



Ackworth School

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy has been reviewed by the Compliance and Policy Sub-Committee and approved by the School Committee

Introduction

Within Ackworth School we aim to create a happy and secure environment in which all pupils realise and develop their own special abilities in constant awareness of the needs and claims of others." The School commits itself to creating an environment for everyone that is characterised by our Quaker ethos, which underpins this policy. In line with best practice, this anti-bullying policy is explicitly written with young people in mind, and therefore is written in an accessible manner, including the use of the second person at various points.

Ackworth School recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of children. This policy applies to all members of Committee, staff, visitors and parents.

This anti-bullying policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements identified using the following documents and organisations:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- The Equality Act 2010
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017
- Anti-bullying Alliance
- Kidscape

Aims of the Policy - our commitment

Ackworth School strives to give all of our young people a transformational learning experience. We aim to ensure that all young people feel valued at school and enjoy a safe, secure and stable environment that allows them to flourish academically and socially. We have a 'duty of care' to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our young people, as outlined in our [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#) too.

We do not accept or tolerate any forms of bullying behaviour.

The aims of this policy and our anti-bullying strategies are:

- To create a positive and safe learning environment for all
- To reduce the frequency, severity and likelihood of bullying incidents



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- To prevent and respond effectively to any forms of bullying, showing our commitment to the Equality Act 2010 and any form of bullying to protected or vulnerable groups, such as SEND, LGBTQ++ pupils and looked after children.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff and parents understand our expectations and procedures for any form of bullying, enabling all members of the school community to take responsibility in preventing bullying.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online. (*Anti-Bullying Alliance - Definition of bullying*)

There are five recognised features of bullying:

- It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour;
- It is repeated over a period of time;
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves;
- It is difficult for those who bully to learn new social behaviours;
- Those who bully have and exercise power inappropriately over others

Therefore, bullying behaviour can include, but is not restricted to, the following:

Physical	Pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
Verbal	Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
Emotional	Isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
Online /cyber	Posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion.
Indirect	Can include the exploitation of individuals.

As you can see from the examples above, we recognise that there are many forms of bullying that can take place. Examples of bullying against targeted and vulnerable groups could include:

- **Racist** - taunts, graffiti, gestures, prejudice and hostility.
- **Sexual Orientation** - offensive behaviour focused on issues around sexuality,



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including homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic abuse.

- **Sexist** - offensive name calling, misogynistic behaviour
- **Disablist** - offensive name calling, excluding, laughing, intimidating
- **Religion** - derogatory remarks about a person's religious belief or culture

Signs of Bullying

There are many potential signs of bullying but changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied might include:

- Unwillingness to return to school.
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Failure to produce work, or producing uncharacteristically poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others.
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly going missing, or being damaged.
- Changes to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary).
- Diminished levels of self-confidence.
- Frequent visits to the Health Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains or headaches.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class.
- Choosing the company of adults.
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares.
- Talking of suicide or running away.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms (indeed some are potentially signs of possible abuse), a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

Our responsibilities

We all have a responsibility to keep others safe. We have clear expectations for pupils, staff and parents and the approach taken to any form of bullying. We have agreed as a school community to work together and all take responsibility for behaviour. We will ensure that all young people are supported through our commitment to this policy and working together to tackle bullying and keep children safe in education. As a school we will:



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- Support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly. We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- Ensure staff are trained and equipped with the knowledge and expertise needed to take appropriate action
- Review and reflect on our anti-bullying practice
- Act as role models to the young people in our care and are vital in demonstrating appropriate inclusive behaviour.
- Work with organisations such as the police and children's services as required.
- Welcome feedback from families on the effectiveness of our preventative measures. Parents are encouraged to be a part of the process and can help the School to resolve the issue and reinforce the value of good behaviour at home.

Pupil responsibilities

We hope that pupils will endeavour to abide by the expectations set out in this policy. Here are some other responsibilities that we wish for you to consider:

- Report any concerns around bullying to a member of staff immediately
- Stay strong and know you do not deserve to be bullied
- Talk to friends and stay in our safe spaces
- Seek advice or ways to deal with bullying from staff
- Do not respond to any form of bullying with violence
- Tell an adult if you know someone else is being bullied

Are you bullying others? Most people have bullied someone at some point in their lives. If you are doing this then try to work out why:

- Do you mean to upset or hurt others?
- Do you know when you are bullying?
- Is something making you miserable?
- Talk to someone about this for support and guidance

Bullying behaviour is usually a signal that the perpetrator needs some help too. They are often – afraid, jealous, angry, insecure and unhappy. Everyone can change their behaviour with the right support, so always ask for help.

Parent/carer responsibilities

Ask your child how their day was at school and be aware of any signs of changes in behaviour. Please keep informed, through this policy and information shared with you by school, in order to remain aware of the signs of bullying behaviour and to understand how to report any concerns to school. We would also always welcome your



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contributions to any parental engagement surveys that are shared with you, in order for us to always be reflecting and improving our provision where necessary.

If your child has been bullying other pupils, we will support you in reaching a balanced view of what has happened and ask for your support in helping your child to learn about the consequences of their actions.

We ask parents and carers to help us to ensure online bullying does not occur. Bullying and harassment of staff will not be tolerated online and will result in an exclusion.

Any concerns, however small they may seem, should be discussed with your child's form tutor or Pastoral & Academic Lead (PAL) initially.

Our curriculum

We have an extensive range of learning opportunities delivered through our curriculum that will enrich the personal development of our young people throughout their journey with us. These experiences will help to shape the behaviour of our young people, educate them for the future and enable them to make wiser choices in their interactions with others. They will build and establish the knowledge and skills needed to support their health and wellbeing.

