

	POLICY TITLE:	Anti-Bullying
Kingsmead Academy T/A Kingsmead School		
Committee/Person Responsible for Policy:		Assistant Headteacher: Inclusion Well-Being & Diversity sub-committee
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1. Introduction

Fundamentally, we are clear that bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our schools, whether it is in the school, in the form of online activities or in off-site activities. If bullying or harassment does occur, all students should be able to inform an adult in the school and know with confidence that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that it is also an expectation of anyone who knows that where bullying, including all forms of harassment including sexual and gender-based incidents is happening, to tell a member of the staff team and for that staff member to ensure it is recorded and acted upon.

To eradicate bullying in our community, we must educate everyone on what bullying is and focus on building strong and meaningful relationships with each other. Educating everyone on the impact of their behaviour towards other and creating safe spaces for people to share and talk means concerns, fears and experience can be shared and acted upon. This will enable thoughts and feelings, which may have otherwise manifested in bullying behaviours, to be addressed with a preventative and caring response.

It is important to understand that bullying/harassment is defined by the impact on the person being bullied, not just the intention of the perpetrator. Bullying/harassment is the intentional, repetitive, or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. However, single incidents of hurtful or unkind behaviour may still leave the targeted individual fearful of repetition and should always be addressed. This is particularly relevant to cyberbullying when a single incident may have an ongoing impact.

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At Kingsmead School, our policy is to promote an ethos where all students, parents/carers and staff treat each other with respect. Our core values determine that we should care and respect for each other, and as such, all forms of bullying are unacceptable.

A recent study by Ditch the Label, (National Anti-bullying group), investigated the reasons people bully each other:

- **STRESS AND TRAUMA:** those who bully are far more likely than average to have experienced a stressful or traumatic situation in the past 5 years.
- **AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOURS:** some who bully have cultural norms where they do not understand that this type of behaviour is wrong.
- **LOW SELF-ESTEEM:** those who bully do so to mask how they actually feel about themselves, some people who bully focus attention on someone else.
- **THEY'VE BEEN BULLIED:** those who have experienced bullying are twice as likely to go on and bully others.
- **DIFFICULT HOME LIFE:** feelings of rejection from the very people who should love them unconditionally can lead to bullying behaviours. Those who bully are much more likely to come from violent households with lots of arguments and hostility.
- **LOW ACCESS TO EDUCATION:** Without access to education, hate-based conversation directed at others may be the norm. Those who bully may not understand what hate speech is and why speaking about people in a derogatory way is not appropriate.
- **RELATIONSHIPS:** those who bully are more likely to feel like their friendships and family relationships are not very secure. In order to keep friendships, they might be pressured by their peers to behave in a certain way.

2. Safeguarding children and young people.

Support must be given to students whether or not it is deemed that the impact of bullying is a child protection concern. Bullying should always be considered a safeguarding issue and dealt with by the school in an appropriate manner. Schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the student who is experiencing bullying such as sexually harmful behaviours associated with bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and discuss their concerns to their local authority children's social care services and work with them to take appropriate action.

It is important to note however, that the school retains the responsibility to address the bullying, the involvement of social services does not absolve the school of the need to act.

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Full details can be found in Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The same safeguarding considerations should be applied to bullying incidents that occur outside of school hours or on the journey to and from school need to be addressed. The school has a key part to play in coordinating a supportive response and involving the relevant agencies to ensure the child is safe and the perpetrators appropriately sanctioned.

3. Criminal law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

4. What is bullying?

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm and is often based around hate or prejudice-based attitudes. It can involve an individual or a group and be aimed towards one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour can occur as a single incident or be repeated over time (persistent).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium, and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Bullying around gender and LGBTQ+ issues is often referred to as Homophobia, Bi-phobia, or Transphobia but are not actually phobias, because they are not based on fears. Instead, they should be viewed as forms of discrimination or hate towards LGBTQ+ people or those perceived to be LGBTQ+ and as such must not be tolerated.

What bullying is not:

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- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite or unkind behaviour
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements, or fights.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- LGBTQ+ - because of or focussing on the issue of sexuality.
 - including Gay, Trans or Bi-phobic - bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes,
 - views, or beliefs about LGBTQ+ or trans people
- Gender - bullying because of their gender or gender identity or because they may not be perceived to conform to typical gender norms
- Faith - because of their religion • Social class – because of their background or social class
- Ability - because of or focusing on learning and/ or physical disabilities.
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.
- Cyber - all areas of internet use, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging, including aggravated sexting & calls, misuse of associated technology

Transphobic bullying

The following guidance should be followed when there is a case of transphobic bullying. From the date of change the student should be known by their chosen name. Mistakes may occur and an apology should be made if this happens. For those staff and students who struggle with the concept of a name change, they may find it helpful to think of the new name as a 'nickname.'

However, it is the legal right of the student and so compliance is expected even if the staff or student have moral, ethical or social objections. Changes should be made on SIMS from the agreed change date, with the birth name archived. Where staff continually ignore the choices of the student and do not use their chosen name (so called 'dead naming') or pronoun ('misgendering'), then this should be discussed with the line manager which may include further diversity training being undertaken or other procedures being enacted under our various separate staffing procedures.

