



BROMSGROVE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Scope:	Preparatory and Pre-Preparatory Schools

BROMSGROVE PREPARATORY AND PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy applies to all staff and pupils at Bromsgrove Preparatory and Pre-Preparatory Schools including those in the EYFS setting.

This Policy has regard to:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (5th January 2015): Part 3, Paragraph 10
- The Independent School Standards: Guidance for Independent Schools (DfE, April 2019)
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (DfE, September 2022): Part G, Standard 16
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies. (DfE, July 2017)
- Approaches to Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Case Studies (DfE, June 2018)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE, February 2024)
- Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE, November 2014)
- Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying (DfE, November 2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (DfE, September 2024) (KCSIE)
- The Equality Act (2010)

1. INTRODUCTION

Bromsgrove School will not tolerate any form of bullying whether it be verbal, physical, racial, sexual, cyber or against a disability, regardless of motive. Bullying usually takes place away from staff; it can also be difficult to establish what happened. The most recent DfE advice (2017) states that successful schools create an environment that prevents bullying from being a serious problem in the first place.

The three main factors that reduce and remove bullying are as follows:

- creating attitudes within the pupil body that bullying is unacceptable and that any bullying should be reported – it is thus essential that pupils are aware of the policy and involved in its implementation; feeling ownership of it. The Preparatory School 'Anti-Bullying Team' (including Pupil Buddies) plays a crucial role here
- the School showing that it will not tolerate bullying and will take action when it occurs
- staff awareness, concern and vigilance.

2. AIMS

In line with current DfE guidance, the School Mission Statement, and the School Rules, we aim through this policy to produce a safe and secure environment where all children can flourish, where bullying is unacceptable and measures are in place to reduce its likelihood. Our policy and procedures are in place to deal effectively with bullying or poor behaviour. Our procedures outlined within this policy and the Positive Behaviour Procedure documents are clear to parents, pupils, and staff so that, when incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively.

3. OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that we provide a safe, secure and inclusive environment for all pupils.
- Increase awareness of bullying and encourage debate and discussion amongst staff and pupils.
- Involve the whole staff and pupil body in combating bullying and making it unacceptable at Bromsgrove School.
- Create a supportive climate and break down the notion of secrecy that often surrounds bullying.
- Encourage pupils who are being bullied or who observe bullying to inform staff.

- Highlight how we can educate pupils about bullying and relationships.
- Complement the School's behaviour and discipline policies.

4. WHAT IS BULLYING?

Definition

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.¹ Furthermore, we recognise that bullying may start as a single incident and, in these instances, the School will act accordingly, using the procedures in place following a reported incident. By taking action in response to a single incident and completing the appropriate records, the School will be able to ensure that any patterns are identified, with aim of preventing the single incident from becoming the first of a series

KCSIE² states that child-on-child abuse 'is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm, and
- initiating/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).'

Pupils who are bullied suffer distress rather than being treated with respect, which can affect their general behaviour, health and wellbeing, let alone their engagement with school and a possible decline in their long-term academic prospects. Equally, pupils who bully need to be aware and understand the negative impact of their actions. This is particularly important for any boarding pupils who are experiencing bullying since they may not be able to escape their bullies due to not going home regularly during term time.

We recognise that there will be occasions when child-on-child bullying incidents will fall within child protection procedures or may be deemed criminal activity, requiring referral or reporting to external agencies. Our response to such incidents is set out in the separate Safeguarding Children Policy and Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

5. CYBERBULLYING AND ONLINE SAFETY

Cyber-bullying is specifically bullying that occurs through digital means. It can happen via social networking sites, through instant messaging, or via online games or activities. Cyber-bullying may be an extension of off-line peer-bullying, or it may be self-contained; the perpetrator may be known to the victim

¹ Anti-Bullying Alliance

² *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE September 2024), paragraph 33

or they may remain anonymous online. It is the ease with which someone can believe they are anonymously engaging in cyber-bullying that makes it a dangerous scenario. The following points highlight some of the typical forms of cyber-bullying:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Advice to Parents

This advice is drawn from the Boarding Schools Association (BSA) and the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP).

