

**ANTI-BULLYING****OBJECTIVES**

- To reflect our school ethos in working hard, being kind and being ambitious, we aim to create a caring, friendly and safe school environment in which all members of the school community can feel secure and unthreatened and able to work to achieve their full potential.
- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all students should feel able to inform staff and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- We are conscious that bullying usually involves an imbalance of power and children with specific protected characteristics may be more vulnerable. Therefore, staff should receive training to understand this and be particularly vigilant when supervising the interactions between children with known protected characteristics.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies on:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Equality
- Behaviour
- E-Safety and
- SEND
- Attendance
- Exclusions

This policy is underpinned by a legal framework and we are aware of our duty to prevent bullying in BSG specifically including:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006
- The Education (Independent School standards) Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Preventing Bullying (DfE Guidance, 2017)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

**PURPOSE**

- To prevent bullying from occurring.
- To create a positive and safe learning environment.
- To develop each individual's self-esteem and respect for others.
- To have a complete and consistent method for dealing with incidents of bullying if and when they occur.
- To understand the different types of bullying and hold a consistent definition of what bullying is.
- To ensure all members of the BSG community have a high level of awareness of the Anti-Bullying policy and its aims.
- To ensure families and other members of the community are aware of our approach to bullying.
- To ensure all are aware of their roles and responsibilities to prevent and tackle bullying.
- To resolve bullying, not only through use of sanctions but restorative action, support for both victim and perpetrator and, where possible, through reconciliation.

**WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is usually a behaviour which is intended to upset or hurt or put a person under stress.

Sometimes this can be unconscious and not intended but if a person’s actions cause discomfort, pain and upset then it is still bullying. The most common cause of bullying occurs in school when friends fall out.

**Bullying**

- hurts
- is threatening
- frightens
- has a significant impact on an individual’s self-esteem.

Sometimes the bully will get others to gang up on the victim.

The term ‘bullying’ is commonly used to describe these behaviours and its meaning is established in both education and society in general, but using it can lead to minimisation of the seriousness of the behaviour if not also understood as a safeguarding concern for both the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) involved. Perpetration of bullying is a negative behaviour that can and should be managed within the behaviour policy of BSG, but it also falls within the definition of ‘child on child abuse’ as described in Keeping Children Safe in Education, and it is crucial that the term ‘bullying’ is not used euphemistically resulting in harmful behaviours not being fully addressed

Bullying comes in a variety of forms:

<b>Physical</b>	hitting, kicking, spitting taking another’s belongings, any use of violence
<b>Verbal</b>	frequent name calling, creating cruel nicknames, repeated teasing, sarcasm, spreading rumours, insults or threats
<b>Emotional</b>	exclusion from discussions/activities by those they believe to be their friends, spreading rumours, manipulating social sites, breaking trust.
<b>Damage to property or theft</b>	interfering with belongings, vandalism and theft of property or physical threats so that the victim parts with property
<b>Cyber</b>	<p>malicious messages via text messages/social media, gaming sites, excluding others online, using others’ login.</p> <p>Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that occupies a unique space within the broader definition due to its scope, both in that it can take place at any time of day or night and the bigger potential audience size, and due to the fact it can (and usually does) take place away from BSG and beyond the parameters of the school day.</p> <p>Furthermore, the artefacts of cyberbullying, including things like youth produced sexual imagery or abusive comments, have the potential to travel to any other point in the world and there are few or no options to limit or retract once information has been shared in this way.</p> <p>Cyberbullying has become the most common form of bullying that education now faces. We believe that any act of harmful behaviour that occurs between members of our school community is our business and will be managed within the remit of our policies and routines.</p> <p>Not all cyberbullying is criminal or meets statutory thresholds for referral to Children’s Social Care, but there are laws that can apply in relation to threats, harassment and the safeguarding of children, and so the police or other services will be involved as and when necessary.</p> <p>Searching, Screening and Confiscation 2022 gives head teachers, and those authorised by head teachers, the power to seize and examine data or files and to delete these where there is good reason to do so.</p>

<b>Prejudice-based and discriminatory</b>	Including: Racial, Faith-based, Gendered (sexist), Homophobic/biphobic, Transphobic, Disability-based Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)
<b>Sexual</b>	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching

**All staff** should be aware that children can abuse other children, this can happen both inside and outside of school, as well as online, and that no reports being made does not mean that this form of abuse is not taking place.

**All staff** are provided with CPD on the different forms of peer abuse, including bullying, and made aware of the indicators and signs as well as how to respond to it.

