

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Last Review: June 2023

Committee: PSW

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1. Rationale

- 1.1 Oldfield School is a friendly and inclusive learning community where everyone has the right to study and work in a safe and secure environment, without harassment, intimidation or fear.
- 1.2 Oldfield School seeks to create a safe environment in which all members of the school community feel supported and free from bullying; we are working with staff, students and parents to create a school where bullying is not tolerated.
- 1.3 We believe that to realise their potential and achieve their aspirations, people need to feel happy, confident and included in their environment.
- 1.4 Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence, sense of self-worth and can prevent them from reaching their potential and have serious consequences for their mental health.

2. Aims

- 2.1 We will aim to reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which students are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy and respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to us.
- 2.2 This policy establishes a means of dealing with bullying and of providing support to those who have been bullied, as well as guidance to those who are accused of bullying and may be experiencing problems of their own.
- 2.3 All types of bullying are harmful and can prevent students achieving their academic and personal potential.
- 2.4 This policy follows the guidance in the DfE, 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders and Governing Bodies and is in keeping with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations' 2014, the Education Act 2011 and the Equality Act 2010. It reflects Oldfield School's commitment to upholding the Bullying – A Charter for Action publication.
- 2.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;
 - Online Safety;
 - ICT and Acceptable Use of electronic devices;
 - Behaviour for Learning;
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection;

- Code of Conduct for Staff;
- Bullying and Harassment (staff);
- Single Equalities Scheme;
- SEND.

3. Practice: Definitions

3.1 The National Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

‘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’.

3.2 Bullying can be:

- physical – hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another’s belongings;
- verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks indirectly;
- cyber-bullying - inappropriate text messaging, social media or gaming, emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping;
- excluding people from social groups; spreading hurtful and/or untruthful rumours.

3.3 Pupils can be bullied for a variety of reasons. Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture;
- bullying related to SEN or disabilities;
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions;
- bullying related to sexual orientation (including the use of homophobic or transphobic language);
- bullying of young carers, looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- sexist or sexual bullying.

3.4 The school holds the view that there is no 'hierarchy' of bullying — all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

3.5 The school recognises that bullying can be done by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. Even if the bullying takes place outside of school, it can have a negative impact on the behaviour within school and will be dealt with accordingly.

3.6 The school recognises that bullying someone because of their disability, transgender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes and can be reported to the police.

3.7 Cyberbullying is defined as bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved.

3.8 The school has a duty of care to all students that extends beyond the classroom, although it is not always able to control bullying actions on social media sites or outside of school hours.

3.9 The school recognises in line with DfE guidance that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This can involve the perpetrator having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for the victim to defend themselves. We recognise that this imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways including;

- physically;
- psychologically (knowing what upsets a person);
- coming from an intellectual imbalance;
- having the capacity to socially isolate another;
- resulting in the intimidation of a student/s through the threat of violence or by isolation either physically or online.

4. Preventing Bullying

4.1 There are many ways to prevent bullying. Strategies employed include the following;

- a highly visible staff presence at breaktime, lunchtime, before and after school;
- an ongoing theme in assemblies / PSHE lessons / tutor time;
- the House system encourages tolerance, respect, support and care across the years / ages of the students within the School;
- promoting careful use of language, challenging 'banter' and racist language and instilling a collective understanding of the power of words which can cause harm to others if used in the wrong way;
- using specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems;
- providing staff training - this includes helping our staff understand the needs of students, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual, non-binary and transgender (LGBTQ+) students;
- working with the wider community such as the police and social care where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed;
- making it easy for students to report bullying;
- provide support and advice for parents and students.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 All staff will:

- foster our students' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our students;
- be alert to the signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying (see appendix 1);
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- report suspected cases of bullying to the relevant tutor / Head of Year/ SLT link;
- follow any complaint by a parent about bullying and report back promptly and fully on the action taken;
- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

5.2 We expect our students to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying;
- report any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying to a member of staff.

5.3 We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying, advising their children to report any bullying to their tutor, and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other students;
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying. If this occurs a sanction will be imposed;
- being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- co-operating with the school if their child is/children are accused of bullying; trying to ascertain the truth and pointing out the implications of bullying both for the children who are bullied and the bullies themselves.

6. Responding to Bullying

6.1 Oldfield School will always aim to tackle reported instances of bullying in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.

6.2 Our primary aim is to prevent and/or stop any continuation of the harmful behaviour to safeguard the student who has experienced bullying, and to trigger sources of support.

6.3 The perpetrator can expect sanctions to be applied (Appendix 6), but it is perhaps more important that they learn from the experience and develop their own emotional intelligence. The school recognises that bullying is multi-faceted, regularly involving groups; often impacted by wider peer culture, and too often involving vulnerable children who both bully and are bullied. The school will in the event of an allegation and/or disclosure endeavour to investigate why the perpetrator carried out the bullying and provide sources of support for them to address the causes. This may include referrals to outside agencies where appropriate.

