



# Anti-Bullying Policy

**SAFE 04**

Reviewed by RAK in May 19 | Next Review Date: Mar 20

**This is a whole School Policy including Prep, Pre-Prep, EYFS, After School Care and Holiday Club**

The policy responds to the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Independent School Standard Regulations 2010, The Equality Act 2010, and the Children Act 1989. The policy is reviewed annually or more often if required with regard to new advice and legislation. This Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Policy for **Behaviour, Rewards and Consequences Policy** and the **Equal Opportunities Policy**.

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### 1. Aims

Our aim is to create a School in which children grow up happily and free from fear; free to pursue their own interests with consideration for others. We aim to ensure that all children and staff have a clear understanding of our definition of bullying and what we, as a School, consider unacceptable behaviour. We aim to prevent bullying before it occurs through the continuing vigilance of all children and staff, by educating children in their responsibility for themselves and each other,

We take seriously any form of bullying and we understand the severe emotional distress and possibly psychological damage that bullying can cause. We aim to implement a robust procedure to identify and deal with any bullying that occurs in a prompt, effective and sympathetic manner.

### 2. Definition

Bullying is any action that deliberately causes pain, unhappiness, humiliation or suffering to another. Bullying activities include isolated or repeated acts of verbal abuse, teasing and name-calling, which cause another to feel victimized. Equally, the exclusion of others from the social groups that form naturally within the different age groups, causing distress and isolation, is an act of bullying. The erosion of self-esteem, and in certain cases the taking or spoiling of possessions, also classes as bullying. 'Banter' which causes effects listed above is unacceptable. 'Sexting' is unacceptable, too.

### 3. Bullying Triggers

- Race, Religion or Culture

Bullying centred on someone's racial characteristics, religion or culture might also be termed as racism or racial discrimination. It is based on the differences between the accepted norm in a

particular environment and someone who is different by virtue of his or her genetic inheritance or upbringing. This might take the form of a different skin colour, different routines of worship, different accent etc.

- Sex or Sexual Orientation

Bullying behaviour can be based on a person's gender, appearance, sexuality or sexual orientation. It can take a physical or non-physical form and it can be adopted by both boys and girls. A person can be bullied on either to their face, behind their back or by use of technology.

For example by:

- Using sexual words to put someone down (like calling someone a 'slut')
- using words that refer to someone's sexuality as a general put down (like calling something 'gay' to mean that it is not very good)
- Making threats or jokes about serious and frightening subjects like rape.
- Gossiping about someone's sex life - including the use of graffiti.
- Touching someone in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Forcing someone to act in a sexual way.

- SEN/Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines those with a disability as someone who has:

'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

The definition includes a range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

The definition of Special Educational Needs applies to children who require special provision made in order that they can access the education that is available locally. It may or may not encompass a child with disabilities depending on the individual's requirements. SEN / Disability Bullying can take the form of name-calling, innuendo, negative stereotyping or exclusion from activities.

- Internet and Mobile Phone

Cyber-bullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) deliberately to upset someone. It includes the sending of malicious emails and texts as well as images via the computer and the mobile phone. It can be used to carry out all the different 'types' of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to SEN and Disability), and its success is based on the possible anonymity of the perpetrator, the distance between that person and the victim and the silence of the attack.

The school has the power under the Education Act of 2011 to search for and, if necessary delete inappropriate content on electronic devices including mobile phones.

Research carried out for the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) by Goldsmiths found that 22% of 11 to 16 year olds had been a victim of cyber-bullying. (P. Smith, J. Mahdavi et al 2006). Further guidance is available in Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014).

#### 4. Bullying or Teasing?

Physical bullying is quite rare. It is quite easily identified and should always be reported to the Headmaster by the member of staff seeing the problem so that members of staff and the



Headmaster can agree on the necessary action to be taken.

Teasing, 'leg-pulling', 'banter', mental bullying or whatever causes stress and / or unhappiness is unacceptable. That said, it is a matter of substance and can be hard for children to understand.

#### **Why is it hard for children to define or understand:**

- Different children have different levels of sensitivity. What hurts some has no effect on others, being water off the proverbial duck's back.
- Some sufferers do not show that they being hurt.
- Teachers tease children and children tease teachers. This may give the impression to *some* that *all* teasing is acceptable.

#### **How can/do we help children to define and understand this line?**

- The Headmaster should talk (at least once a term) about knowing the line in school Assembly.
- The PSHE curriculum covers all areas of bullying in school and the children learn about the effects it has upon others.
- Abberley Hall takes an active role in National Anti-Bullying Week in November.
- 1:1 tutors should not only discuss the line with their tutees at least once a term, but also take every convenient time to do so, e.g. whenever a case of mental bullying occurs.
- School Council should talk with their groups, encouraging children to talk about any incident or worry they may have about themselves or others.
- In the Pre-Prep and EYFS this should be discussed during Circle Time and Assemblies using age-appropriate language.

#### **What action should be taken to stop mental bullying?**

Any member of staff who hears teasing going on should check to satisfy himself or herself that the teasing is acceptable to those being teased. It is best practice to discourage any form of teasing.

If the teasing is not acceptable the necessary action should be taken:

- Intervention and/or sanction and in both case written on PASS and the 1:1 tutor informed.
- Counselling only may be sufficient, but some sanction (possibly a community task) may confirm the wrongness of the teasing to the bully and others and may appease guilt felt by the bully.
- The 1:1 Tutor(s), or, in the case of younger children, their form tutor, of the children involved should be informed on all occasions, along with the Headmaster and the Housemaster (in the case of an incident involving boarders) so that an overall profile for each child can be kept.