**BSG is committed to** creating a culture of safety by challenging harmful behaviours between peers and never downplaying or dismissing behaviour that is actually abusive in nature by saying things like “it’s just banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

**We have a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to managing child on child abuse in any form**, including bullying.

Bullying can take place within BSG, including the outside spaces, during events, trips and residentials, in the community and via technology, including cyber-bullying and by phone / text.

Warning signs that pupils are being bullied:

- Unusually cautious, sensitive and quiet – not their normal selves – reluctant to talk about things, go out with friends, or do things they would normally do
- Reluctant to come to school
- Develop a negative view of themselves. Victims of bullying tend to look upon themselves as failures and feel stupid, ashamed and unattractive
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches; visits to Reception or Medical Room
- Their work suffers and grades go down
- Unpleasant comments written in victims’ books, pencil cases, on the whiteboard etc.
- Loss or damage to clothing, books or other property.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF AND PUPILS**

Children must feel confident that, if they feel unsafe or that they are being bullied, they can come forward and will be listened to. Any child can come forward to speak with any member of staff.

Everyone has the right to live in the school community without fear, and to have their contribution to school life valued. To this end, no form of bullying will be tolerated. We all have a duty to intervene in an appropriate way if someone is being bullied, to support those who are victims, and report any incidents to someone in authority. There can be no innocent bystanders: in an environment of openness, bullying will not thrive.

The most important contribution to the elimination of bullying is a positive, challenging culture in which our expectations of our own behaviour towards others are consistently high.

All members of the school community should help to create a climate in which bullying can be reported in the knowledge that it is unacceptable and will be dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Bullying in its various forms, and its consequences, are discussed as part of the PHSE programme at all levels of the school and will be addressed in whole school assembly themes and thought for the week in Tutor time.

## **REPORTING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING**

Pupils can report incidents of bullying to the school to any trusted adult in the school, their form tutor or Head of House.

Parents can report incidents of bullying to the school via email or phone call to the form tutor, Head House or to the senior leadership team.

Staff can report incidents of bullying via the My Concern safeguarding software. This should also be followed up with a conversation with the form tutor or head of house as soon as possible.

The school uses My Concern to record and analyse types of bullying.

## **PROCEDURE ONCE BULLYING IS REPORTED**

Incidents of bullying are dealt with using the school behaviour policy at form tutor and Head of House level. Sanctions are decided on a case by case basis.

1. Heads of House investigate all allegations of bullying, together with form tutors or other members of staff. Pupils (victim and perpetrator) will be asked to write a statement about what has happened. If the statements are in line with each other, then the schools behaviour policy will be followed and an attempt at a resolution will be made.
2. It may be necessary to seek other witnesses if the statements from the victim and perpetrator do not match. This may take time and both the victim and perpetrator will be supported through this process.
3. Records should make clear what the follow-up was, what sanction was given, when parents were contacted, whether any support was given or planned for.
4. Serious cases are referred at once to the school's SLT Team.
5. Reconciliation is attempted, including acknowledgement of the harm done and an apology. Appropriate support is offered to both the victim and the perpetrator.
6. It may be that an external mediation through the safer schools team is arranged, particularly in the case of cyber bullying and persistent bullying.
7. It is made clear to the perpetrators that any repetition of bullying behaviour will result in severe punishment, such as temporary or permanent exclusion.

## **RECORDING INCIDENTS**

Records are kept of all incidents, reports and conversations with pupils on My Concern, and parents informed.

When pupils are interviewed regarding serious incidents, two members of staff should be present. The pupils should also be asked to sign the resultant statement.

Records should make clear what the follow-up was, what sanction was given, when parents were contacted, whether any support was given or planned for.

## **ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES**

Bullying at BSG will not be tolerated and this message will be reinforced regularly. It is important that tackling bullying is seen as an on-going process which involves all members of the BSG community.

The message will be delivered through:

- Assemblies
- PSHE schemes of work, posters and advice leaflets
- The Anti-Bullying information board
- Pupils engaging with the *Princess Diana Anti-Bullying Award*
- Pupils working on the *Respect Campaign*
- every form teacher and class teacher
- duty staff and lunchtime supervisor should be particularly vigilant when on duty
- subject teachers will sometimes be able to incorporate an 'anti-bullying' message in their lessons, e.g. in literature, drama, discussions of current affairs etc.
- confidential safe area in the Pastoral Hub and Learning Centre
- cyber bullying special assemblies and lessons – students to understand the risks of social networking sites and ways to report cyber bullying
- continuing professional development for all staff

Reviewed

September 2022

Next review

July 2024

Approved by S&S committee

Ratified by FGB