



Bilton Grange - Pastoral Policy

January 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- 1.1 We aim to provide a safe, secure and happy environment in which our children enjoy a rich childhood in a community based on Christian principles.
- 1.2 We aim to teach children to treat each other with consideration, respect and compassion.
- 1.3 We aim to develop confidence, self-esteem and independence in each child. We aim to treat children as of equal worth.
- 1.4 We aim at informal and friendly relationship between staff and pupils with a strong emphasis on courtesy, good manners, personal responsibility and justice.
- 1.5 We aim to create a culture of choice in which children take responsibility for the use of their time and the activities in which they take part.
- 1.6 We aim to encourage parents to participate in the school's community and for children to participate in the wider community.
- 1.7 We aim to create an atmosphere in which our children can develop with confidence in a positive atmosphere free from fear, safe in the knowledge that their right to be heard will be respected and a sensitive approach to advice and guidance when needed will always be adopted

Equal Opportunities Statement

The school believes in equal opportunities and entitlement to the full curriculum for all pupils whatever their ethnic origin, religion, gender or disability. The only difference in curriculum is in sport where girls play netball and rounders with some cricket, whereas the boys play rugby and cricket.

Children are expected to attend assemblies and religious services based on the Christian message, although there are many religions represented within the school.

All staff are valued as individuals within their sphere of work, regardless of race, gender or creed, and have equal opportunities to develop their career within the school.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all pupils and staff.

3.0 POLICY CONTENT

3.1 PASTORAL STRUCTURE

3.1.1 All Staff

All Staff are encouraged to use their experience, talents and expertise in order to ensure high standards of care to which our children are entitled. Some have very specific pastoral roles (Form Tutor, Heads of Phase, Houseparents, Matrons, Assistant Head (Pastoral), Deputy Head and Head).

3.1.2 Form Tutors

Up to and including Middle School, responsible for a group of approximately 12-18 children, the Form Tutor is in the best position to be aware of the day-to-day concerns of his or her tutees, whether pastoral or academic. In Upper School, the Tutor has responsibility for 5-8 pupils. With a judicious mix of gentle enquiry, attentive listening and keen observation he/she will monitor the well-being of each child and be in the best position to encourage, or respond to problems where they arise. Positive comments, as well as concerns about children, should be relayed to the Tutor, who will make a judgement as to whether to involve the Head of Phase. (Details of other aspects of the Tutor's work will be found in the Form Tutor Policy).

3.1.3 Heads of Phase

The Heads of Upper School (5th-6th Form, Y7-8), Middle School (3rd-4th Form, Y5-6) and the Juniors Co-ordinator (Y4) provide a pastoral and disciplinary overview. They will be the next reference point beyond the Form Tutor where a child's needs require some further co-ordination and record keeping.

Responsible for year groups, they hold meetings with Form Tutors in their year groups. Minutes are taken at these meetings and reported to the Assistant Head Pastoral. Any further notes made by Heads of Phase are collated and filed accordingly. Any matters which require further action are passed to the Assistant Head Pastoral who may discuss them further with the Deputy Head or the Head.

Heads of Phase have general responsibility for maintaining good order in their zoned classroom areas and for their general presentation. The Juniors Team (Co-ordinator and Form Tutors) fulfil this responsibility collectively.

Heads of Phase also encourage and review out of school visits and other whole year activities and assess the quality of provision for their year within the school and consider ways in which it might be improved.

3.1.4 Deputy Head

The Deputy Head has overall responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day running of the discipline in the school and will deal with some of the more serious matters brought to his attention by Form Tutors, Heads of Phase and the Assistant Head Pastoral. All details of offences and actions taken will be held by the Deputy Head in the Incident File. In order to maintain the necessary links with all departments in the school which have a bearing on pastoral or disciplinary issues, the Deputy Head meets regularly with the Head, Assistant Head Pastoral, Assistant Head Boarding, School Nurse and Prefects, and with the Assistant Head Pre-Prep and Heads of Phase as and when required.

3.1.5 Assistant Head (Pastoral)

The Assistant Head (Pastoral) has overall responsibility for pastoral care in the school and will deal with those issues which arise where pupils need support and guidance. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) co-ordinates the work of the tutors and Heads of Phase, including the PSHE programme, and is also responsible for Child Protection issues and is the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL). The Assistant Head (Pastoral) will act as a link between Tutors and the Deputy Head and Head and ensure that most serious matters (particularly vandalism, theft and bullying) are passed directly to them.

3.1.6 The Head

The Head has ultimate responsibility for overseeing pastoral care and discipline throughout the School and for ensuring a high level of good practice at all levels of delivery. He maintains his overview of all pastoral matters by chairing staff meetings and boarding staff meetings at both of which 'children for comment' is always an agenda item. He or the Deputy Head chairs prefects' meetings and sets the tone and ethos through contact with the school as a whole at Assemblies and Chapel services. He also has one to one meetings with the Assistant Head (Pastoral) on a weekly basis. He encourages staff and pupils to approach him with regard to problems they may be experiencing at any time.

