

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## [Paragraph 10, Part 3 ISSR]

### Bablake Senior School

<b>Author</b>	Designated Safeguarding Lead
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<b>Regulatory / Statutory Authority(ies)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSR).</li> <li>▪ Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) - Para 10, Part 3 ISSR – Welfare, health and safety of pupils.</li> <li>▪ Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023.</li> </ul>
<b>Related Policies, Procedures, and/or Documentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School’s Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy</li> <li>▪ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy</li> <li>▪ CSF’s Exclusion Policy</li> <li>▪ Acceptable Use (of ICT) Policy (AUP)</li> <li>▪ Life Choices Policy</li> </ul>
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#### VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Amendment(s) Or Formal Review	Date [Month/Year]	Summary of change(s)
1.0	Formal Review	September 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. Reviewed by Head.

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Policy review/updates are highlighted in **yellow**.



## I INTRODUCTION

**As a school we believe that the pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.**

The long-term effect of persistent bullying can make young people feel unhappy, insecure, threatened, excluded and isolated. It may cause them to have low self-esteem so that they become withdrawn, anxious, or reluctant to attend school and less willing to take social, intellectual or vocational risks.

## 2 DEFINITION OF BULLYING

**Bullying is when an individual pupil or group of pupils, through repeated, wilful, deliberate, conscious actions cause other pupils to feel hurt, distressed, intimidated and/or fearful.**

Bullying can take many forms and each type is not exclusive: -

- **Physical** - including physical violence, damage to belongings, threats and extortion.
- **Verbal** - in particular name-calling, insulting comments (about the individual and/or their family), malicious teasing, offensive remarks, humiliation.
- **Emotional** - in particular indirect – spreading malicious rumours, excluding individuals from social groups by deliberately leaving them out or influencing/encouraging others to do so, inappropriate body language, invasion of space.
- **Cyberbullying** - inappropriate/offensive phone calls/text messaging/emails/messaging or photographs/video messaging via the internet or mobile phone.

In addition, **racial, religious, sexual, homophobic bullying** and **bullying related to disability or transgender** are unacceptable.

## 3 CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Bullying behaviour is recognised as one form of 'Child on Child Abuse'. 'Child on Child Abuse' is defined as abuse by children towards other children; boy on boy, girl on girl, girl on boy or boy on girl. 'Child on Child Abuse' is never to be tolerated or passed off as banter. Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- **Bullying** (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- **Abuse** in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- **Physical abuse** such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);

- **Sexual violence**, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- **Sexual harassment**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Causing someone to **engage in sexual activity without consent**, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- **Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos** (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- **Upskirting**, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- **Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals** (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All child on child abuse will be managed in accordance with Bablake's Child Protection Policy and a bullying incident of this nature, will be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. In such cases it will warrant a response under Child Protection procedures rather than the Foundation's Exclusions Policy.

This Anti-Bullying Policy is reinforced by the School's Behaviour and School Code of Conduct Policy, through the Acceptable Use Policy, by the Life Choices Policy and is also reflected in the school ethos. It is also reinforced through tutorial time, questionnaires, the Life Choices Programme, the Peer Support system, assemblies, staff meetings and the Pastoral Care system. The school seeks to promote good citizenship, positive relationships and to make the school community aware of the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour is antisocial, is damaging to the individual, is wrong and will not be tolerated at Bablake.

#### 4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To create a caring, supportive, happy, safe environment where pupils can learn effectively and develop as valued individuals.
- To develop a culture in which bullying or peer on peer abuse is not tolerated and is challenged.
- To encourage pupils who are bullied, those who witness bullying and those who hear about incidents of bullying to speak out and to report them to an adult.
- To investigate incidents of bullying (and alleged bullying) fully and to effect the school disciplinary procedures if necessary.
- To work with parents, victims and the bully/bullies – recognising that in different ways all parties may require support.

## 5 REPORTING BULLYING

- The school encourages pupils to **'Speak Out'** as bullying thrives in a climate of silence. Pupils who are being bullied or onlookers who have witnessed bullying should report the incident as soon as possible. In the first instance, pupils should speak to their Form Tutor or any member of staff they feel comfortable with, including the School Nurses, or members of Support Staff. Form Prefects or Peer Supporters will also offer support.
- The trusted adult must report the incident to the DSL via My Concern software which can be found on the staff intranet.

### 5.1 Procedure

- Where an allegation of bullying has been reported a senior lead will be appointed to manage a child on child abuse investigation (in accordance with procedures as found on the staff intranet).
- In cases of cyberbullying pupils should keep relevant evidence for any investigation e.g. saving text messages, taking screen capture shots, printing out conversations and noting web addresses. These should be given to the member of staff to whom the incident is reported.
- After discussion and when it is clear that bullying has taken place, the appropriate measures/ sanctions in line with the School's Behaviour and School Code of Conduct Policy and Acceptable Use Policy will be actioned. Incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the School Behaviour Policy but will likely range from a Deputy Head Detention to Permanent Exclusion. If deemed appropriate, restorative practice will be implemented in line with the school's reconciliation principles and ICON status.
- We would anticipate where there have been disagreements or minor conflict between peers that the Form Tutor can take the lead by empathising and coaching those concerned. More serious or repeated incidents will be referred to the Year Head/ Deputy Head, DSL or, if necessary, the Head.
- At the first level, parents will be informed at the discretion of the Form Tutor. In cases of persistent bullying the parents/carers of the pupil will always be informed.
- Should a pupil be suspected of involvement in an incident of cyberbullying which is serious in nature and may require in depth investigation the pupil's mobile phone may be confiscated and, if appropriate, searched.
- Should the content of cyberbullying be illegal the police will be contacted to determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes, e.g., hate crime, harassment.
- Pupils involved in a bullying incident, both the bully and the victim, will be monitored periodically to ensure the bullying has stopped and to prevent a recurrence.