If Staff require further guidance on bullying or any other form of abuse, they should contact the DSL, Richard Keeble, and consult the ***Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy***.

### **5. Education and Prevention**

Education must be at the heart of any effort to eliminate bullying. All aspects of school life should be seen as opportunities to further such education, and it must begin at the earliest stages of learning and continue through to the final year. Education is vital not only to prevent bullying, but also for pupils' personal, social and moral development.



Across the pupils' age range, class teachers, 1:1 Tutors and boarding staff are responsible for ensuring that the children are fully aware of how to recognize and understand bullying behaviour. Examples of opportunities for discussion:

- Curriculum: PHSE, drama, literature, creative writing, history, current affairs
- Chapel: readings and talks by visiting Preachers
- Groups: Class discussions, pastoral groups, tutor groups, School Council.
- using educational elements such as projects, drama, stories, literature, with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.

**Within these opportunities, it is important that:**

- Contributions of all pupils are valued;
- All pupils feel able to contribute appropriately;
- Stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability or disability;
- Children are reassured of who they can speak to and what they can do to solve a bullying problem they might have or that they know about.
- All forms of bullying and harassment are challenged;
- Pupils are supported to develop their social and emotional skills.

The **Staff Code of Conduct** outlines what should be done by staff to discourage bullying and all children are aware that bullying in any form is not acceptable at Abberley.

- Particular attention needs to be paid when children are together in unsupervised groups, e.g. before a lesson, changing rooms.
- Children should be encouraged to recognise that bullying is unacceptable.
- Children should feel able to speak to members of Staff should they so desire. Any problems of this nature are brought up at staff meetings so that all staff are made aware of any situations.
- Prefects as part of their roles have specific instructions to bring any indications of bullying to the attention of a member of a staff. There are regular weekly Prefect meetings with the Headmaster and the Patrol Leaders meet with NDR, also on a regular weekly basis.

Children should know that:

- Any case of bullying can be reported to any member of staff;
- Any report will be treated seriously and (if appropriate and if requested) confidentially. Confidentiality of the source can normally be ok, however if the pupil is deemed to be at risk of harm or significant harm then confidentiality cannot be promised and the child must be made aware of this. See the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** for further details on harm.
- Prevention is enhanced by the School's ordered and disciplined environment.

## 6. Procedures and Sanctions

If an incidence of bullying is discovered, the safety and happiness of those threatened is the first



consideration. The bully will be shown that his or her behaviour will not be tolerated and counselling and/or punishment will be considered in line with the school **Behaviour, Rewards and Consequences Policy**. The school recognises the need to implement disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect (strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying).

In any case of bullying:

- If there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm' the member of staff who makes that judgement must dial 999 or ring the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board on 01905 822666 / 01905 768020 or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000. They must then follow the steps below:
- The Headmaster or the DSL must be informed immediately along with the 1:1 Tutor, Form Tutor and the Housemaster/Housemistress.
- The incident must be recorded on PASS in the file of the alleged perpetrator under Bullying, and in the file of the victim under Behaviour. Such incidents will be discussed at the weekly Pastoral Care meeting, so that patterns can be identified and appropriate action taken to try to reduce the incidence, repetition and severity of bullying. The Pastoral Care group will assess the impact of the measures which are put in place to counter bullying behaviour.
- Immediate steps should be taken to avoid recurrence.
- Parents of all children involved will be informed, unless the school is advised by WSCB or the police that this should not be done.
- 1:1 Tutors will follow-up victims during the days (and weeks if necessary) after an incident to ensure that all is well and occasionally thereafter for a period of weeks.
- Staff will be kept informed at staff meetings so that all individuals involved are suitably supported. Both victim and perpetrator of bullying are to be seen as in need of support.
- It may be appropriate to investigate more closely any underlying reason for the bully behaving as he/she did. The Headmaster may interview the bully and may invite the parents of the bully to be present if appropriate. This is intended to air the pertinent issues so that parents can help and support their child. Further steps may include suspension or expulsion.

The school acknowledges its responsibility for raising awareness of staff through training, so 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 are available; where appropriate, schools can invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils. The DSL will deliver such training during INSET at the beginning of the school year.

**The Board of Governors will be monitoring compliance with this policy.**

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**Governor**

**Headmaster**

**Mrs Catharine Hope**

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**Mr Will Lockett**



This is an all School Policy including Prep, Pre-Prep, EYFS, After School Care and Holiday Club

## Appendix A: Guidelines for Adults who Identify Bullying Behaviour

### First Steps

- If there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm' the member of staff who makes that judgement must dial 999 or ring the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board on 01905 822666 / 01905 768020 or the NSPCC on 0800 800 5000. They must then follow the steps below:
- Remain calm: you are in charge and reacting emotionally may fuel the bully's behaviour
- Treat the incident seriously
- Take action as quickly as possible
- Does your action need to be private or public; who are the pupils involved?
- Reassure the victim(s); don't make them feel inadequate or foolish
- Offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s)
- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view

### Involving Others

- Inform the Headmaster (or the Deputy in his absence) or the DSL
- Inform the 1:1 Tutor/s or Form Tutors of all parties involved.
- Inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant in the future.
- Record the incident on PASS.

### Final Steps

- Make sure the incident doesn't live on through reminders from you.
- Try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident.

### Things to Avoid

- DO NOT be over protective and prevent the victim from helping him/herself.
- DO NOT assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour, with the bully.
- DO NOT keep the whole incident a secret because you have dealt with it.

### Suggestions for children for dealing with bullying

- Laugh at the comments.
- Ignore the teasing; silence might throw them off.
- Tell them to ignore the comments and walk away.
- Stay with the crowd – bullies usually pick on individuals.

Further guidelines can be found on: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