3.1.7 Boarding Staff

(See Separate Boarding Policy for details of the structure and the key personnel involved).

3.1.8 Matrons

With their involvement with both day pupils and boarders, Matrons form a vital link in the chain of pastoral communication. Children are often at ease with and will confide in respected and trusted familiar figures outside the classroom, and Matrons play a very important role in offering a friendly ear and a safe haven. Weekly meetings are held between the Boarding Team, the Assistant Head Pastoral and the Head to ensure that concerns are discussed and, where necessary, appropriate action taken.

3.1.9 Sections

With around 50 children of all ages in each, sections are largely structures to enable healthy competition in Sport, Music and Conduct, etc. Heads of Sections are aware of the pastoral and disciplinary implications of such activities and liaise with tutors as and when appropriate.

3.1.10 Daily Communications

In a closely-knit community such as ours, colleagues are in constant communication with each other while regular contact with parents is encouraged at all levels. Consequently, the chances of on-going distress to children going unnoticed is minimised. Senior pupils and prefects are themselves encouraged to be observant and take appropriate steps to see that members of staff are informed if any children seem to be in a distressed state or known to be unhappy. It is explained to children that it is irresponsible not to report anything which interferes with a child's right to live a life free from fear, prejudice or abuse of any kind.

3.2 GOOD BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

3.2.1 Discipline and Rewards Policy

A calm, ordered and purposeful atmosphere is essential in promoting good pastoral care and is the foundation for effective learning. Children of prep school age, of course, react positively to encouragement and will want to seek approval from adults. Consequently, a wholly negative and punitive approach to discipline is neither necessary nor appropriate; disciplinary measures are, it is hoped, the least-used method of reaching our aim of encouraging tolerant and considerate relations among the children and minimising the likelihood of confrontation and argument.

Children will, nevertheless, make mistakes and need guidance; some will require more attention than others. Consequently, a graded series of sanctions and tariffs will always be necessary. Punitive these will sometimes need to be, but they should seek to concentrate on the lessons learnt by the children and how to avoid their making similar mistakes in the future. The early involvement and support of parents is also a crucial factor in the success of any sanctions.

Please refer to the Discipline and Rewards Policy which refers to the specific details used at Bilton Grange.

3.2.2 School Rules

The first rule is the rule of common sense. An action which is contrary to the interests of the School or its members, or which gives a bad impression, breaks the rule of common sense.

For a list of school rules, please refer to Section 4 of the Staff Handbook.

Rules could go on for ever, the test is, and “Would the Head allow all pupils to do what I am doing now?” If not, stop doing it.

3.3 ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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.

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

For full details, please refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy.

3.4 EATING DISORDERS AND DINING ROOM SUPERVISION

Children can develop difficulties with eating at any age and for a variety of reasons. Staff should always be aware of children who either appear to be eating inappropriately or avoiding food, as an inadequate diet can quickly harm health and cause other problems to do with energy and sleep. Staff should be aware that children with eating difficulties often develop strategies to hide their disorder.

There is a variety of choices provided at all meals where a cafeteria style operates. Kitchen facilities have recently been completely renewed. Catering is provided by an in-house team headed by the Catering and Commercial Manager.

Bilton Grange supervises meals closely. A Matron is on duty in the Dining Room Children are encouraged to select a balanced diet from the choices that are on offer at lunch. If inadequate amounts are requested, the child is gently returned to choose something in addition. Children are not allowed to return with plates piled with uneaten food, but are again encouraged to eat up their meals, having chosen an amount appropriate to their hunger.

Duty Staff supervise the queues, and staff will eat amongst the children. Breakfast is overseen by the Boarding Houseparents and Tutors. Tea is overseen by Matrons and Duty Staff. Children are encouraged to observe good table manners.

Children are encouraged to drink water regularly, as this is a key part of a healthy diet and a ‘wet brain’ is better able to learn, according to research. Drinking fountains are available on both girls’ and boys’ side and in the boys’ changing room.

At the end of the day, boarding children are allowed a selection of fruit or snack and a drink before going to bed.

Children may fill up their school water bottles at school for use during the day. Water bottles are provided for all major sporting events and drinking breaks have been introduced for cricket matches.

If a child is unable for any reason to eat the standard diet provided by the school, special arrangements can be put in place. Vegetarians are catered for, children's religious observances and attitudes to food are respected. If, as happens occasionally, we are aware that a Muslim child at the top of the school is intending to fast during Ramadan (children are exempt from fasting until their teenage years) and this occurs during term time, we will discuss this and ensure that their health and wellbeing is maintained.