Refusing to use anyone's chosen name will be considered bullying. Any transphobic bullying should be dealt with immediately with appropriate sanctions applied to the bully, and support offered to the victim. Reporting of incident or bullying will be managed in the same way as any other incident, by the student to a trusted adult, and by staff via My Concern.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the Kingsmead School community are encouraged to take responsibility for personal behaviour and actions and treat one another with Care and Respect. Everyone should contribute to creating a positive working atmosphere within school where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, difference is celebrated, and discrimination is actively challenged.

Governors

- The Safeguarding Governor will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) over all anti-bullying strategies and individual cases where appropriate.
- The Safeguarding Governor will discuss, review, and endorse agreed strategies to promote anti-bullying.
- The Safeguarding Governor will monitor and evaluate the reports provided by the Headteacher and DSL to ensure any patterns across school are understood and escalated.

The Headteacher

- The Headteacher has a legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students.
- The Headteacher will: • Ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them on a regular basis.
- Determine the strategies and procedures and ensure a regular review is undertaken. Discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Leadership Team.
- Ensure appropriate training is available.
- Ensure that a system for recording bullying incidents is in place (behaviour within ClassCharts and Safeguarding actions within My Concern).
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents/carers, and students on a regular basis in a clear manner.
- Ensure that sanctions imposed for bullying reflect the serious nature of the incident.
- Report at least termly to the Governing body via the Headteachers report.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Be responsible for consulting with the appropriate member of staff over all incidents involving students in their year group.
- Ensure that all incidents of bullying are reported.

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- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.
- Take part in the anti-bullying programme in the PSHE curriculum.
- Know the policy and procedures.
- Be observant and ask students what is happening to them.
- Deal with incidents according to the policy
- Never let any incidences of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity.

All staff

- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems.
- Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both those being bullied and the bullies.
- Help maintain the school's record of incidents of bullying as required.
- Keep the Headteacher and designated safeguarding lead informed of incidents.
- Take part in relevant staff training
- Determine how best to involve parents/carers in the solution of individual problems.
- Promote a culture of anti-bullying/harassment.
- Be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice
- Know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support, including for those students with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGB&T) students.

Students

If a student thinks they are being bullied they must tell an adult, parents/carers, a member of staff, or use an anti-bullying system and be supported to explain what form the bullying is taking and how it affects them. Students who witness bullying or experience an incident which they feel may be bullying or harassment, must tell an adult, parents/carers, or a member of the school staff

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the Form Tutor or HoY if they have any concerns about their child or about another student in the school.

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The Form Tutor or Pastoral Leader should record these concerns and investigate them as a priority.

6. Responding to bullying allegations and supporting students

If bullying is reported the staff member is responsible for ensuring that the details are recorded in ClassCharts and emailed to the Head of Year, as presented to them, any safeguarding considerations will also be reported via My Concern to fulfil the statutory duty of having separate and distinct safeguarding records.

No promise of confidentiality can be given.

Following a reported incident staff will investigate using the following strategies, with the support of other members of staff, including the Designated safeguarding Lead, as appropriate:

- Reflection – What has happened? Could it have been different?
- Resolution – How can we try to ensure this does not happen again?
- Reconciliation – How we put things right between those involved?

Allegations of bullying:

If an allegation of bullying occurs, the school will:

- Take it seriously
Investigate as quickly as possible to establish the facts
- Record and report the incident; depending on how serious the case is, it may be reported to the DSL
- Provide support and reassurance to the victim
- Make it clear to the 'bully' that this behaviour will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group.
- It is important that children who have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, redress their actions, and staff will make sure that they understand what they have done and the impact of their actions
- Discuss the matter with both parties, bring them together and insist on the perpetrator seeing the other person's point of view; sometimes the no blame approach is used, sometimes negotiation and sometimes sanctions
- Ensure that if a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the 'bully' will be told why it is being used

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an appropriate member of staff of their choice.

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- Reassuring the student.
- Offering continuous support with a designated member of staff.
- Restoring self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Referral to welfare if appropriate.
- Referral to a counsellor.
- Offering continuous support and advice to parents/carers.
- Being informed about the outcome of the investigation into their concerns.
- Include Children's Services where appropriate (e.g., where there are linked Child Protection concerns)

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the student became involved.
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude of the student.
- Involving other agencies, including Police and Children's Services, to support a change in behaviour.
- Referral to a counsellor (if necessary).
- Attend a mediation (restorative justice) meeting with the effected student to resolve issues and prevent recurrence where this is deemed appropriate and does not place undue stress on the victim.

Complaints

If a parent or carer is dissatisfied with the response made by the school following a reported incident of bullying, he/she may make a complaint in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

Equal Opportunities

In implementing this policy all members of staff must consider the Equality statement. Staff must ensure that no student involved in any incident of bullying is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation, age, religion, or belief.

Support organisations

- Kidscape <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/> 020 7823 5430
- Bullying UK <https://www.bullying.co.uk/> 0808 800 2222

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- Anti-Bullying from The Diana Award <https://www.antibullyingpro.com/>
- NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/> 0808 800 5000
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau
- Childnet