

Anti-Bullying Policy

[Paragraph 10, Part 3 ISSR]

Bablake Junior and Pre-Prep Schools

Author	Designated Safeguarding Lead
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Related Policies, Procedures, and/or Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School's Behaviour Policy ▪ Equal Opportunities Policy ▪ PSHE Policy ▪ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy ▪ CSF's Exclusion Policy
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VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Amendment(s) Or Formal Review	Date [Month/Year]	Summary of change(s)
1.0	Formal Review	November 2023	Formal Review and Approval at Full Governing Board
1.1	Update	April 2024	Updated Role Descriptors / Titles; Converted to new policy template and structure. New branding. Reviewed by Heads.



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This policy also applies to all pupils at Bablake Pre-Prep, including those in Early Years.

Introduction

1.1 We strive to create a whole school positive culture in which all members of the school communities feel safe and assured, and treat each other with respect and politeness, particularly with regard to individual differences. To this end, bullying will be eradicated.

1.2 This policy should be read and understood in the context of our Behaviour Policy, our Equal Opportunities Policy, and our approaches to personal, social, and health (PSHE or PSED) education.

1.3 This policy has been written in the context of our responsibilities under:

- The Equality Act 2010. The Act makes it unlawful in England and Wales for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, exclude them or subject them to any other detriment.
- The Independent School Standards Regulations 2014.

1.4 A bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Should this be the case, staff will follow the procedures within their school Safeguarding Policy in dealing with the concern.

1.5 External services may be accessed to tackle any underlying issues which have contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

1.6 This policy applies to all pupils including those in Early Years.

Defining bullying

2.1 The 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”. The power imbalance makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves. It may be motivated by prejudice. Bullying may be physically seen or felt, experienced online or psychologically, and includes social isolation or intimidation, as well as any violent threat.

2.2 Bullying can take many forms, including:

- **Cyber:** using electronic communications including email, mobile phones, text/multimedia messaging, photographs/video, online profiling, websites, social networks, and instant messaging. This is done with the intent to frighten, embarrass or harass the victim. This can happen at any time of day in some of our schools with a wide audience and more accessories through the sharing of the contents;
- **Disability:** because of, or focusing on, the issue of a person’s disability;
- **Emotional:** isolating, being unfriendly, upsetting (e.g. hiding items, threatening gestures);

- **Homophobic or Transphobic:** bullying a person due to, or focusing on, the issues of sexuality and/or gender identity;
- **Physical:** slapping, barging, pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence inflicted on another individual;
- **Racist/Cultural/Religious:** racial, cultural or religious taunts, comments or gestures;
- **Sexual:** sexually harassing and/or abusive taunts, comments or gestures; and
- **Verbal:** name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours.

It is our view that bullying is a choice of behaviour by the individual(s) and that anyone can be supported to change their behaviour.

2.3 Our schools should be inclusive environments, where differences are respected, and diversity is welcomed in all members of our communities and in society generally.

2.4 Our schools provide a safe environment and dealing with bullying is a key aspect for all members of the school to deal with. Pupils have the right to feel safe, secure and valued.

2.5 We support a range of positive strategies to deal with bullying. Reducing bullying through fear, humiliation or ridicule is employing the same mechanisms used by some bullies. As such, we actively challenge these approaches.

2.6 Bullying is extremely serious, as shown by the tragic experiences of some victims. It can result in long-term psychological trauma and, in extreme cases, suicide. It is often motivated by prejudice, for example, targeting race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, special educational needs and/or disability, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.

2.7 Bullying is not a criminal offence. However, criminal laws in the UK are relevant to harassment and threatening behaviour. If a criminal offence might have been committed, our staff will seek assistance from the police.

2.8 School trips visits are a regular part of school life, and this policy applies in full when pupils are off site, on work connected to the school. Additionally, teachers have a power to discipline pupils in a reasonable way for conduct on and off the school premises. As such, any bullying incidents occurring off the premises, such as on public transport, school buses or in the local community, will fall under this policy and be treated accordingly. If the matter involves criminal activity, the police will always be informed.

2.9 Bullying which is deemed to be illegal must be reported to the police.



Objectives

3.1 Our policy is implemented whenever the school is responsible for the conduct and welfare of its pupils. The Senior Leadership Team and all staff are responsible for its implementation.