The Caterers are experienced in being discreet and sensitive to varying needs of children. Persistent refusal to eat what is considered an appropriate diet leads to referral to the school doctor and contact with home by the Assistant Head Pastoral.

3.5 CONCERNS PROCEDURE

3.5.1 Introduction

Our policy at Bilton Grange is to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of the child'. To this end we embrace a culture of vigilance and maintain a professional curiosity with the knowledge that abuse can happen anywhere.

There is a clearly defined structure of pastoral support and reference points in place in addition to the daily contact with form tutors and published notices round the school; notice boards, procedures documents and 'Helping Hands'. An in-house booklet providing information as to where children can go for support.

As described in these notices, distress or a concern may be passed through a variety of channels to the Head of Year, Assistant Head (Pastoral), and ultimately the Head. Bilton Grange uses C-Poms which all staff have access to and can log their concern which will come through to the DSL and any other allocated staff.

In the event of a concern being raised, every effort will be made to pursue the matter and resolve the problem with the involvement of appropriate staff including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, if necessary.

3.5.2 Structure

The 'concern' will be passed to the Head of Phase or Assistant Head Pastoral who will interview the child, make notes and take any necessary action to deal with the problem.

Where more serious matters are concerned the Head, Deputy Head and Assistant Head Pastoral will confer promptly and decide what action to take.

If necessary, other members of staff and parents will be consulted.

Where appropriate the child will be kept informed of the action that is to be taken. Where appropriate other staff will be called on to give support.

If the child feels the need to go outside the school, these channels are also readily and easily available to him/her. The School Nurse is in touch with the school doctor who can be contacted if it is considered appropriate. The telephones are available to children 24 hours a day.

The twice daily meeting all children have with tutors is always a valuable reference point.

3.5.3 Consultation

There are regular school council meetings to discuss wider issues such as: food, extra curricula activity, the option to board, desired improvements, chapel, induction, discipline.

3.5.4 Sharing Concerns

For children who prefer to write down their concerns, they are free to do so. There is a form available from the Head's PA's office and in the boarding houses which may be returned to her or passed to the Assistant Head Pastoral/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the School Nurse. Details for children can be found in the Helping Hands booklet. The procedure will then be the same as in 5.2.

Upper School pupils are able to use Whisper – an anonymous reporting tool, where they can share concerns and they come directly to the Assistant Head Pastoral who will follow up on the issue. Upper School children are also able to share concerns through their MindSafe online Journal. These concerns go to The Assistant Head Pastoral and Head of Wellbeing who will follow up appropriately.

4.0 CHILD PROTECTION

4.1 Introduction

We recognise at Bilton Grange the right of children to grow up in a caring environment free from neglect, abuse or exploitation. The Rugby School and Bilton Grange Safeguarding and Child protection Policy and Procedures is designed to provide a high standard of care, to promote and safeguard children's welfare and to acquaint them with their rights to complaints and representation procedures. All staff are acquainted with the procedure to adopt wherever there is suspicion of any form of child abuse. Child protection procedures and the means of identifying possible abuse form part of the training for senior staff involved with child welfare.

4.2 Child Abuse

The ill-treatment or neglect of a child which causes injury, suffering or distress is abuse.

It may be PHYSICAL, (hitting, burning, bruising, scalding or poisoning, for example). It may be neglect through not providing proper care, food, warmth, shelter or cleanliness. If a child is excessively teased

or made to feel worthless, is over-protected or not allowed to do normal things there may be EMOTIONAL abuse. SEXUAL abuse may involve emotionally immature or dependant children in sexual activity to which they cannot give consent and which they do not really understand. It is much more common than was believed and can have serious and long-term damaging effects both emotionally and physically. Where research has recorded the gender of perpetrators of intra-familial sexual abuse, the vast majority have been found to be male, although abuse by women does occur. In around a quarter of cases, the perpetrator is under 18.¹

All these forms of abuse can be serious and cause long term harm to the child.

4.3 Who can the Abuser be?

Anyone who cares for a child may be responsible for abuse. Usually an abuser is well known to the child. Abuse happens in families that are well off, as well as in poor homes. Even the most respectable seeming person can be an abuser.

4.4 Aide-Mémoire for Staff

What should you do?

If you are approached by a pupil who wishes to discuss a serious, distressing problem which could be defined as abuse, you should follow the following guidance

- a. Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- b. Accept what is being said.
- c. Take it seriously.
- d. Reassure, but only as far as is honest and reliable.
- e. DO NOT promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer the matter.
- f. Tell the child you will need to refer the matter to the DSL whose job it is to take the matter further in order to protect them.
- g. Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk about it.
- h. Never agree to keep secrets.
- i. Record carefully and in detail what is being said but DO NOT interrogate for full details.
- j. DO NOT ask leading questions, (e.g. “what did he do next?”, “did he do/say ...?”, such questions may invalidate the evidence should the matter ever come to Court.
- k. Listen quietly and carefully.
- l. DO ask open questions like “is there anything else you want to tell me?”
- m. Do not criticise the (alleged) perpetrator.
- n. DO NOT ask the child to repeat what they have told you to another person. Explain what you have to do and to whom you have to refer the matter. You are encouraged to see the matter through and to keep in touch with the child (depending on circumstances).
- o. Make brief notes at the time and write up your notes as soon as possible.