- Make yourself aware of the amount of time your child is using the Internet, chat facilities, games consoles and their mobile phones and whether this is excessive.
- Consider carefully the location of the computer or laptop and whether your child would be better using it in a family area of the home.
- Search on Google for your child's name and any online usernames they use. This is a valuable exercise for you and them to be able to see exactly how much information other people can see about them with very little difficulty.
- Consider installing internet monitoring software.
- Talk to your child; both about the dangers of the internet, but also about their general usage – be interested in what they are doing and keep dialogue open so they feel able to talk to you if they do experience problems.
- Ask your child to (or help them) set up appropriate privacy settings on social media sites (the School has made available a number of short guides to assist with this in the Online Safety folder on the Parent Portal).

See also:

- 'Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying' (DfE November 2014)
- 'Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff' (DfE November 2014)

The School's Role

The School takes these issues seriously and takes the following action to help educate, inform and assist pupils on these issues.

- We reinforce Internet safety messages at various regular stages and at an age-appropriate level to all pupils. This is done through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) sessions, Assemblies, during Head of Year time meetings and visiting speaker presentations as appropriate.
- The Preparatory School has an 'Acceptable Usage Policy' that the pupils are made aware of and sign. Given the age of the children in the Pre-Preparatory School and the nature of their usage of School devices, rules regarding acceptable use are clearly stated on devices and teachers regularly draw attention to them with their classes.
- We follow the appropriate School disciplinary procedures in relation to any incident of misuse of ICT equipment or websites or of cyberbullying. (The School has the right to take action, even when the offence is committed out of School, if it harms members of our community or brings the School into disrepute).

- Filtering software (Lightspeed), which amongst other things limits access to social networking and game sites during the working school day, is in use throughout the School's network.

6. THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

The Headmaster and Governors have a legal duty to:

- encourage within the School community good behaviour and respect for others
- prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

When a school accepts a pupil onto the roll, it takes responsibility for his or her physical, psychological and educational welfare. The focus should not just be on the pupils' educational attainment but on nurturing their emotional growth and making sure that they are safe.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where 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's Safeguarding Children Policy should be referred to for details of the requisite processes.

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.

7. STAFF PROCEDURES FOLLOWING A REPORTED ACT OF BULLYING

Preparatory School

- All reported cases will be investigated. Records must be kept through the Preparatory School's incident recording system. These records are used to ensure that a pupil's profile is accurately informed throughout their time at the School. More importantly, the records are kept to identify any patterns of behaviour and furthermore to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach.
- Cases of bullying or suspected bullying that are observed in class or around the School should be acted on immediately by the member of staff involved. The event should be recorded as an 'Incident' using the School's intranet system and relevant staff informed such as the Tutor and Head of Year. Contact should be made with the parents of all parties involved (by either the Deputy Head (Prep) or the Head of Year).
- Cases confined to the Boarding House will be dealt with by the Houseparents initially, who will in turn inform the Headmaster and Deputy Head (Prep).
- The Deputy Head (Prep) will notify the Headmaster of any serious cases or of any ongoing situations. In certain situations, it may be necessary for outside agencies to be contacted (Police, LADO, Social Services etc.). Contact with external agencies would always be at the Headmaster's discretion.
- Close liaison will be maintained with the Boarders' Clinic and Wellbeing Hub.
- Every effort should be made to follow up each case to ensure the victim is given support and to prevent recurrence. All such issues should be monitored, reviewed and evaluated with all relevant staff being kept fully informed.
- Consequences for instances of bullying will be in line with the pupil behaviour and consequences guidelines in the Preparatory School Positive Behaviour Procedure. There is no set minimum but the School is prepared to include permanent exclusion as an outcome if that is deemed necessary and appropriate.

