Anti-bully Education

We aim, through discussions in form groups, PSHEE lesson, assemblies and curriculum time, to openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, gender identity or sexuality, also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. We also give clear advice to pupils and staff that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable and aim to challenge the use of such language any time it is used.

We actively engage with Anti-Bullying week through assemblies, form time activities and promoting it through screen savers.

All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders

There is a focus on 'kindness' in discussions that Tutors and Heads of Year have with individuals and groups of pupils in relation to behaviour between pupils, with the intention of encouraging pupils to act kindly and notice when unkindness happens.

3.2 Reporting Bullying

The School aims to make it easy for pupils to report bullying, such as via the Anonymous Reporting software button on the VLE, so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Advice for pupils, displayed on every classroom wall, details actions that pupils should take if they become aware that bullying is happening. Pupils are also encouraged through PSHEE lessons and assemblies to feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school, including cyber-bullying

3.3 Staff Training

We understand that policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the School's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. Staff receive anti-bullying training as part of induction and ongoing CPD as required.

3.4 Monitoring and Recording Bullying Incidents

The Head of Prep (Prep) Heads of Year, the Pastoral Leader, and the Deputy Head Pastoral (Seniors) will record incidents of bullying on CPOMS whenever they are reported. Incidents are recorded with the category 'Meets the Criteria of Bullying' when they meet the definition of bullying noted in section 2 above. Incidents which do not meet this definition will be responded to sensitively and will also be recorded on CPOMS as any pastoral concern would be, with the understanding that they could be a precursor to bullying (eg if repeated). The incidents that for which 'Meet the Criteria of Bullying' is recorded as also recorded in the Bullying Log. The Heads of Section and Heads of Year will identify any patterns relating to bullying behaviour and decide what action needs to be taken to prevent recurrences of such behaviour.

3.5 Measures to Prevent Cyberbullying

Online, the School monitors and filters anything connected to the Old Palace School Network. Personal devices connected to other networks cannot be monitored by the School, but through the ICT AUP, the Personal Development curriculum, online safety tutorial topics, advice from visiting speakers and our Computing curriculum pupils are educated as to good and safe use of digital technologies.

The School regularly evaluates and updates its approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance by updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers and regularly reviewing and updating this policy.

3.6 Parental Involvement

The School aims to ensure parents are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents should feel confident that the School will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. The School also expects all parents to reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

3.7 Working with External Agencies

The School will work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and/or where a criminal offence may have been committed, including working with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school.

The School may draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with proven track records and which provide resources for dealing effectively with certain forms of bullying.

3.8 What is expected of staff, pupils, parents and governors?

All members of the Old Palace Community - and this includes staff, pupils, parents and governors - have a responsibility to show that they believe that any form of bullying is unacceptable and to set an example which reflects that view.

All members of the School should help to create an atmosphere in which bullying and inappropriate behaviour or language that demeans any individual or section of society, will be spoken of openly, taken seriously and responded to with appropriate action.

The school expects staff, pupils, parents and governors to:

- treat other people with respect and sensitivity – including (but not limited to) members of the school and the wider community; members of other schools; visitors and exchange students.

- think carefully before speaking/commenting/acting (whether face-to-face or via any form of media or communications technology) in ways which may cause upset
- respect and celebrate differences and variety

3.9 Advice to pupils

Bullying and its effects can only be dealt with if responsible adults are made aware of what is happening. Pupils must, therefore, tell their Form Tutor or any other responsible member of the school community (which could be a Head of Year, any teacher, the Health Officer, or a prefect, whenever

- they feel that they have been a victim of bullying.
- they see someone else being bullied – this includes what is seen or heard when online or using a phone
- they have bullied someone themselves and would like to stop.

Any pupil who suspects bullying should report it to their Tutor or Head of Year. Telling is absolutely necessary. The bully believes he or she is safe so long as nobody tells. In fact, we help nobody - victim, school, bully or future victims - by keeping such behaviour secret. For victims and onlookers to tell is not just their right, it is an obligation. In the end, telling helps everybody.