¹ <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-publications/key-messages/intra-familial-csa/>

- p. DO NOT destroy your original notes (no matter how scrappy or sketchy they are) in case they are required by Court.
- q. Record the date, time, place and any noticeable, non-verbal behaviour and the EXACT words that are used by the child. If the child uses slang, record exactly what is said rather than interpreting the meaning.
- r. Draw a diagram or use a body map to indicate the position of any marks on the child's body.
- s. Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- t. Do not assume anything nor jump to conclusions.
- u. REPORT THE MATTER IMMEDIATELY TO THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD and in their absence to the Head. (If away from school, the Head can always be contacted on his mobile phone (07808763209). Information about the allegations MUST NOT be shared with anyone else.

Of course, it is hoped that you will never have to deal with anything of this nature but, if you do, it is very important that the above procedures are rigorously followed.

N.B.

If a member of staff has reason to suspect abuse has taken place he/she should immediately report to the DSL. The nominated member of staff for liaison with Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) is the DSL. The contact number at the Social Services Department is 01926 410410.

If you think a child at Bilton Grange is being abused you MUST tell a DSL about it. Sometimes children will tell an adult they trust that they are being abused, but will ask that no one else be told. If that happens to you, you must explain that you can only help them by involving others who can be trusted and who can help.

4.5 Making a Child Protection Referral:

The following guidelines are published by the SSD and outline the department's policy on referral. Whilst it is usually the DSL who will make the referral, it is important to remember that anyone may make a referral.

It is particularly important that all those whose work either brings them into contact with children or contact with adults who have children, are alert to the definitions and indicators of child abuse. In circumstances where **you** have concerns that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm to his or her health or development, or where a child gives information detailing abuse, the following principles must be adhered to:-

- a. All concerns and allegations, whatever their origin, must be taken seriously and considered with an open mind which does not pre-judge the situation.
- b. In circumstances where a child volunteers/discloses information about abuse, listen to the child. **Do not question him/her.**
- c. Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events. The child should **not** be asked to repeat their story to a colleague or asked to write it down.

- d. In circumstances where a child has an injury but no explanation is volunteered, it is acceptable to enquire how the injury was sustained.
- e. If there are concerns about the explanation given for the cause of the injury, these must be referred to Social Services.
- f. Always make a written record as soon as possible of any information volunteered to you. The record will include the time it was written, the setting, personnel present, as well as what was said.
- g. Record all subsequent events up to the time of Social Services/Police intervention.
- h. Do not promise confidentiality.
- i. **ACT NOW – DO NOT DELAY.**

It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that the matter is referred to WSCB within 24 hours with written confirmation of a telephone referral.

4.6 Child Protection Information for Children:

The DSLs are the Assistant Head Pastoral, Assistant Head PrePrep, Assistant Head Boarding, Heads of Upper and Middle School. The Head is also trained to the same level and can act as DSL in the absence of the above.

In order to comply with the Children Act, the following structure is in place for any pupil who has a concern or complaint.

TO ALL PUPILS

If you need help or advice on any matter you should always feel free to talk to any of the following:-

- Your Form Tutor
- Your Head of Phase
- Assistant Head Pastoral
- Deputy Head
- Boarding Houseparents
- Any Matron or School Nurse
- Librarian
- Head
- Peer Listener

OR, if you prefer, the Head Prefect or any senior pupil whom you trust.

If you wish to take a trusted friend with you, you may do so. If you would prefer to write about your concern the Helping Hands Booklet will remind you what to do.

If at any time you need to talk to anyone outside the school, you may contact the following:

Dr Collier the San	01788 556199
Social Services Department	01926 410410
Childline	0800 1111

5.0 Health and Safety in School

Risk assessments, health and safety documents and policies and guidance appear for all departments in the Staff Handbook and include details of safety rules for all areas of the School, including fire regulations and guidance for medical emergencies and accidents.

6.0 Children

Children are advised and consulted about health and safety matters and risk assessment, both as a separate issue with comments and recommendations from them duly considered, either through questionnaires or during PSHEE lessons. (see PSHEE syllabus for details of Health and Safety issues covered).

7.0 POLICY OWNER

This policy will be reviewed by the Assistant Head Pastoral.

8.0 RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

This policy pays regard to the following school policies:

Form Tutor Policy
Boarding Policy
Discipline and Rewards Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

9.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

This policy will be reviewed annually.