6.4 In the event of an allegation and / or disclosure we would seek to;

- establish a supportive and safe environment;
- reassure the student for disclosing;
- appreciate victim's need to see that positive action is taken;
- inform parents;
- when appropriate give feedback and ongoing support to the victim;
- when appropriate sanction the perpetrator;

- when appropriate recognise the need for providing ongoing support, using agencies to bring about a lasting change of behaviour in the perpetrator;
- use restorative approaches to repair the relationship where appropriate to do so.

6.5 The following procedure should be followed where a student discloses to a member of staff or a member of staff suspects bullying

- 1. The member of staff takes a statement from the student and passes the information on to the tutor. If appropriate the Head of Year (HOY) and the SLT link will be informed;
- 2. The alleged perpetrator is interviewed by the tutor or HOY or SLT link without bias, but encouraging them to be honest, open and expressive. A written statement is taken;
- 3. Friends/colluders/witnesses are interviewed separately by the tutor, HOY or SLT link. A written statement is taken from all involved;
- 4. Depending on the severity of the situation, findings are discussed with the victim and parents are updated;
- 5. If appropriate, the perpetrator and the victim plus friends/colluders are brought together to discuss how to resolve the situation using a restorative approach;
- 6. If the alleged perpetrator is found to be responsible for the bullying, an appropriate disciplinary sanction will be served in line with the stepped approach towards bullying as outlined in Appendix 6 – Bullying Stages; this is recorded on CPOMS and parents are informed.
- 7. If appropriate, the victim and/or perpetrator are provided with ongoing support (Appendix 6) This could include referral to outside agencies e.g. Off the Record Listening/Counselling Service, School Nursing Service, Stand Against Racism (SARI), Black Families Support. This is completed in consultation with the student and their parents/carers.

6.6. Bullying outside school premises

As a school we have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incident that occurs anywhere off the school premises, such as on public transport or outside the local shops.

6.6.1 Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and dealt within the same manner as outlined in 6.4 and 6.5 of this policy.

6.6.2 The headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police if the bullying could be criminal in nature.

6.7 Cyber bullying

The rapid development of and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur inside or outside of school. As a school we follow the guidance as outlined in the Education Act to tackle cyber bullying.

6.7.1 In cases of cyber bullying if appropriate we will search a student for, and if necessary, delete inappropriate images (files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

6.7.2 If appropriate the police will be notified of the incident to investigate further.

7. Monitoring incidents of Bullying

The school monitors incidents of bullying in a number of ways:

- CPOMS identifies incidents of bullying;
- Key staff analyse the data in relation to age groups, locations and patterns of occurrence;
- Regular reviews are undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the school's actions in reducing the incidents of bullying in school. A regular review of the Anti-Bullying Policy takes place involving all stakeholders;
- A designated member of the governing body is responsible for monitoring anti-bullying procedures in school.

Appendix 1 Guidance for teachers and parents on recognising signs of bullying -

Students may show one or more of the following behaviours:

- be frightened of walking to or from school;
- be unwilling to go to school and develop unidentifiable illnesses like a stomach ache;
- change their route to school, deliberately avoiding certain places and times;
- start underachieving in their school work or opt out of activities and clubs;
- come home regularly with clothes or books damaged or destroyed;
- become withdrawn and or distressed;
- become more aggressive and argumentative;
- experience disturbed sleep;
- have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts;
- have their possessions go 'missing';
- ask for money or begin stealing money;
- refuse to say what's wrong;
- become more reclusive and/or give improbable excuses to explain any of the above;
- be over generous towards another child because they are frightened not to be their friend.

Appendix 2 Guidance on recognising if a student has been bullying others

This can be difficult to ascertain, but any of the following may be indicators:

- They may have access to more money than usual;
- There might be changes in their views;
- They may openly express negative comments and feelings about individual people or groups, e.g. making racists or homophobic insults;
- This may be reflected in graffiti around the house, on books and on paper;
- There might be changes in behaviour. For example, becoming more verbally aggressive or displaying unusual mood changes;
- They may have new or different belongings that they didn't buy with unlikely reasons for having these;
- They may become more secretive particularly involving communication technology, which could hold images or text of their behaviour.

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Appendix 3 Possible signs of cyberbullying

It is not always easy to spot the signs of cyberbullying as it can happen all the time, which is a feature that makes it different from other forms of bullying. Be alert to a change in your child's behaviour, for example:

- Being upset after using the internet or their mobile phone;
- Unwilling to talk or secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use;
- Spending much more or much less time texting, gaming or using social media;
- Many new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses show up on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet;
- After texting or being online they may seem withdrawn, upset or outraged;
- Not wanting to go to school and/or avoiding meeting friends and school mates;
- Avoiding formerly enjoyable social situations;
- Difficulty sleeping;
- Low self-esteem.