Some examples of how we provide this nourishing through our curriculum are:

- PSHE and RSE programme
- Meeting (Assemblies) and Active Tutor time.
- Anti-Bullying week and further events
- Peer Mentor programme (to be introduced December 2022)
- Embedding our Quaker ethos
- Celebrating and rewarding acts of kindness
- Promoting and raising awareness of inclusion, diversity and equality; eliminating any discrimination or harassment.

Other Preventative Measures

At the School we take the following preventative measures with respect to bullying:

- Staff and older pupils set a good example at school and reinforce the necessity to respect one another. This culture extends throughout the School. The School's Quaker values underpin this process.
- Lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills. The consequences of bullying are clear to all and it is always evident that it is regarded as unacceptable.



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- All of our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place. A positive and healthy relationship between form tutors and tutees helps to make it easy for pupils to report bullying whether it has occurred in or outside the School. Pupils are encouraged to openly discuss the cause of their bullying without fear of further bullying or discrimination.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents.
- We have a strong and experienced team of Tutors, PALS (pastoral and academic leaders) and a Head of Boarding, who support the Deputy Heads and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to the possible signs of bullying. All staff have a role to play in our anti-bullying strategy and this is a regular part of staff training. Where necessary specialised training is offered to staff to help them understand the needs of their pupils.
- We have a counsellor, a mindfulness practitioner and a Quaker Visitor who are an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and wellbeing support. They are available to give confidential advice and support to pupils who can refer themselves to her when they have social, emotional or behavioural concerns.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. If they observe inappropriate language or behaviour they can step in and if necessary, follow the procedure below for dealing with bullying.
- In boarding houses there are strong teams of Assistant House staff supporting the Heads of Houses and the Matrons, who act in loco parentis. The informal house environment is important in reinforcing a pupil's standards and values providing the opportunities for friendly, informal discussion of matters of concern to the individual pupil outside the formal classroom. We encourage close contact between the Heads of House and the parents / guardians, and would always make contact if we were worried about a pupil's well-being.
- 'Initiation ceremonies' are not tolerated and any that may cause pain, anxiety or humiliation will be treated as bullying.
- All pupils have access to a telephone, enabling them to call for support in private.
- We expect all students to adhere to the Computer Acceptable Use Policy contained in the online Pupil Organiser. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department can monitor pupils' use.
- We may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- School staff members authorised to do so by the Head can confiscate an electronic device, such as a mobile phone. Only the Head or Deputy Head can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. There is no need for parental consent to search a student's mobile phone.



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- We offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and online bullying in PSHE and IT lessons, which covers blocking and removing contact. This information is also included in the Pupil Organiser.
- We offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Use of mobile phones is discouraged during the school day.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones is not allowed in washing and changing areas (or in the bedrooms of the boarding houses unless for a boarder's personal use).
- Staff must not use their own mobile phones or other cameras to take photographs within the EYFS setting. Further advice on the taking of photographs and other images is given in the Staff Handbook.
- It is difficult to prevent parents taking photographs of their children at School events, but we are mindful of the potential danger which this poses, and remain vigilant for excessive or unusual activity.
- All staff are made aware of pupils whose photos must not be used in publicity and marketing material.

Responding and Recording Bullying

We have created a 'response to bullying' framework as guidance to recording and reporting any bullying incidents in school. We will deal with every incident of bullying seriously and ensure that our approach is consistent and supportive at all times.

All staff must prioritise the need to keep our young people safe and the wellbeing of all is crucial. We will include the target of bullying as much as possible in the process, keeping them reassured and maintaining contact with parents when required.

- **Step One:** Securing the safety of those involved & informing the PAL or Senior Deputy Head (Academic & Pastoral)
- **Step Two:** Prevent the bullying reoccurring
- **Step Three:** School learning and reflection

Bullying incidents are logged and records are maintained by the PALs, including logs of victims of bullying and identified perpetrators. Incidents of bullying would typically be investigated by the PALs, with the most serious level of bullying automatically involving the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Deputy DSL.

Our 'response to bullying' framework, is available from the pastoral team. It outlines for PALs the approach we take to recording and reporting bullying in school, explains the sanctions that we will put in place to tackle bullying behaviour, including our bullying education programme for repeated perpetrators. This ensures a consistent approach.



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Places and Spaces

Please be reassured that this policy covers a range of places and spaces that bullying may happen. We have worked with our student council to discuss and identify these areas, in addition to providing further safe spaces for young people too. We will not tolerate any forms of bullying behaviour in the following places, with this being reviewed and reflected on too:

- The journey to and from school
- The local community
- In school
- Any extracurricular activities e.g. sports clubs and trips
- Online cyberbullying

Cyberbullying

Although bullying or cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, there are laws that can apply – for e.g. in terms of menacing and threatening communications, or harassment. Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the protection from Harassment Act 1997 and there have been some instances of such prosecutions in the UK. For further information, please visit the [Cyberbullying and the Law](#) section of the ABA website.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Head the power, ‘to such an extent that is reasonable’, to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are offsite.

School staff members authorised to do so by the Head can confiscate an electronic device, such as a mobile phone or iPad. Only the Head or Deputy Head can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. There is no need for parental consent to search a student’s mobile phone/iPad.

If, however, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that an electronic device which has been confiscated, contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device will be given to the police. Material that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, must not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

If the Head or Deputy Head find material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of School discipline.

Further support and help



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In some serious cases, a young person exhibiting bullying behaviour or being bullied will have more complex needs around their social and emotional behaviour. They may require on-to-one intervention as part of a package of support. Other organisations that can help include:

Kidscape - <http://www.kidscape.org.uk>

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) - <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk>

Get Connected - <http://www.getconnected.org.uk>

The Samaritans - <http://www.samaritans.org>

National Children's Bureau - <http://www.ncb.org.uk>

ChildLine - <http://www.childline.org.uk>