Pre-Preparatory School

- All reported cases will be investigated. Records must be kept through the Pre-Preparatory School's incident recording system. As with the procedures in the Preparatory School, the records are kept to identify patterns of behaviour as well as offering the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach.
- Cases of bullying or suspected bullying that are observed in class or around the School will be acted on immediately by the member of staff involved.
- Parents of all parties involved will be informed.
- Consequences for incidents of bullying will follow the guidance offered within the Pre-Preparatory Positive Behaviour Procedure document. For incidents of a significantly serious nature, permanent exclusion may be deemed both appropriate and necessary.
- All staff who have contact with the child (or children) are to be made aware of the problem and to report back to the Class Teacher, Deputy Head (Pastoral), or Headmaster immediately if they observe any further inappropriate behaviour from the child or children concerned.
- The situation will be carefully monitored to prevent any reoccurrence and to ensure that the victim(s) receive appropriate support.
- In certain situations, it may be necessary for outside agencies to be contacted (Police, LADO, Social Services, etc.). Contact with external agencies would always be at the Headmaster's discretion.

8. STAFF AWARENESS

The Preparatory School follows the Anti-Bullying Alliance's approach to dealing with bullying and uses the Alliance's auditing tool (this was most recently undertaken in 2024 with the School being designated as a 'United Against Bullying Silver School') to create an action plan for how to continually evolve our approaches. Specific staff awareness encompasses the following:

- Anti-bullying procedures and advice form an important part of staff meetings and annual INSET.
- Staff are asked to watch for early signs of distress in pupils – e.g. deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, desire to remain with adults, avoiding Houses or play areas at break times, erratic attendance.
- Staff need to be aware of racist and sexist language or actions.
- Staff need to be aware of the specific challenges that boarding pupils face – if bullying exists within a boarding house, pupils affected by this will not have the same sense of 'escape' that a day pupil may have when going home.

9. EDUCATION

The School aims to prevent bullying by making use of various strategies:

- use all pupils as a positive resource in countering bullying (the key factor)
- encourage pupils to turn to pupil listeners (Buddies – Preparatory School only)
- asserting the School's stance of zero tolerance of bullying through regular talks, presentations, assemblies, Chapel, Tutor Periods or class time, PSHE lessons and HOY meetings
- where appropriate, use opportunities within the curriculum and throughout the teaching day to address bullying.

The School emphasises to pupils the importance of:

- conflict resolution and negotiating skills
- rights and responsibilities
- respect for others
- courtesy to others.

10. PUPILS ('WHO TO TURN TO' AT THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL)

It is of paramount importance that pupils should know who to turn to, for example their tutor, class teacher, the School Chaplaincy, Head of Year or Deputy Head (Prep). Pupils are reminded through the 'Where do I Turn?' leaflet of who they can talk to in confidence, and to know it will be acted upon discreetly and sensitively via our counselling procedures. Pupil listeners (Buddies) also play a vital role here.

11. STAFF WORKING WITH VICTIMS

It must be recognised that the first priority is to support and protect the victim of bullying. Ongoing support is crucial. It is also important to support witnesses as they can be deeply affected, as can those who join in 'on the fringe' because they could feel that they may be the next target.

12. STAFF WORKING WITH BULLIES

Bullying is often caused by insecurities within the bully resulting in the need to gain power over, or intimidate, another person that they perceive to be vulnerable. We need to consider:

- the antecedent conditions making the bully behave as she or he is
- the behaviour itself
- what the consequences of the behaviour are and whether this might be perpetuating the bullying.

13. STAFF WORKING WITH PARENTS

Incidents of bullying will be reported to parents.

- Staff should make clear to parents of all parties involved, the actions we have and will be taking, why we are taking them and what they can do to help and reinforce our actions.
- We urge parents to contact us immediately if they have any suspicion of bullying; sometimes schools may be unaware of a problem. All reported concerns will be investigated.

If a parent feels that their grievance has not been dealt with effectively, it may be necessary for them to follow the Complaints Procedure found within the Concerns and Complaints Policy.

