



**Kents Hill Park School
Anti-Bullying Policy**

Anti-Bullying policy

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Written June 2018

Section	Governors' Meeting or Committee
Whole Document	KET Board of Directors
Whole Document	LGB 29 th September 2020
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When writing this policy, the following relevant guidance has been referred to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2022
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools 2016
- Listening to and Involving Young People 2014
- Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff 2014
- Equality Act 2010

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour for Learning
- Special Educational Needs
- Online Safety
- Permanent Exclusions and Suspensions Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity guidance

Summary of Policy

This summary provides a short guide which can be helpful to get a broad overview of the policy. It is not a replacement for the policy itself, which should be referred to where detail is essential.

- Kents Hill Park School use the definition agreed by the antibullying alliance. *'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group, by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face to face or online.'*
- We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice; bullying is not tolerated at Kents Hill Park School.
- All school staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.
- The totally anti-social and unacceptable nature of bullying is constantly reinforced through education; it is an integral part of the school's curriculum and personal development teaching and learning.
- All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by talking to a member of staff of their choice (this is likely to be a Tutor, Head of Year or Pastoral Lead). Alternatively, anonymous reports can be made via the 'pupil voice' button on the school website.
- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with by the member of staff who has been made aware of it and/or the Pastoral Team. Pupil statements will be taken, along with witness statements and CCTV images will be reviewed where appropriate. The completion of investigations and any outcomes will be fed back to pupils and parents where appropriate.
- The policy provides advice and support for parents whose children have been bullied and for those whose children have bullied others.

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Equalities Statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's and families' diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. With regards to antibullying, we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Intention

It is the policy of the school to ensure that all people (children and adults) in the school community are able to work in a safe and secure environment free from humiliation, harassment, oppression and abuse. Specifically:

1. To clarify for all members of the school community what bullying is.
2. To clarify for all members of the school community that bullying is not acceptable and must be totally discouraged. Everyone must act in a positive way to ensure that bullying is challenged and reported.
3. To ensure there is a senior leader (DSL) within the school coordinating the whole school approach to antibullying, and a school safeguarding governor who monitors antibullying and the schools action in this area.
4. To develop staff awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities their pupils face by addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage.
5. To ensure that all pupils, parents, staff, governors, visitors and external providers are aware of this policy and know that appropriate action will be taken.
6. To recognise that bullying can take place off-site and that the school will endeavour to respond appropriately as if it had happened on site by involving external agencies.

What is bullying?

Bullying occurs when a person or group of people, over a period of time, by word, action or gesture, deliberately deny the dignity of another individual or group and leave them feeling:

- Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried.
- Unsafe and/or frightened.
- Unable to do well and achieve.
- Different, alone, unimportant and/or unvalued.
- Unable to see a happy and exciting future for yourself.

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to hurt.
- The person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it.
- Happens more than once.
- There will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident.
- Involves an imbalance of power.
- The person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

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It can be:

- Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings or encouraging someone else to use physical violence. This includes demanding money or belongings from someone.
- Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive/personal remarks. This includes prejudice-based bullying, racist, homophobic, transphobic bullying, or bullying about a disability.
- Relational or psychological, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Online e.g. e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM), filming or encouraging someone else to film a person being bullied.
- Indirect, e.g. graffiti, defacing of property, display of pornographic, class, disability, homophobic, racist or sexist material.

National research has shown that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include pupils with SEND, looked after children, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths including Gypsy, Roma and Travellers, Young Carers, LGBTQ+ pupils and those perceived to be LGBTQ+. We are committed as a school to anti-discrimination and recognise that all pupils have the right to the same protection, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Identifying and reporting concern about bullying

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Pupils who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absence or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

All school staff are alert to the signs and impact of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy. Staff are aware that bullying is a safeguarding issue and that it should be reported on the school safeguarding platform MyConcern.

Pupils who are bullying others also need support to help them understand and change their behaviour. Pupils who are aware of bullying ('bystanders') can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way. Bullying may also occur through joint enterprise, where pupils actively seek to watch and encourage acts of bullying without taking direct part.

