



BILTON GRANGE

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Anti-bullying Policy

September 2021

The Bilton Grange policy is drawn up based upon the Department for Education guidance on the prevention of bullying, contained in *Preventing & Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, 2017* and *Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff*, along with subsequent additional Department for Education guidance. This should be read in conjunction with our Good Behaviour policy.

and

There has been a great deal of research into bullying behaviours in recent years with the result that bullying is now understood in a much wider context. If in the past bullying implied only physical violence, it is now recognised to include teasing, unkindness, disruption of property and social manipulation over a period of time. Modern communication technologies allow some of these behaviours to happen rapidly, at a distance and across the school/home boundary. We understand that in some serious cases, long-term social or psychological damage may result from bullying.

Aims

The expectation at Bilton Grange is that people will at all times behave in an appropriate, fair and friendly manner towards each other, in accordance with the school's aims and principles. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils remain free from bullying and from the fear of bullying.

Defining Bullying

Bullying behaviour is often very complex in its causes and its manifestations. At Bilton Grange, we will strive to take all possible steps to help all pupils involved in a bullying situation, so that it comes to an end as quickly as it can, but we recognise that there may not be a quick solution. Pupils who are being targeted are suitably supported, and pupils who may bully others are also given suitable help and guidance.

Because of its complexity, and the risk of conflicting concepts of bullying in the minds of the children, staff and parents, it is important that we define what we mean by bullying at Bilton Grange. Based on published research, we believe bullying behaviour has the following symptoms:

Repetition

Relationships, particularly between children in the busy, public and challenging environment that is school life, will inevitably create tensions and incidents. We try hard to minimise the likelihood of such incidents as outlined in the Promoting Good Behaviour policy, but address them as they arise, using the Discipline and Sanctions policy as necessary. Bullying behaviour, however, forms a repeated pattern. It is important to point out that by the time repeated behaviour is felt to be bullying, original causes or underlying tensions may be long forgotten. Bullying behaviour can also be cyclical, with the same child at different times suffering from and causing others to suffer bullying. In rare 1, bullying may be a one-off incident.

Intent

Incidents may occur accidentally between pupils, but bullying behaviour will always be intentional. In many cases this is easy to ascertain: physical violence, unpleasant emails, stealing possessions, for example; unfortunately these are the least common forms of bullying behaviour. The most common contexts for incidents, verbal and social, can often be caused by insensitivity or misunderstanding rather than intentional bullying. Repetition, however, can demonstrate intent, which is why it is important for staff to deal with all incidents, no matter how trivial, and to report all incidents to enable senior staff to build a complete picture.

Abuse of Power

All children have differing abilities, but we aim to provide arenas for our pupils so that all can find success and we celebrate these successes as a community. Bullying behaviour abuses the advantages children may find themselves possessing, and seeks to belittle the successes or development of others. Bullying behaviour could be defined as an attempt to prevent or exaggerate the usual ups and downs of normal life. It is destructive, which contrasts with the constructive environment which the school promotes.

Evident enjoyment by those with power:

Intent can be difficult to ascertain but bullying behaviour is rarely a private matter: boasting to and enlisting support from bystanders is very common in bullying behaviour. Indeed, bystanders play a crucial role in helping to tackle bullying. A sense of enjoyment, of course, can make it difficult for some to understand why their actions are wrong: it feels fun.

A sense of oppression for those without power:

This is the reciprocal situation to the point above but it is a key component to defining bullying behaviour. Friends can often be rude or unfair to one another but over time this is equally shared. Those suffering from bullying behaviour, however, will see their options for an equal relationship being reduced. It is important to investigate any report of a child feeling bullied: even if there is no bullying behaviour taking place, friends and peers will need to understand that someone in the community needs their support.

Forms of Bullying

All forms of bullying behaviour share the characteristics listed above, but it may be helpful to list the variety of content and contexts that arise.

- a) **Physical bullying:** hitting, pushing, tripping. This is the stereotypical bullying situation but it is relatively uncommon.
- b) **Verbal bullying:** the most common form of bullying behaviour, as children learn the power of words.
- c) **Social bullying:** often non-direct, ostracising, gossiping and forming gangs.
- d) **Racial bullying:** bullying based on differences in race, culture and background.
- e) **Sexual bullying:** boys can bully girls and vice versa; older children can become victims as puberty begins and sexual difference becomes more explicit.
- f) **Disability bullying:** using disability or atypical development as a cause for bullying; includes physical attributes such as weight or height, and academic achievement.
- g) **Cyber bullying:** using communication technologies such as mobile phones, email and social networking sites.

Preventing Bullying

The ethos at Bilton Grange should make bullying rare, but nonetheless we hope it would be obvious to community members. Many of the actions we take are outlined in the Promoting Good Behaviour policy, but the following are specific to the prevention of bullying behaviours:

Helping Hands booklet: this is available in classrooms and in central areas of the school. It offers advice about what to do if a child feels they are being bullied, who children can turn to for help and provides contact numbers for agencies such as Childline, Children's Social Services and the school's GP. It also gives the name and contact number for an Independent Listener who is known to the school. The purpose of the booklet is explained to all pupils at the start of the academic year and tutors will refer to it throughout the course of the year, particularly during Anti-bullying Week.