3.2 Our objectives are to:

- Ensure pupils understand fully what is meant by bullying and to understand that bullying in any form will not be tolerated by the school community;
- Make it simple for pupils to report bullying so that they feel confident that they will be listened to, and incidents acted upon;
- Ensure parents feel confident that bullying incidents will be firmly dealt with by the school;
- Provide a safe environment and promote an inclusive ethos in the school where pupils can discuss the cause of bullying without fear of further bullying or discrimination;
- Raise staff awareness of the presence of different types of bullying, and an awareness of groups of pupils who are bullied disproportionately;
- Establish guidelines for action where bullying is evident;
- Develop a range of effective strategies for pupils to learn about moral and social issues;
- Ensure pupils are able to explain how we expect them to behave; and
- Celebrate success as an important way of creating a positive school ethos around anti-bullying.

Our Procedures

4.1 Effective staff training is an important aspect of our work to prevent and tackle bullying, including the different types of bullying. All staff will have relevant training annually and understand the importance of this policy. In particular, our Senior Leadership Teams ensure that all staff understand the principles and purpose of the Foundation's policy, the legal responsibilities, how to resolve problems and where to seek support.

4.2 We all understand that bullying can occur in any school and that we have a responsibility to be vigilant for incidents, especially at times and in places where it is more likely to occur. We ensure that the physical layout of our buildings and our safety mechanisms, such as CCTV, all help to discourage and reduce the risk of bullying. 'Pupil voice' is used as a means of understanding the scope of where it might be prevalent.

4.3 Staff are supported to feel confident to consistently tackle all forms of bullying and pupils are empowered to say "no" to bullying, especially should they be observing or peripheral.

4.4 If a member of staff suspects that bullying is taking place, or a disclosure is made to them about an incident of bullying, they should always consult a senior member of staff. Under the guidance of a senior staff member, an age-appropriate investigation will take place. Separate meetings, at which all conversations should be recorded in writing, should be arranged with those involved to establish their version of events and assure them that the situation will be dealt with sensitively but firmly and fully.

4.5 Parents of both parties are always kept fully informed about how the alleged bullying is being handled.



4.6 Bullying behaviour will often be addressed through the provision of counselling for all parties involved, and a sanction in keeping with the school's Behaviour Policy. A proven allegation of serious bullying will result in suspension or exclusion, with the possible involvement of the police. Following the incident, a senior staff member oversees the monitoring of the situation, liaising directly with the relevant teacher to check that further bullying is not occurring.

4.7 Parents are asked to keep the school and staff informed of any concerns and encourage their child to report any incidents immediately to an appropriate staff member. The Head will ensure that the incident and any action taken are formally recorded in the behaviour incident log.

Preventative Strategies

5.1 As schools providing opportunities for success for all, we create an environment that prevents bullying from being a serious problem in the first place.

5.2 Staff are proactive in gathering pastoral information about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict. Hence, actions can be taken, and strategies developed to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. The curriculum offers scope to talk with pupils about issues of difference. Events such as special assemblies are also used to emphasise the school attitudes. We keep lines of communication open, so pupils feel included.

5.3 We are aware that schools which excel at tackling bullying have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, British values, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment. We reinforce these messages through the behaviour and attitudes of our staff, who set an excellent example.

Successful Intervention Strategies

6.1 We apply sanction measures to pupils who bully in order to demonstrate to them and the wider community that their behaviour is wrong. In accordance with our Behaviour Policy, we apply sanctions fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities that pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

6.2 We carefully consider the motivating factors which may have influenced the bullying behaviour and whether it indicates any concerns for the safety and/or safeguarding needs of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in the bullying behaviour may need support themselves.

6.3 We involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and that they are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. We make sure that our parents feel confident that we will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way which protects the child.



6.4 We involve pupils so they understand our approach towards bullying and so they are clear in the part they have to play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

6.5 We annually evaluate our approach and ensure that our policy and practice is up to date.

6.6 We make sure that the consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.

6.7 We teach pupils that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

6.8 We work with the wider community, such as the police and children's services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.