All pupils will be encouraged to report bullying by talking to a member of staff of their choice (this is likely to be a tutor, Pastoral Manager or Head of Year). Alternatively, anonymous reports can be made via the 'pupil voice' button on the school website.

Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with the bully or their families can lead to problems escalating.

The school will create an atmosphere in school where anyone who is being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to, and that action taken will be swift and sensitive to their needs. Disclosure (telling an adult) can be direct and open or indirect and anonymous.

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Implementation:

The totally anti-social and unacceptable nature of bullying is constantly reinforced as an integral part of the school's aim of creating a caring and protective environment for all of its pupils and staff. This notion is reinforced through the formal channels of the curriculum, assemblies, tutor group, PSHRE and antibullying ambassador groups. Individual members of staff are expected to respond to all instances of bullying.

Bullying incidents are brought into the open, discussed and strategies agreed to help resolve the problem. It is always important to make clear that:

- The bully's behaviour is unacceptable and the bullying must stop.
- Everything that happens is carefully recorded.
- The application of sanctions will depend on the individual circumstances of each incident.
- Revenge is not appropriate for the victim.
- The school works with the parents of both the victim and the bully wherever appropriate.
- Support is available for the victim.
- Support is available for the bully to help change their behaviour using the restorative and reflection model in the first instance.

Signs of Bullying

All adults on the school site have a responsibility to be aware of signs of distress in pupils as well as responding to direct/indirect disclosure. While the following types of behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems they may be the product of bullying:

- Obvious signs of distress such as tearfulness or constantly miserable expression.
- An unwillingness to come to school – pupil absence is monitored and recorded and incidents of bullying will be reported on MyConcern and appropriate action to support the pupil is taken.
- Frequent headaches, stomach aches or complaints of feeling generally unwell.
- Request for money from staff or friends.
- Bruising on face or body.
- Isolation from other pupils.
- A sudden deterioration in standards of work.
- A reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of the lessons or at the end of the school day.
- A tendency to stay close to staff during breaks.
- Damage to pupil property.
- Uncharacteristic behaviour.

This list is not exhaustive.

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Responding to reports about bullying

Kents Hill Park School

Kents Hill Park School will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with by the member of staff who has been made aware of it. Pupil statements will be taken, along with witness statements and CCTV images will be reviewed where appropriate. The completion of investigations and any outcomes will be fed back to pupils and parents where appropriate.
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded on MyConcern and a pastoral member of staff (Head of Year/Pastoral Lead) will determine the level of involvement of other staff.
- Reports of all incidents which are recorded on MyConcern will be filtered quickly to the appropriate staff who will advise about future action in respect of both the victim and the bully.
- The investigating member of staff will take statements from everyone involved and keep a detailed record. This will be held in line with the school's data protection policy/practice.
- Tutors will be kept informed and if it persists the tutor will advise the appropriate subject staff.
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed.
- Where bullying occurs outside school, any other relevant schools or agencies will be informed and advice/support obtained.
- Sanctions will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties involved.
- School currently adopts a practice of Restorative practice.
- Ensure anti-bullying interventions and education takes place where needed.

Pupils & Staff

Staff who have been bullied could be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. counselling, where appropriate.
- Help and advice on how to remove online material, if relevant.

Pupils who have been bullied could be supported by:

- Discussing what happened and discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the pupil.
- The use of special interventions such as SEMH support and/or referrals to other agencies where appropriate.
- Other pupils where appropriate.

These lists are not exhaustive.

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Strategies

Strategies often have to operate within a number of constraints:

- incidents need to be resolved, not just smoothed over;
- those who feel aggrieved want to see justice done;
- blame may not be all on one side;
- it may never be possible to prove what really happened;
- levels of tolerance may vary enormously for pupils and parents;
- expectations may be unrealistic.

In responding, staff will use a range of strategies to resolve issues. Adults are crucial to all these procedures.

The following steps can be taken as an example of possible sanctions:

- Group or 1 to 1 work to learn more about the negative effects of bullying.
- Detention.
- Pastoral bullying intervention programme.
- Movement of form/class to keep pupils out of the same lessons (usually only a short- term resolution).
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises.
- Fixed term Suspension.