Tutor support: all children need help negotiating not only the school routine but also the challenges that a school environment brings. Children having difficulties, and perhaps therefore causing difficulties to their peers, will need regular support from the form tutor who can also co-ordinate with other staff.

Duty staff: bullying behaviour, when it does happen, is most frequent at break times. All duty staff, co-ordinated by the Deputy Headmaster, must fulfil their duties at all times. Careful supervision of certain areas of the school, or certain groups of children, and quick intervention as necessary, will help prevent bullying.

Prefects: as fellow pupils, the Prefects are better placed than anyone to see bullying behaviours developing, particularly in places where staff are not present. The Prefects meet with the Deputy Headmaster regularly and they are specifically asked if they have any concerns.

Chapel and Assembly: shared expression of Christian principles and collective celebration of all forms of success help create stronger bonds between pupils at the school than the differences which might initially separate them. The Lay Chaplain is an additional source of support.

School/Parent links: tackling bullying behaviour will require the support of staff and parents in unison. Good, trusting relationships between the school and the parents, based on high professional standards in all areas of school life, will ensure that parents will come forward knowing the school can help in these most difficult circumstances.

In the Pre-Prep, Bilton Grange's expectations regarding behaviour are introduced through the management of pupils, the Golden Rules, assemblies and by catching children doing the right thing and rewarding them.

Bullying and related topics are covered in PSHEE and the academic curriculum provides many ways in which the pupils learn tolerance, respect and an awareness of others' lives.

The Senior Leadership Team must remain vigilant to ensure that the school routine and the school premises prevent the emergence of bullying behaviour. Areas of school life that appear to cause behavioural issues must be addressed and every care is taken to ensure 'initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation do not take place.

Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

Situations involving bullying behaviour are always complicated and must be treated as unique cases. The age-group affected, the nature of the bullying and the number of children involved, for example, will require differing courses of action.

There are various ways to deal with bullying incidents which have been proven to be effective and the school's response may well consist of several of these ways. They include: rules and consequences; restorative justice; the no-blame approach; the method of shared concern; mediation. The Assistant Head Pastoral and Deputy Headmaster, if not directly involved with the response to an incident, will offer guidance to those staff who are involved. It is important that all parties, particularly those harmed by bullying behaviour and their parents, understand how the process will unfold.

Whichever route is taken, the following points must be met in the school's response to bullying:

- **To take all suggestions of bullying seriously, and investigate them fully.**

- To prevent, minimise and stop any continuation of harmful behaviour as soon as possible.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and fair manner.
- To safeguard any pupils harmed by bullying behaviour.
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to any pupil initiating bullying behaviour.
- To ensure all relevant parties are informed of the situation; this will include parents and other staff.
- To monitor the situation for as long as necessary until staff and parents are content that bullying behaviour is very unlikely to reoccur.

Sanctions

Bullying, once identified, is a most serious situation and, whilst we would expect pupils to respond to the support on offer, continued bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. Sanctions will be decided by the Headmaster, after discussion with the Deputy Headmaster, as detailed in the Discipline and Sanctions policy. These sanctions may range from the removal of privileges to expulsion in the most extreme cases.

Recording Bullying Incidents

All incidents of poor behaviour, any of which may form part of a pattern of bullying, should be recorded on iSAMS and, if at Prep, a bad Mark recorded, as detailed in the Discipline and Sanctions policy. Form Tutors, Heads of Phase, Assistant Head Pastoral and the Deputy Headmaster watch for repeated incidents or individual pupils involved in several incidents.

Serious incidents, including suspected bullying behaviour, are investigated by the Assistant Head Pastoral and/or Deputy Headmaster, who will record all relevant details either electronically or in writing.

A bullying incident should be treated as a Child Protection (CP) concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm'. This includes the reporting of incidents which happen outside of school and cyber-bullying. Of course, it is very hard to control the activities and interactions of children outside of school time, but an awareness that such incidents can take place, and the role that school can play to try to help children in such circumstances, is essential.

The Assistant Head Pastoral and/or Deputy Headmaster will keep the Headmaster, parents, form tutor and other staff as necessary informed of the situation.

Staff Training

Training staff is part of a cycle of INSET training. Protective Behaviours underpins much of the school's approach to children feeling safe at school. Training is also conducted informally by the Assistant Head Pastoral through staff meetings and mentoring activities and by understanding and following detailed school policies. Anti-bullying activity is an integrated part of the School's approach to promoting good behaviour and safeguarding the pupils of the school.

Helping Hands Booklet

A copy of this booklet is kept in the Appendices and the Helping Hands booklet, reminding children to whom they might turn in the event of needing help, is on display in Form Rooms and boarding houses.

The Assistant Head Pastoral and Deputy Head are responsible for updating this policy, overseeing the actions it describes and ensuring that all staff are aware of the importance of preventing bullying behaviour at school.

Authorised Risk, Compliance and Safeguarding Committee:	
Date:	22 September 2021