### 5.2 Records

- **Bullying incidents should be recorded on My Concern, by relevant staff members**

### 5.3 Support

- Support is given to the victim by taking their concerns seriously and by investigating and dealing with the incident quickly and, depending on the incident, by enlisting help and support from friends and classmates. The victim will be given strategies to deal with any further incident and it will be reinforced that a member of staff must be told immediately.



Staff will be asked to monitor and report any concerns they have immediately. In the case of serious, repeated bullying, parents of the pupil bullying will be informed of the incident, the action being taken and, after discussion, the consequences to the pupil should there be any further incidents. Counselling/support can be arranged if needed or requested.

- Whilst the school considers bullying behaviour and child on child abuse to be totally unacceptable it is recognised that sometimes pupils demonstrate this behaviour as a result of their own problems. They will be offered the opportunity to discuss these and, in order that the bully has the chance to change their behaviour, support will be offered through school and outside agencies if appropriate. Parents will be informed and will be asked to assist with this support.

## 6 ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

### 6.1 For Pupils

Bullying is unacceptable. Unfortunately, at times it happens in all schools and also in work places. It happens to children and adults, but it will only thrive where there is silence and fear.

We have a “**Speak Out**” Policy.

- If you are bullied remember that there is nothing wrong with you. Do not blame yourself for what has happened. You have taken the correct action by reporting the incident.
- Do not retaliate or, in the case of cyberbullying, return the message or continue with the conversation. Block contacts, change contact details. In all cases save the evidence and report the incident.
- Take action if you see bullying occurring. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bully. ‘Speak Out’.
- Do not tolerate bullies in your circle of friends. If anyone is acting badly, tell them – ‘Speak Out’. Do not be fearful of them. Do they need help? Remember, by reporting incidents you are helping a friend to correct their behaviour rather than allowing situations to escalate and your friend face a more serious sanction. Help them to see that their behaviour is wrong.
- Although it may be difficult, ‘Speak Out’ – whether you are a victim, an onlooker, or are directly involved in bullying, tell an adult in School, your Form Prefect, Peer Supporter, or a friend, who will act on your behalf in telling an adult. You could also hand a note into the School Office in an envelope with the member of staff’s name on it whom you wish it to go to.
- If you are bullying and need someone to talk to about the difficulties you are having seek out a member of staff, the school nurse or friend to act on your behalf. ‘Speak Out’ before being found out.

### 6.2 For Parents

General advice and guidance for parents:

- Watch for signs of distress in your children. There could be an unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches or stomach aches, equipment that has gone missing, request for extra pocket money, damaged clothing or bruising.



- Take an active interest in your child's social life. Discuss friendships, how break / lunchtime is spent and the journey to and from school.
- First, tell them that their concerns are taken seriously and reassure them that telling you was the right thing to do.
- Advise them to avoid places where bullying is likely to happen and to tell an adult in school, for example a liked and trusted teacher. Reassure them that they will be given support. Bullies only thrive when they know their actions will go unreported.
- Discuss the incident with your child. Make a note of what they tell you. Keep a written record if the bullying persists. Should cyberbullying occur your child should save text messages, take screen capture shots, print out conversations and note web addresses. These and a written record will provide supportive evidence regarding **who, what, where and when**.
- Contact the Form Tutor/Year Head. Aim to devise strategies that will provide your child with support inside and outside school.
- Do not encourage your child to retaliate. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to their nature. More positively, encourage your child to build up their friendship group.
- Advise your child not to buy the bully off with 'presents', (sweets, lunch, drinks etc) and that they should not give in to demands for money or for their property. If the latter happens they should tell an adult **immediately**.
- If the plan of action devised by the Form Tutor/Year Head does not result in an end to the bullying then contact the school again.

## 7 CASES OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Whilst schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises we would endeavour to offer support to a pupil in school if there are difficulties. In serious cases parents may wish to contact a solicitor and ask for a letter to be sent to the bully's parents, informing them of the legal consequences of a recurrence of such behaviour.

Cyberbullying is unacceptable inside or outside school. Any incident involving the use of information technology to bully/defame fellow pupils or staff occurring outside school but impacting in school will be investigated, and suitable action will be taken.

## 8 REVIEW, APPROVAL & 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.

## 9 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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

- School's Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- CSF's Exclusion Policy
- Acceptable Use (of ICT) Policy (AUP)
- Life Choices 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.

## 10 APPENDICES

There are no appendices to this policy.

**END**