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Appendix 4 Contact details for further support and advice for students, parents and carers:

Government Guidance

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

BULLYING

Anti-Bullying Alliance - <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

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 ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/working-parents-and-carers>

Bullying UK - <https://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/>

Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP): <http://ceop.police.uk>

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk> Telephone: 0800 11 11

Childline has helped hundreds of thousands of children and young people in trouble or danger. If you or a child do not want to ring them, check out their website. There are fact sheets on many subjects including bullying.

Digizen online resource for students and parents <http://www.digizen.org/>

Don't Suffer in Silence: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/bullying>

Diana Award (Anti-Bullying organisation) - <https://diana-award.org.uk/>

Open Monday to Friday between 10 am and 4 pm. They provide leaflets and booklets about bullying and information and support to young people and their parents, including action steps to take.

Internet Matters - <https://www.internetmatters.org/>

Useful site for support for parents supporting a child through cyber bullying.

Kidscape - cyberbullying resources <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/cyberbullying/>

NSPCC - bullying and cyberbullying resources [Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/keeping-children-safe-articles/helping-children-deal-with-bullying-and-cyberbullying/)

Parentline Plus: <http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk>

This website gives advice for parents on supporting a child who is being bullied. There is a free phone helpline (0808 800 2222) that adults can call. (Parentline does not deal exclusively with bullying issues)

South West Grid for Learning <https://swgfl.org.uk/>

UK Safer Internet Centre - where you can find e-safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe online <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

LGBTQ+

Barnardos – offers guidance to students, parents and teachers on how to support LGBTQ students and tackle LGBTQ prejudice based bullying

http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm

Stonewall A LGB equality organisation. <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

SEND

Information, Advice and Support Service Network: Every local area has an information, advice and support service, providing information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/information-advice-and-support-services-network/about/what-do-ias-services-do>

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people. <https://www.mencap.org.uk/>

RACE, RELIGION AND NATIONALITY

Educate Against Hate: provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

<https://educateagainsthate.com/>

http://report-it.org.uk/your_police_force provides support and information for all stakeholders on how to report hate crime.

Kick It Out: Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools. <http://www.kickitout.org/>

Appendix 5 Guidance and Advice for school staff

The DfE , Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for School Leaders and Governing Bodies:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

The Equality Act 2010: <https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Cyberbullying: Advice for schools

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf

Counselling in schools a blueprint for the future: advice for school leaders and counsellors

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counselling-in-schools>

Anti-Bullying Alliance - [Top tips for teachers and school staff | Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)

Childnet International - **cyberbullying guidance for schools**

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-guidance-for-schools>

Childnet International - **resources for teachers and professionals**

<https://www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals>

Think u Know : <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/>

Schools Out <http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources: Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying. <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/groups-more-likely-experience-bullying/sen-disability>

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse. <https://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf>

MIND ED – practical online resources to support staff and develop their knowledge and understanding of mental health issues. <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

Appendix 6 – Bullying sanctions - stages

The school follows a stepped approach to sanctioning students who bully others. This is line with and should be read in conjunction the 'Behaviour for Learning' policy.

Stage	Example of bullying offence	Possible sanctions awarded
Stage 1	First offence of name calling.	C1 sanction such as discussion with student / break/ lunchtime detention. Parents/carers of both victim and perpetrator informed.
Stage 2	Repetition of first offence of the same/different student and /or a more significant first offence e.g. verbal/physical threat, racist or homophobic language. Classified as a bullying incident.	C2 sanction such as an after-school detention / SLT detention / internal exclusion. Parents/carers of both victim and perpetrator informed. Victim offered additional support. Perpetrator meets with Assistant Head of Year (AHOY) to reflect on the reasons for bullying. Additional support offered if appropriate.
Stage 3	Persistent bullying of the same/different student/s. Classified as a bullying incident.	C3 sanction such as an internal exclusion. Meeting held with the parent/carer of perpetrator. Parents/carers of the victim informed. Victim offered additional support; this may include a referral to outside agencies for ongoing support. Perpetrator receives ongoing support via AHOY (minimum 4 weeks). Referral to outside agency support made if appropriate.
Stage 4	Continuation of bullying despite the previous interventions/sanctions. Classified as a bullying incident.	C4 sanction such as a suspension. Meeting held with the parents/carers of perpetrator. Parents/carers of the victim informed. Victim offered additional support; this may include a referral to outside agencies for ongoing support. Perpetrator receives ongoing support via AHOY (minimum 8 weeks). Referral to outside agency support made. Additional meetings with parents/carers of perpetrator to review progress.
Stage 5	A student who receives further suspensions for bullying despite the previous interventions/ sanctions could be permanently excluded at this point.	