

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**This policy applies to the Senior School and is published to parents, pupils and employees.**



This policy has regard to Department of Education Guidance: *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)*; *Supporting Children and Young People who are Bullied: Advice for Schools (March 2014)* and *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (November 2014)*

### **1. Aims and Objectives**

- all governors, employees, pupils and parents should have a full understanding of bullying;
- all governors, employees, pupils and parents should know what Bradford Grammar School's (the "School") policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying occurs;
- all pupils and parents should be confident that there will be prompt action when bullying occurs and that there will be support for both the bully and the bullied; and
- the School's policy deals with all forms of bullying: physical, verbal, emotional, cultural, religious, psychological and cyberbullying.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyberbullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously the School's first priority. However, the School recognises that emotional bullying can often be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Bullying can take place in all parts of school, including the journey to and from school, in changing rooms, corridors and the playground. It can happen outside school hours and away from the school site. It may involve sending notes or making phone calls intended to offend or upset another person. Bullying may occur through via social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat, or via email and mobile devices used for SMS messages or as cameras, and may involve sending electronic messages, pictures or videos (sometimes of a sexually suggestive or explicit nature i.e. "sexting" or "Youth Produced Sexual Imagery" (YPSI)), or posting them on websites or social media, intended to hurt or humiliate someone. Cyberbullying of this kind will be treated just as if the bullying occurred face-to-face in school.

The School has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school buses or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to School employees, it will be investigated and acted on. The School will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police.

Forcing unwanted attention on someone else, particularly in a sexual way, is also a form of bullying. Bullying can involve using a third party to tease or torment someone, and can involve complicity which falls short of direct participation. Bullying is not confined solely to relationships

between young people, but may also occur between employees and pupils. **At the School, bullying in any form will not be tolerated between pupils, or between employees and pupils.**

The School is committed to the emotional wellbeing of its pupils, takes all allegations of bullying seriously, will investigate each one thoroughly and will take firm action against any behaviour intended to hurt or humiliate others. In extreme cases, if it is felt that a criminal offence has been committed (in terms of threatening behaviour or harassment) advice and assistance from the police may be sought.

Although the School will usually try to reconcile bully and victim, and help them both to move forward, it will also deal with the bully by making use of the full range of sanctions detailed in the Behaviour Policy, up to and including permanent exclusion.

The School openly acknowledges the seriousness of bullying, and its potential to affect the social, mental and emotional health of the victim. Victims of bullying are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem, and even blame themselves for "inviting" the bullying behaviour. This unhappiness is likely to affect their concentration and impair their learning. Some victims may experience stress-related symptoms such as stomach aches and headaches, nightmares or anxiety attacks. Some may avoid being bullied by not going to school. In extreme cases, bullying can lead to suicide.

The School also acknowledges that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways; it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

As stated in the School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy, the School recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Such peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in a number of ways e.g. sexting, girls being sexually touched / assaulted, boys being subject to initiation / hazing type violence. The School will never tolerate peer on peer abuse or pass it off as "banter" or "part of growing up", but recognises that the use of offensive language can itself have a significant impact on its target and, if left unchallenged or dismissed as "banter" or "horseplay", can lead to a reluctance to report further bullying behaviour. The School aims to ensure early intervention in order to set clear expectations of what is and is not acceptable behaviour and stop negative behaviours escalating.

## **2. Procedures to follow**

### **2.1 Reporting**

- Pupils are encouraged to bring any instance of bullying to the attention of an employee.
- All employees must be responsive to allegations of bullying, and must inform the relevant form tutor(s) and/or Head(s) of Year if they are aware of an allegation.
- It is essential that pupils have the confidence that all allegations are taken seriously and acted upon. The incident must always be recorded and investigated.

### **2.2 Investigation**

- After initial investigations by the subject teacher or form tutor who has become aware of a bullying incident, control of the investigation will be handled by the Head of Year, if the incident appears to be a serious one. The Assistant Head Pastoral will be kept informed.
- If the incident is felt to be serious, the Assistant Head Pastoral, the Deputy Head or the Head will assume responsibility for the investigation in conjunction with the Head of Year.

### **2.3 Response**

- In the case of serious incidents, the parents of the bully and the victim will be informed, and the parents of the bully will be asked to come into school for a meeting.
- In some cases, assistance will be sought from the School Counsellor and/or external specialist agencies (such as local authority children's services, or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) to help the victims and bullies.
- In extreme cases the police will be informed.
- Victims of bullying will receive support and help to develop strategies for dealing with bullying. It should be recognised that the self-esteem of victims of bullying may need rebuilding.
- Consideration will also be given to the reasons for the bully's behaviour and to how they can be helped to avoid such behaviour in future.
- Disciplinary action will be taken against the bully, who may be required to give a written assurance that they will not be involved in or responsible for any further incidents of bullying.

