



Bowdon Preparatory  
School for Girls

Believe • Persevere • Succeed

## Anti Bullying Policy

*This policy is applicable to all Governors, staff, associates, volunteers and student teachers, parents/carers, plus all pupils in the school. It also applies to the EYFS phase of our school.*

### Statement of intentions

We are committed to fostering an environment that promotes **our vision** 'To continue to be recognised as a leading Prep school for girls, providing unforgettable learning experiences which inspire our girls to **Believe** in themselves, to **Persevere** and **Succeed** in all they do'.

Our policies are designed to support the diverse needs of all our pupils, our staff, and our community. This policy and its procedures have been developed with due regard for our duties and obligations, for the safeguarding and wellbeing of all our pupils.

### Principles of the policy

- All members of the school community have the right to feel safe in school;
- All members of the school community have the right not to experience prejudice and bullying behaviour at school, whether or not it is directed at them;
- All reported and witnessed bullying incidents should be treated seriously and responded to consistently;
- Intervention should support and empower anyone who has experienced bullying, and the school refers to recipients of bullying as 'targets', not victims;
- The needs of vulnerable and SEND pupils will be taken into account when preventing, investigating and responding to bullying.

### Objectives of the policy

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- Create an atmosphere where pupils can disclose bullying, be taken seriously and rely on appropriate action being taken
- All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- Respond promptly and firmly to all concerns expressed regarding bullying
- Assist parents who request advice and support them
- Ensure that there is emphasis on praising good behaviour and that there are positive expectations of pupil behaviour
- Ensure that the general pupil management reduces the opportunity for bullying
- Portray a clear message that bullying will not be tolerated



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## Introduction

We believe that every child has the right to come to school and be happy. Bullying, whether verbal or physical, affects children either directly or as witnesses. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Children who are worried about being bullied or who see their friends bullied cannot concentrate and their quality of learning is affected. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated under any circumstances as it is an extreme form of unkindness.

Pupils should learn to value themselves and others; recognising that they are individuals and learning to respect the individuality of others. This aim can only be fostered within a safe, happy and fulfilling environment. We as staff are conscious of this and so deliberately instil at every opportunity the right of an individual to be their own person and so seek their own forms of recreation, so long as it does not impinge on the rights of others. We aim to create, within the school, an environment of mutual respect and value. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. All aspects of bullying are to be treated seriously, and every effort must be made to establish the cause of such behaviour and eradicate it. Any issues where bullying is suspected will be discussed at staff phase meetings where the SLT or Headteacher will reinforce the correct procedures and advise on any measures to be taken (including how to reduce the risk of bullying and plans to monitor effectively the places it is most likely to occur e.g. in the playground at lunch and break times).

## Definitions

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.

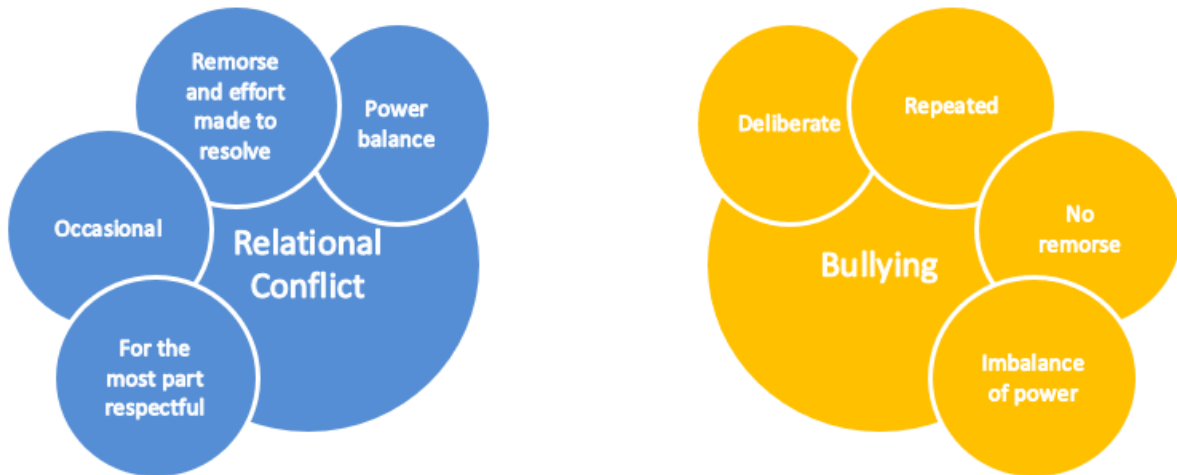
The NSPCC defines bullying as behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

A working definition of bullying: behaviour that intentionally hurts another pupil or group of people physically or emotionally; it is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).



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It is important to outline the difference between Relational Conflict and Bullying (please see the diagram below):



**Bullying can be:**

- Emotional - isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, biting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling SEN/Disability. Negative reference or actions associated with special need or disability
- Cultural - taunts, inappropriate reference to cultural diversity
- Religious - negative reference or actions regarding personal belief, dress code or dietary requirements.
- Online/cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals

Child-on-Child abuses can be physical, emotional, sexual and exploitative. Such allegations where a child is suffering significant harm by another child or a group of children, then a response under our Child Protection procedures will be carried out by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We are aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or



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group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. We have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. We reinforce throughout the school that it should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as we believe that this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it

For detailed information relating to Child-on-Child abuse please refer to our Safeguarding Policy

### **Why it is Important to Respond to Bullying**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Bullying is taken very seriously at Bowdon Preparatory School and has serious implications. Bullying may cause psychological damage and although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

We should also recognise that bullying affects other children who see it happening, not just the bullied and the bully. Often, less aggressive pupils can be drawn into the situation through peer pressure. Bullies themselves frequently act in an aggressive manner because of deep seated feelings of want, fear and insecurity.

### **Bullying Outside School and Cyber-Bullying**

This policy relates to children’s behaviour when in school or when supervised by staff outside school (e.g. when on school trips or at sports fixtures and when in extended school services including breakfast or after school clubs). However, the rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for ‘virtual’ bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. At Bowdon Prep the issue of cyber-bullying is explicitly tackled within the IT and PSHEE curriculum and during weekly e-safety sessions, looking at internet safety; however, we recognise that this is a fast-developing area and that we need to remain vigilant and be prepared to respond to a possible increase in incidents in the future potentially against both pupils and staff. The DfE outlines the specific statutory power, held by Headteachers, to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers the power to regulate pupils’ conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises and can be seen of particular value when dealing with cyber-bullying.



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Members of the school community may be involved in cyberbullying against pupils, outside of school hours. For example:

- Sending abusive or threatening email or text messages
- Posting malicious or abusive comments on a social media site
- Filming or passing on inappropriate material via mobile phone

In these cases, the Headteacher does have the power 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site', which could mean using any of the sanctions as given in this policy or involving external agencies such as the police, as appropriate.

It should be noted that dealing with other issues of bullying outside school or school time (when parents and carers are responsible for their own children's behaviour) poses many problems and will only be considered where actions are continued or impact directly upon relationships and learning in school or the reputation of the school.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

A pupil may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school or doesn't want to go on the school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence or starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to perform poorly in school work/activities
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are frequently damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (lunch has been handed over unwillingly)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings



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- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone or is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received
- These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### Reporting Bullying

As a principle, pupils who believe that they have been bullied should expect, as a right, protection by the school. Consequently, we encourage pupils who either believe they have been bullied or who have witnessed bullying, to speak either to their class teacher or any other member of staff in whom they have confidence.

We take the view that bullying is a very serious matter, and it should be stressed that girls will be listened to at any time.

We also encourage parents to inform the school of any concerns they may have in this respect, whether by having heard about or having witnessed acts of bullying. In the first instance they should contact the Class Teacher (Lower School) or Form Tutor (Prep), or Phase Leader either in person, by phone or by email.

It should also be recognised by staff and parents alike, that often pupils feel unable to verbalise the oppression they are under because of its element of subjugation. We therefore need to be aware of possible signs both at home and at school. These signs are sometimes more evident at home than at school and parents must know that if they are concerned for whatever reason, the school needs to be informed.

### Procedures

We firmly believe in being proactive in our approach to safeguard against bullying. The development of social skills and the reinforcement of positive behaviour is addressed in PSHEE sessions and school assemblies. All bullying behaviour or threats of bullying are investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly. Strong home/school links are vital so that the bully and the bullied can be effectively supported. The school provides the following framework within which bullying is effectively addressed:

- All teaching, non-teaching and volunteer staff are made aware of the school's Anti-bullying Policy.
- Teachers will record incidents of bullying from individual pupils and from parents.



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- Social interactions and behaviour of children is discussed during staff phase meetings. Strategies are discussed to support children in the development of their social skills and to support staff development within these areas. Regular meetings with lunch time assistants also provide a forum for discussion.
- Circle Time sessions during Form Time. Pupils are actively encouraged to discuss incidents/situations that they are aware of or that might occur. The emphasis is on dealing with the problem with a non-confrontational and empathetic approach. We are confident that by involving the children in this way they, and their peers, will all become more sensitive towards bullying issues and spread an awareness.
- Early intervention should follow all reported incidents to encourage an 'open' atmosphere whereby disclosure is facilitated. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- All bullying incidents are investigated, monitored and logged on CPOMs. The Headteacher monitors all incidents in order to identify any patterns of concern which require action (via SLT meetings).
- Action will be taken should any individuals re-offend. This would include the temporary removal of the bully from a potential bullying situation. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
- Counselling and discussion will take place with the victim and the aggressor, firstly with the Class Teacher and then the Phase Leader or Headteacher, should the situation become more serious.
- The motivation for the aggression should be established.
- If necessary, punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
- Further measures would involve discussion with the parents.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted. Severe and persistent bullying may result in the temporary or permanent exclusion of an individual from the school.

**Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:**

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor, teacher or a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence





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**Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child

**Outcomes**

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

**Prevention**

We will use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behaviour contract/ home school agreement
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters



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### **Related policies / documents**

**Please click [here](#) to access school policies, a copy can be requested from School office:**

Care and Supervision Policy – website

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy – website

Early Years Policy – website

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy – website

Online Safety Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy

PSHE Policy

SEND Policy

Home/School agreement – not on website

Social Media Policy - not on website

Visitor Policy – not on website

### **Appendix**

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#)

[Behaviour in Schools \(2024\)](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations \(2014\)](#)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(2017\)](#)

[Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and School Staff \(2014\)](#)

[Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK](#)

### **Organisations for reference or support**

[Advisory Centre for Education \(ACE\)](#)

[Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)

[Childline | Childline](#)

[Coram Children's Legal Centre - Home](#)

[Parenting and Family Support | Family Lives](#)

[Help With Bullying | Bullying Advice | Kidscape](#)



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[National Bullying Helpline](#)

[NSPCC](#)

[Welcome to Youth Access | Youth Access](#)

### **Policy Review and Dissemination**

All members of staff and governors will receive a copy of this policy (via TEAMS link).

The policy will be available for parents on our website. A paper copy can be requested via the School Office [office@bowdonprep.org.uk](mailto:office@bowdonprep.org.uk).

<b>SLT member responsible</b>	SMT/SH
<b>Governor / Board Responsible</b>	Full Board
<b>Date of review</b>	February 2025 - Spring 1 (SMT)
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>February 2026 - Spring 1 (SH)</b>

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