Preventative measures

Kents Hill Park School will:

- Promote, discuss and practise our school values at every opportunity.
- Raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in Tutor time including PSHRE, assemblies, subject areas and informal discussion, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.
- Give care and support to create and maintain a safe learning environment where all pupils feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously in line with the school ethos.
- Participate in local and national initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week.
- Advise pupils to delete online apps and inform parents/carers of these apps.
- Seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive, antibullying education.
- Consider the use of specific strategies, e.g. on a more regular basis subject to available resources.
- Provide pupil leadership opportunities to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors alongside the anti-bullying lead teacher.
- Work towards the principles of the Anti-Bullying Award.
- Pupil surveys/ voice.
- Work with outside agencies where necessary to promote tolerance and inclusivity.
- Continue to be a member of the Anti-bullying Alliance and use their resources to support our work.

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Promotion of this Policy

The policy and methods for reporting bullying concerns will be promoted throughout the school, for example in information packs for new pupils, staff, external providers and through regular awareness raising activities with existing pupils and parents. Pupil surveys will be carried out in each year group.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

A senior member of school staff (DSL) will be identified to lead on the implementation of the policy and act as the link person with outside agencies. In addition, another member of staff (Pastoral Lead) has a lead role in terms of Anti-Bullying and oversees the Anti-bullying leadership group.

There is a school safeguarding governor who oversees antibullying and monitors school action in this area.

Regular reports are made, including to the governing body, with statistics about:

- The number of reported concerns.
- Monitoring information about the pupils involved.
- Analysing data for identified characteristics, so that it is clear if trends are identified across year groups/ incidents.
- Actions taken and outcomes.
- The school will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Advice to Parents

We recognise that bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It affects pupils who witness bullying and other pupils might be drawn in through peer group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. Only when we effectively address issues of bullying will a pupil be best able to benefit from the opportunities available at the school.

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying

- Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve the difficult situations without using violence or aggression.
- Ensure your child has controls on their phone and only uses age-appropriate apps.
- Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied

- Calmly talk with your child about their experience; if it is online bullying keep a record of the content using a screen shot or screen print.

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- 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 has happened.
- Reassure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur they should report them to a member of staff immediately.
- Talk to or email your child's Tutor, Head of Year or Pastoral Lead.
- Explain to the member of staff the problems your child is experiencing.

When talking with staff about bullying

- Try to stay calm, bear in mind that the member of staff may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child.
- Stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If you are not satisfied

Families who feel that their concerns are not being addressed appropriately by Kents Hill Park School might like to consider the following steps:

- Talk to your child's Tutor and/or Head of Year. We can resolve issues most quickly this way.
- Check with the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed.
- Make an appointment to discuss the matter with a senior leader. Talk to us before writing, as we can resolve issues more quickly this way.
- If you are still dissatisfied, make a written complaint. You do this by completing the Complaints Form (available on the website), putting details in writing to the Headteacher.
- If you need further support and information at any stage or the problem remains unresolved, ring the helpline at Parentline or other local and national support groups.

If your child is bullying other children

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know that it's wrong.
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire.
- They haven't learned other, better ways of mixing with their school friends.
- They are being bullied/ intimidated into bullying others.
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

To stop your child from bullying others

- Talk with your child; explain that what he or she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.

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- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Put controls on their phone and delete age-inappropriate apps.
- Show your child how they can join in with other children without bullying.
- Talk to or email your child's tutor. Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop him or her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he or she is cooperative or kind to other people.

Bullying by mobile phone, text messages, or email

If your child experiences this kind of bullying, a parent can

- Contact your child's tutor initially and pass on information.
- Ensure the child is careful about who they give their mobile phone number or email address to.
- Check exactly when a threatening message was sent.
- When necessary, report incidents to the police.
- Support their child to 'unfollow'/delete bullies, or come off the apps where bullying has taken place.
- Keep screenshots/the messages that have been sent, wherever possible.