### **2.4 Follow-up**

- Incidents of bullying must be recorded and passed to the Assistant Head Pastoral.
- A record will be placed on the file of the pupils involved.
- After an incident, there must be a "follow-up" to ensure that the problem does not re-surface. Experience suggests that bullying will not take place again if the perpetrator knows that there will be follow-up. This should take place two weeks after the initial incident and in some cases there will be further follow-up half a term later.

## **3. Raising awareness of bullying**

All members of the school community have a responsibility to prevent such occurrences of bullying. It is important that everyone at the School knows that bullying will not be tolerated and this message must be reinforced frequently. All pupils must understand the School's approach and be clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. The message will be delivered through:

- the Personal Development (PSHE) programme;
- assemblies (both year group and whole school);
- the work of Form Tutors and Heads of Year;
- the Sixth Form Mentoring Scheme;
- the Student Voice councils;
- Anti-Bullying Week activities;
- meetings with and letters to parents to raise awareness of the key anti-bullying messages delivered to pupils at the School;
- projects, drama, stories, literature, with discussion of current affairs and of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language; and
- training for employees both within School as part of continued professional development, and through external courses attended by individuals, from which they will give feedback to colleagues.

All employees at the School are required to read and familiarise themselves with the School's Anti-Bullying Policy. Employees are expected to set a good example to pupils and to encourage an environment of good behaviour from pupils.

It is particularly important that pupils are encouraged to speak to an employee if they experience or know of incidents of bullying taking place. Research suggest that bullying rarely ceases without intervention from teachers, and although victims often worry that telling a teacher will make matters worse, it is clear that the unchallenged bully may consider their behaviour acceptable or lack the emotional intelligence to appreciate the impact that they have on the victim.

The School's Personal Development (PSHE) scheme of work includes various themes which promote an understanding of the issues involved in bullying, such as self-esteem, dealing with difference, having respect for others, forming positive relationships, and being a responsible member of the community.

It is also important for parents to be informed of the anti-bullying message by means of School correspondence and the School's website. The School will consult pupils, through Student Voice councils and via occasional surveys, in order to ascertain the incidence of bullying within the school and also to enable any patterns to be identified.

The School will involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the School does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied.

Parents will have confidence that the School will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and will reinforce the value of good behaviour at home

The School will regularly evaluate and update its approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating the School's ICT Acceptable Use Agreements.

The School will provide effective employee training to ensure that all School employees understand the principles and purpose of the School's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.

The School will also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school.

The School will make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside School, including cyberbullying.

The School aims to create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

#### **4. Sanctions**

Although the School will usually try to reconcile bully and victim, and help them both to move forward, it will also deal firmly with the bully by making use of the full range of sanctions available, including:

- senior detention or Deputy Head's detention;
- temporary exclusion (suspension);
- regulation of the mode of transport used to and from school;
- withholding participation in school teams, events or trips;
- police involvement; and
- permanent exclusion.

By using these sanctions the School aims:

- to make the bully recognise the seriousness of their behaviour and deter them from repeating it;
- to demonstrate to the school community that bullying is not acceptable, and to deter others from behaving in similar way; and
- to help the victim of bullying feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop.

## **5. Bullying and the law**

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when 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 concerns will be reported to the local authority children's social care.

Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the School may need to draw on a range of external services to support any pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a pupil engaging in bullying.

Although bullying is not in itself a specific criminal offence in the UK, 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 and the Communications Act 2003). If the School feels that an offence may have been committed, assistance from the police will be sought.

## **6. Cyberbullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology have provided a new medium for "virtual" bullying, or "cyberbullying". Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, which is intended to harm others.

Cyberbullying is sometimes a channel for continuing face-to-face bullying in School. It may consist of harassment, intimidation, defamation, impersonation, unauthorised publication of images (or manipulation of images) and may encourage exclusion or peer rejection. It can take place at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories to the act as others share the bullying material. "Sexting", or the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images or messages, via mobiles or over the internet, is recognised by the School as a potential vehicle for bullying behaviour.

The School's Personal Development programme promotes safe use of technology and social media, and gives guidance on dealing with and reporting cyberbullying. All employees and pupils sign the School's Acceptable Use Agreement before they are allowed to use School computer equipment, the internet and Wi-Fi within School.

When an employee has concerns about a pupil's misuse of technology, they must report it to the Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will request that the pupil reveals the content of the relevant material and who may confiscate equipment. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyberbullying by providing a specific power to search for inappropriate files on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

**Policy reviewed by:** Mrs M J Chapman, Assistant Head - Pastoral  
**Last policy review date:** June 2019  
**Next policy review date:** June 2020