6.9 We make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they feel assured that they will be listened to, and incidents acted upon.

6.10 We draw on the expertise of specialist organisations with a proven track record in dealing with bullying to ensure our practices are effective and keep children safe.

6.11 We ensure that notices are placed around school which provide appropriate telephone numbers and email addresses for children to contact organisations such as ChildLine, Kidscape and CEOP.

6.12 We listen to our pupils' voice at all times and act accordingly.

6.13 We aim to use restorative approaches in school which focus on reconciliation with those who have been harmed. This enables all those affected by any incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward, enabling everyone to prevent conflict and build relationships.

Our Procedures

7.1 The immediate priority is to stop the bullying, so instances will be dealt with without delay. The schools take the standpoint that most pupils involved in bullying do not intend to cause significant harm. As a first recourse, those who bully will be counselled by pastoral staff, an appeal will be made to 'better nature' and a commitment to correct the behaviour will be elicited. The bully should apologise to the victim.

7.2 It is important for the school to understand the motivation behind any bullying and whether it reveals any cause for concern about the safety of the perpetrator. This is because the bully may need support themselves.

7.3 In serious or persistent cases, parents should be informed and may be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem and, if necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted. All attempts will be made to help the bully or bullies change their behaviour. This may include referral to outside agencies or specialist programmes of support.

7.4 Our school uses restorative practice which includes a facilitated meeting being held to enable individuals and groups to work together to improve their mutual understanding of what has taken place and to jointly agree the best solution moving forwards. Sometimes a less formal approach is used with the same principles in place, depending on the nature of the incident. Restorative practice

provides an opportunity for everyone to reflect on how they interact with each other and consider how best to prevent harm and conflict, recognising everyone has a part to play and is responsible as such.

7.5 The most obvious strategy is the use of disciplinary sanctions and learning programmes to deal with those pupils who are found to be bullying. Such disciplinary measures have three main purposes, namely to:

- Impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable;
- Deter him/her from repeating that behaviour; and
- Signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing the same or similar.

7.6 Sanctions for bullying are intended to hold pupils who bully to account for their behaviour and to ensure that they face up to the harm that they have caused and learn from it. They also provide an opportunity for the pupil to put right the harm they have caused. Sanctions available are detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy and will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. Ultimately, bullies will not be tolerated at this school and permanent exclusion (expulsion) will be used if, at the Head's discretion, it is considered appropriate and that the relevant procedures have been followed accordingly.

7.7 Incidents of bullying will be recorded by relevant pastoral staff. This will enable patterns to be identified, and keeping records of bullying incidents will also enable the school to:

- Manage individual cases effectively;
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies;
- Celebrate the anti-bullying work of the school; and
- Respond effectively and swiftly to concerns from parents.

7.8 We have powers to search included within the Education Act 2011 to tackle cyber-bullying, including, where necessary, deletion of inappropriate images or files on electronic devices, including mobile phones. We use this power under the specific authority of the Heads only and where there is good reason to do so, i.e. that it could be used to harm children, disrupt teaching or break the school rules. We do not search pupils in a blanket fashion.

Monitoring and Evaluation

8.1 Each Head is responsible for maintaining a behaviour log which includes instances of bullying.

8.2 The Heads are responsible for the implementation of this policy and for reviewing from time to time to evaluate its implementation and impact.

8.3 Heads report on behaviour and bullying at governance meetings. This forms the monitoring and evaluation function of the governing body.



8.4 Where there are concerns regarding the school's approach to dealing with bullying, these will be explored by the Safeguarding lead governor.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy may need to be read in conjunction with the following Foundation/School policies:

- School's Behaviour Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- CSF's Exclusion Policy

And/or with reference to the following legislation or governance provisions:

- The Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSR).
- Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) - Para 10, Part 3 ISSR – Welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Education Act 2011.

Review, Approval and Publication

The DSL has strategic oversight of this policy which is reviewed every year unless otherwise required owing to a change in policy/legislation or guidance; once reviewed, the policy is presented to the Education Oversight Committee for their formal recommendation to present it to the Full Governing Board for final approval.

This Policy will also be made available to parents/carers via the Schools' website; and, published to the ISI Portal.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this policy.

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