



Ashton House Preparatory School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Title:	Anti-Bullying Policy
Version:	Aug 24
Policy Summary:	This policy sets out the processes the school will adhere to tackle any form of bullying in Ashton House School and EYFS setting.
Policy Owner:	Wellbeing and Personal Development Lead
Relevant to:	All staff, volunteers, contractors and service providers.
Date introduced:	January 2019
Next review date:	August 2025
Related School Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Policy • Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy • Online Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy • Whistleblowing Policy
Date(s) modified/reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensively Reviewed January 2019 <p>Modifications made to Version 1 of this policy are indicated throughout the policy with a left-hand margin line.</p> <p>Reviewed February 2021</p> <p>Reviewed October 2022 GMS</p> <p>Reviewed August 2023 AS</p> <p>Reviewed Aug 24 GMS</p> <p>Reviewed Sept 2024 CM</p>

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

References:

Bullying A Charter for Action

Equality Act 2010

DfE Guidance 2014 Behaviour and Discipline in Schools

DfE Guidance 2017 Preventing and tackling bullying

Rationale

We do not tolerate bullying at Ashton House School. All members of the school community have the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Bullying of any sort prevents this from being able to happen. People who are bullies need to learn different ways of behaving as their actions could lead to psychological and physical damage.

Bullying might be motivated by real or perceived differences between pupils. All members of the school community need to be aware of pupils with SEN/disabilities and adjust their interactions and judgements accordingly.

This policy cannot eradicate bullying completely. However, it is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and continue to build an anti-bullying ethos in school. When bullying occurs in school people should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.

The school works hard to ensure that all people know the difference between bullying and simply 'falling out.'

At Ashton House School staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Research has shown time and time again that the extent of bullying in schools is greatly underestimated **and can cause psychological damage**. On occasions as part of a bullying incident, if a child has experienced significant harm or suffering, the incident might be treated as a child protection, safeguarding concern.

Aims of the Policy

This policy is available to all on the school website. Ashton House School and EYFS setting seeks to ensure that the Proprietor, Staff members, pupils and parents/carers understand what bullying is and the school's anti- bullying procedures. Staff training takes place, PSHE issues are on every staff meeting agenda and bullying incidents are recorded on yellow forms and regularly reviewed to identify patterns and to evaluate the success of the policy.

All reports of bullying are taken seriously. Staff will always be available to listen to concerns. Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

Signs and Symptoms

Changes in behaviour or other signs may be indicators of bullying. Adults should be aware of the following: a child not wanting to come to school, complaining of illness, tiredness, underperformance in class, starting to truant, exhibiting anxiety or a lack of confidence, losing possessions, changing eating patterns, becoming aggressive, disruptive, unreasonable or displaying uncharacteristic behaviour. Staff must be aware that bullying can occur anywhere within the school and that bullying incidents that happen outside of school can impact behaviour at school. Some aspects of cyber bullying may well be categorised as an offence.

Safeguarding

All staff need to be aware and sensitive to the safeguarding issues that may emerge as a result of peer to peer abuse. This may be in the form of bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence, sexual assault and sexting.

This form of abuse will be managed through the school Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy. Victims of peer to peer abuse will be supported through the normal pastoral channels with the assistance of external agencies if required. Most of our children will use mobile devices and computers at some time. They are important tools for communication and education as well as for recreation and socializing.

However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts including sexting and emails (cyber bullying), to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

The school's Code of Conduct and the ICT Acceptable Use Policy explain the responsibilities of staff in relation to keeping children safe in school. Pupils receive guidance on safe use of the web (including anti bullying) through computing lessons and the PSHE curriculum and in assemblies. Cyber bullying by children, via texts including sexting, direct messages, social media, gaming or email, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through the School Anti Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy. Chat rooms and social networking sites are sources of risk of inappropriate and harmful behaviour including

the potential for radicalisation in the digital arena. Some children will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobile or social networking sites at home. The School gives information in the school newsletter and parents' Acceptable Use Agreement to help parents understand the possible risks. Filtering and monitoring systems are in place on the IT system as part of the School's online safety policy.

The School also has a clear policy on the use of mobile technology and while pupils may bring phones into school they are to be turned off during the day and held in the school office. Their purpose is for safe travel to and from school.

Strategy for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. Disciplinary measures will always be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and considering the needs of vulnerable pupils. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

- Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, believe, act
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Headmaster
- **Make sure all incidents are recorded (Yellow Form) to enable patterns to be identified**
- Discussions with the bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at Ashton House School
- If they own up then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Behaviour Policy
- If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts
- Both bully/bullies and victim/s should be involved in discussion until a solution to end the bullying is agreed upon. The bully is encouraged to apologise.
- Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim
- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s)
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition
- As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the

child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at Ashton House School we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils
- All staff listen, believe, act
- Raise awareness of staff through training and discussion
- Reading and writing stories and poems related to bullying
- Drawing pictures and posters with an anti-bullying message
- Every child being 'visible' to staff and peers, supervision of children
- Information on potential cyber bullying issues shared with parents
- Posters in school advertising these measures and dissuading children from bullying, **Anti-Bullying Week activities, PSHE, assemblies, drama, current affairs etc**
- The Childline telephone number 0800 1111 to be displayed clearly in school
www.childline.org.uk

Gauging the success of the policy

The following methods can be used to judge the success of the policy: the number of bullying incidents recorded, success of follow up action to bullying incidents, responses in pupil questionnaires, feedback from the school council and the school atmosphere and ethos.