14. BUDDIES AND PREFECTS (PREPARATORY SCHOOL ONLY)

Year 8 pupils, especially those in leadership positions, can play a vital role in counter-acting bullying. The Head of Year 8 will encourage them:

- to never use physical means to punish a child. If they have a problem with a younger child they should see a member of staff for advice or action
- to be observant and report bullying
- to adopt the mentality: 'if it happened to you, break the cycle'.

15. CONTACTS

Parents and guardians are encouraged to seek clarification on any points in this document or to raise any issues regarding internet safety and cyber bullying with the School.

Parents and guardians can contact any of the following people who will be happy to discuss issues:

Mr M Marie (Headmaster: Preparatory and Pre-Preparatory School)
Mrs T Hill (Deputy Head: Preparatory School)
Mrs S Webley (Senior Head of Year: Preparatory School)
Mrs L Blakemore (Anti-Bullying Lead Co-ordinator: Preparatory School)

Mrs S Grove (Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator Years 3 – 5: Preparatory School)
Mr R Barnett (Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator Years 6 – 8: Preparatory School)
Mr B ETTY-Leal (Deputy Head (Pastoral) Pre-Preparatory School)
Mrs J Townsend (Head of Early Years: Pre-Preparatory School)

APPENDIX: FURTHER READING AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Specialist Organisations

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including the social, mental or emotional effects caused by bullying:

- [The Anti-Bullying Alliance \(ABA\)](#): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.
- [The Diana Award](#): An anti-bullying ambassadors' programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviours of their peers towards bullying. It looks to achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.
- [Kidscape](#): Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle them. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.
- [Restorative Justice Council](#): Includes RJC Schools Briefing December 2011.
- [Ditch the Label](#): A youth charity, whose website includes their [2020 annual bullying survey](#).

Cyberbullying and Online Safety

- [Child Exploitation & Online Protection](#) (CEOP): A law enforcement agency that enables young people to report online sexual abuse or concerning online communication.
- [ChildNet International](#): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.
- [Internet Matters](#): Provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.
- [UK Council for Internet Safety \(UKCIS\)](#): This Government website provides access to a range of resources for schools, colleges and parents about how to keep children safe online, most of them published under its former identity of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

LGBTQ+³

- [Barnardos](#): Through its LGBTQ+ Hub, this site offers guidance to young people, parents and teachers on how to support LGBTQ+ students and tackle LGBTQ+ prejudice-based bullying.
- [The Proud Trust](#): Helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.
- [Schools Out UK](#) : Offers practical advice, resources and training to schools on LGBTQ+ equality in education.
- [Stonewall](#): An LGBTQ+ equality organisation with considerable experience in LGBTQ+ bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

SEND

- [Mencap](#): Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.
- [Changing Faces](#): Provides online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.
- [Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and Disabilities](#): Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance SEND resources](#): Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.

Mental Health

- [MindEd](#): Provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information for adults on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.
- [PSHE Association](#): Provides guidance on improving the teaching of mental health issues.

³ Bromsgrove School recognises that various abbreviations may be used by different organisations or sources

- [YOUNGMINDS](#): Offers Mental health support to children and young people, as well as advice to parents, on all sorts of matters including bullying
- [The Kaleidoscope+ Group](#): A Mental health charity providing support to members of the local community (based in Sandwell)

Race, Religion and Nationality

- [Educate Against Hate](#): Provides teachers, parents and school leaders with practical advice on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.
- [Show Racism the Red Card](#): Provides resources for schools to educate young people about racism, often using the high profile of football.
- [Kick It Out](#): Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and to provide education packs for schools.
- [Tell MAMA](#) : Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA) offers support and provides resources on any form of Anti-Muslim abuse.

Sexual Harrassment and Sexual Bullying

- [Ending Violence Against Women \(EVAW\)](#): A guide for schools setting out the different forms of abuse to support education staff in understanding violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.
- [Disrespect NoBody](#): A Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This link includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance resources](#): Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance for school staff about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying.