



The Grey Coat Hospital

Anti-Bullying Policy

POLICY NAME:	Anti-Bullying Policy
GOV COMMITTEE	Strategy committee
LAST POLICY REVIEW DATE:	March 2025
POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE:	2 years

Introduction

At The Grey Coat Hospital we believe that all pupils have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. We promote good behaviour. It is made clear that any type of bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is wrong and will not be tolerated. We value good relationships between all of the school community between; members of staff, between staff and pupils and between pupils, and expect that every allegation of bullying of any type, including on grounds of race, gender, and disability, will be taken very seriously. The Equality Act 2010 highlights protected characteristics and our Anti-Bullying Policy aims to prevent and/or deal firmly with any bullying on grounds of any of these.

We believe that all learners are of equal worth and should be enabled to achieve their full potential. We recognise that in order to achieve this, pupils have the right to be educated in an environment where they feel valued, respected and safe. Bullying deprives pupils of this right and denies access to the full curriculum.

Aims

- The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to clarify for pupils and staff that bullying is always unacceptable.
- We wish to encourage an environment where independence is celebrated, and individuals can flourish without fear.
- It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where pupils or staff who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift and sensitive to their concerns
- We recognise that we must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate such bullying.
- We will ensure that we support and guide the perpetrators of bullying, so that they understand the implications of their actions
- Every pupil has the right to be safe and happy in school, and to be protected when she or he is feeling vulnerable.
- We will ensure that parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns with staff
- We will ensure that staff feel supported in dealing promptly and effectively with incidents of bullying that are disclosed to them by pupils and/or their parents/carers.
- We will ensure all adults feel safe in discussing bullying from other adults within the school community, and action is taken to deal with this.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened, whether this is targeted or not. School is aware that there are different roles within bullying; the ring leader, the associates, the bystanders and the defenders. School will consider all of these roles when dealing with bullying incidents. There are different sorts of bullying; it can be any of the following. This list is not exhaustive:

Physical	Hitting, kicking, taking or hiding belongings
Verbal	Name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes, it may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, personality, appearance and it includes homophobic remarks.
Emotional	Being intentionally unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, spreading rumours or 'giving looks'.
Cyber	When a pupil sends hurtful or cruel text or images to another using Internet, mobile phones or other digital communication devices. This form of bullying has become of even greater concern as a result of increased online presence during the pandemic and the school takes firm action to educate, raise awareness and deal with cyberbullying.

Peer on peer abuse has recently become a significant national issue and the school will act swiftly to identify and deal with such unacceptable behaviour.

Possible signs

People react differently. It is not always possible to tell if someone is hurt or upset. Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, may lack concentration or may even truant from school.

Procedures

In the first instance, it is important to make it clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate and to the bully that her behaviour is unacceptable, and has caused distress. Every effort is made to resolve the problem through dialogue with both parties.

At this stage, parents of both parties are informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with. It is vital that everything that happens is carefully recorded in a clear factual way. An email will always be sent to the Head of Year and Deputy Head for information and monitoring purposes. Sanctions will be decided by tutor, Head of Year or Deputy Head depending on the severity of the bullying. It is important that support is maintained for both parties, even when sanctions have been applied.

There is relevant advice for students in their Homework Diary on how to deal with bullying:

- *It is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. You can also talk to peer counsellors who can give you good advice and direct you to an appropriate adult.*
- *Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.*
- *Tell your parents or somebody you can trust.*

Role of staff members

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims, too – that may be why they bully. If bullying is reported or suspected follow the guidelines below:

- Talk to the girls concerned and ask them what has been happening.
- Either ask them to write it down, or do so yourself, so that it can be passed on to the tutor or Head of Year.
- Incidents of bullying will always be recorded on an email and sent to the Head of Year and Deputy Head
- If the bully owns up then sanctions will follow, decided upon in discussion with the tutor and Head of Year.
- In serious cases this may lead to an internal exclusion or a fixed term exclusion decided upon by the Deputy Head and Headteacher.
- If the suspected bully does not own up, then the matter will be passed to the Head of Year and Deputy Head to investigate further.
- Attempts will be made to help the bully or bullies change their behaviour. Where necessary other professionals will be asked to work with the class, group or the individuals.
- Teachers will discuss bullying issues regularly as part of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum. Curriculum work can enhance this policy in two ways:
- By dealing with the topic of bullying, in a way which explores why it happens and gives alternative ways of behaving, and dealing with difficulties.
- By using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings so that pupils extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends.
- We need to be particularly vigilant at breaks and travelling times, around corridors between lessons and in the area of the playground and the toilets. These are times and places where victims are more vulnerable and bullying is not easily seen.

Responding to parents and carers

When parents and carers contact the school about bullying they need to know their concerns are being heard and to feel reassured that these will be taken seriously. We recognise that parents will be feeling very worried, and we will work with them to think through what has happened and to agree what may be done to resolve the situation promptly and effectively.

Recording, monitoring and evaluating

We will record incidents of bullying, and we will monitor and evaluate our bullying prevention strategies. This will include the following:

- Conducting pupil surveys and focus group research on a regular basis.
- Conducting parent surveys, annually after parents' evenings.
- Ensuring bullying issues are on the school agenda e.g. through assemblies, theme of the year, school council and the curriculum.
- Using the pupils' Homework Diaries to offer information about procedures and advice to pupils.
- Checking the effectiveness of the incident reporting system.

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Appendix 1: Advice to parents

If you feel your child is being bullied:

- Make a note of what your child says, particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what happened.
- Let school know straight away
- Reassure her that school will deal with it sensitively but firmly.

What school will do:

- If your daughter tells someone in school that she is being bullied, or we discover that she is bullying others, we will contact you, and will discuss together how the situation can be improved.
- Someone from school will contact you as the situation is resolved.

If you feel your child is bullying another:

- Try to find out why your child is bullying.
- Be aware of your daughter's use of MSN and other internet sites, you may want to block some of these at home.
- Show your child ways to deal with difficult situations without having to resort to bullying others.
- Focus on the bullying being what they do, not who they are.
- Discuss with your daughter's Head of Year how you can work with the school.
- Help your child to feel good about themselves.

If you feel you need more support:

- Check with the school's anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed.
- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher; keep a record of the meeting.
- You can then follow the school and LA complaints procedure if you feel the matter has not been dealt with correctly.

Appendix 2: Advice to pupils

Strategies to deal with bullying will be discussed in tutor time, PSHE time or when an incident occurs. Staff will reinforce the following strategies to pupils:

- If you are being bullied, or you know that someone else is, please tell us straight away, and it will be dealt with.
- Not telling means the victim will continue to suffer and the bully will carry on, probably with others too.
- We all have a responsibility to make sure that bullying is not allowed to continue in our school.
- Be proud of who you are; it is good to be individual.
- Try not to show you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive – shout 'No!' Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Fighting back makes things worse – don't do it.