3.10 Advice to parents

A parent who is concerned that the a pupil (their own daughter or another pupil) may be being bullied, should speak to their child's Tutor, the relevant Head of Year, Pastoral Leader or the Deputy Head, Pastoral.

3.11 Advice to staff

All members of staff must be aware of this policy and the procedures. They should have a basic awareness of the signs of bullying – in both the pupil who is bullying and the pupil who is being bullied. Issues of bullying will be included in the School Induction Programme for all staff. See Induction Policy.

There are designated members of staff with pastoral responsibility to whom incidents of bullying should be reported and from whom further support might be sought: e.g. Form Tutors, relevant Heads of Year, Pastoral Leader and Deputy Head, Pastoral.

4. Dealing with an allegation of Bullying

All reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated by pastoral staff, supervised by the Pastoral Leader or Deputy Head, Pastoral.

Investigations will involve interviewing alleged victims and perpetrators, as well as witnesses, if there were other pupils present at the time of the incident or who have other relevant information. In the cases of cyberbullying, a digital record of the evidence will be made (e.g. saving screenshots) if possible. In cases where an allegation is made but evidence (e.g. independent witnesses, digital records) is unavailable, and the alleged perpetrator denies involvement, it will not always be possible for sanctions to be applied.

However, the following action will be taken:

- a report of the investigation will be kept on CPOMS categorised under bullying/friendship issue
- all of the pupils involved will be made explicitly aware that the behaviour in question is unacceptable and should they be involved in this or similar behaviour in future, the School would take serious action in line with the Behaviour Policy.

5. Sanctions for bullying

Punishment needs careful consideration and must go hand in hand with pastoral advice and, if needed, counselling. For sanctions to be applied allegations must be substantiated (to the standard of 'on balance of probabilities')

Sanctions can include:

- Loss of privileges at lunchtime with time spent doing duties for the School organised by and under the supervision of class teachers (Preparatory), Heads of Year (Seniors) as opposed to free time at lunch. This is a lunchtime detention.
- Arranging for the student to be removed to an alternative classroom within the subject area, under supervision of a different teacher should inappropriate behaviour recur.
- An extended programme of reporting on manner and presentation in each and every class as tabulated in a report card signed by staff and evaluated by class teachers (Preparatory) and Heads of Year (Seniors).
- Friday detention.
- Working in internal exclusion – for a part or full day.
- One or two days of external exclusion.
- Between three and five days of external exclusion (with statement in a letter about the seriousness of this level of sanction).
- Permanent Exclusion

Disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

The school may permanently exclude a student from school where the Head or the Deputy Head Pastoral believes and incident of bullying is serious enough.

The 2010 Education Act grants powers to schools to authorise searches of personal electronic devices including, but not limited to, mobile phones, laptops and tablets, where there is reason to suspect these devices contain material which has been used, or could be used, to bully another person. Where this is thought to be the case, the Head, Senior Deputy Head or the Deputy Head, Pastoral may authorise a search of any such devices that may be on the school site, or may require them to be produced in order that such a search can take place.

Counselling and/or advice and guidance may need to extend to the whole form/tutor group.

6. Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

7. Bullying outside School Premises

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on following the procedures above. The school will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in the local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Members of staff have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable”. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, on and educational visit or in Croydon.

8. Appendix Statutory Framework

What does the law say and what does the School have to do?

Every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school’s behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

Independent School Standard Regulations 2010

The Independent School Standards Regulations 2010 provide that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

The Equality Act 2010

- The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Maintained schools and Academies are required to comply with the new Equality Duty. Part 6 of the Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales Part 6 of the Act applies to maintained schools and Academies and to other independent schools.

Safeguarding children and young people

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection 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 school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to 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.

Criminal law

See Item 7 in this policy

Cyber-bullying

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. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available – see below for a link to this document. For more information on how to respond to cyber-bullying and how pupils can keep themselves safe, please refer to the Childnet link under 'further resources'.

9. Appendix 2 – Additional Resources

Further information is available online as follows:

- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(DFE, July 2017\)](#)
- [Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff \(DFE, November 2014\)](#)
- [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(DFE, November 2014\)](#)
- Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools (DFE, March 2014)
- <https://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-guidance-for-schools>