

For this we stand:
to search for truth;
to live in love;
to grow together.



"Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is Jesus Christ"

Ephesians 4

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

BISHOP WORDSWORTH'S SCHOOL

Definitions:

'Is to', 'are to' and 'must' are obligatory. 'Should' is not obligatory but is good practice and is to be adhered to unless non-compliance can be justified.

1. **Policy.** An awareness of both the existence of different types of bullying, the potentially devastating impact it can have on individuals, and of strategies with which to combat it, is essential in a civilised and tolerant environment. The bully makes the victim's life miserable and intolerable by means of insinuation, verbal assault or physical violence. As a Church school, we approach incidents of bullying within the context of our Ethos Statement. The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy also covers some related matters, including the recognition that bullying constitutes child-on-child abuse. The School does not tolerate bullying in any form. Safeguarding procedures may be followed in order to best protect children and measures will be taken against any individuals or groups of individuals who engage in such activity.

2. **Content.** There is no legal definition of bullying, but it is here defined as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time and intended to harm either physically or emotionally. Some individuals may be more prone to bullying, including those with SEND and health issues, children who are LGBT and children from racial or religious minorities. Often motivated by prejudice, actual or perceived differences between children, or actual or perceived power imbalance between children, it can take many forms. Some of the more common types are:

- a. Covert/Alienation – excluding someone from social groups, encouraging others to do the same, giving looks or glances designed to intimidate or unsettle, encouraging others to have a poor opinion of someone
- b. Verbal – use of name-calling, insulting, derogatory, prejudice-based or discriminatory remarks or language, including threats.
- c. Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings, damaging personal property.
- d. Prejudice-based/discriminatory bullying – any type of bullying which is motivated by hostility towards certain individuals or groups due to disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or other perceived difference
- e. Cyber Bullying – any of the above forms of bullying enacted through technology; use of text messages or web spaces/e-mails/blogs etc to either send offensive materials or post them for others to view.

3. Included within this definition is behaviour that is homophobic, bi-phobic or directed against transgender members of the school community.
4. Misogynistic and sexist language and behaviour is also included – whether this is expressed face to face or in digital form.
5. Repeated behaviour that targets someone because of their race or religion is also likely to meet the definition of bullying.
6. Some forms of bullying are illegal. These include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, threatening behaviour or communications, and hate crimes. It also includes encouraging someone to carry out serious self-harm. If the School suspects any illegal conduct, staff will seek assistance from the police.
7. It is considered that the isolated angry remark, made when tempers have flared and a temporary loss of control has resulted, is highly regrettable. However, it is important to recognise that this is not the same as persistent and/or calculated acts committed for the purpose of making an individual or group of individuals unhappy, fearful etc.
8. Much bullying is “unconscious” in the sense that the “bully” may simply not appreciate the effect of his conduct on others: a “bit of fun” may be a source of untold misery for the individual on the receiving end. This type of “bully” is not usually a vindictive individual; more typically he will be an ebullient, dominant, and often physically mature student who lacks the social maturity to perceive the impact of certain forms of conduct upon others. Staff can be most effective in dealing with this type of bullying and often little further action is required. Bullying is often hard to identify and the question of how to respond to it can be difficult: it is a matter requiring considerable care and tact on the part of the teacher. However, all complaints of bullying are to be investigated thoroughly and the appropriate persons informed if a significant problem appears to exist or to be developing. Any parental concerns to the School should be treated with the greatest seriousness.
9. All staff have a role to play in combating bullying. It is not only the responsibility of the form tutor to be vigilant but also subject teachers, staff on duty and support staff.
10. Cyber bullying can be a pervasive problem which is difficult to tackle and (sometimes) difficult to detect. Cases of cyber bullying may be dealt with as if the offence was perpetrated in School irrespective of where and when the materials are posted. When an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been confiscated by a member of staff (see Behaviour Policy Annexe A), that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. There is no requirement to have parental consent to search through a young person’s mobile phone. If the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that the device contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be handed over to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable. Material suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child, or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted before being given to the police. If material is found which the staff member does 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 (Education Act 2011).
11. Serious cases of bullying will be dealt with by the appropriate pastoral staff. Further action will be taken within the guidelines of the School’s Behaviour policy.
12. It is recognised that bullying often does not stop at the school gates. The School has the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises if it is deemed reasonable for the school to regulate students’ behaviour in those circumstances (as specified in the Behaviour Policy and Sections 90 and 91, Education & Inspections Act,

2006). This may include bullying incidents occurring off school premises such as on school or public transport, outside local shops or in a town or village centre.

13. A parent who suspects that their child is being bullied should contact the Head of Year. Students are encouraged to raise any issues with their tutor, Head of Year, Head of School, the Chaplain or any trusted adult. Additionally, students may use The Student Voice to submit a concern.

14. The School adopts a whole school response to vigilance for bullying and it is necessary for all staff and students to be pro-active and sensitive to manner in which others conduct themselves.

15. Procedure

- a. Where there is a suspicion or report of bullying, the alleged victim's tutor and Head of Year, are to be alerted Heads of Year are to consult with the tutors (of both victim and bully) and deal with the incident as appropriate.
- b. If appropriate, an investigation is to begin immediately.
- c. Statements are to be taken from the alleged victim, alleged bully and any witnesses. CCTV may also be consulted. The School should consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police. If the misbehaviour is criminal or poses a threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.
- d. Parents (of both victim and perpetrator) are to be informed.
- e. Sanctions may be imposed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- f. Awareness of the causes and effects of bullying are to be promoted through restorative conversation with students, and the tutorial and assembly programme.
- g. Heads of School are regularly to remind students that bullying is not acceptable in this School.

16. **Monitoring.** Heads of School, in consultation with their tutorial teams, are to review practice on a regular basis, in the light of known incidents of bullying. The Policy is formally reviewed annually by Governors:

25 th February 2025	Separation into a separate policy from the Behaviour Policy
4 th March 2026	Review; Updates to cyberbullying policy in line with KSCIE 2025