

Behaviour Policy – Anti-Bullying Policy Statement	1.1.1c
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Burgess Hill Girls takes any bullying extremely seriously; it aims to treat each case individually and takes into account any special circumstances when making decisions. Ultimately the School knows that students will learn best in a safe and supportive environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Bullying hurts, threatens and frightens.

Definition: bullying is unacceptable behaviour towards another individual repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and 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.

Bullying of any kind, both physical and emotional (which may cause psychological damage) is serious.;

Each pupil has a right to enjoy an education free from fear and distress. The School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment so that all students can enjoy and achieve during their time here. The School aims to foster an atmosphere of friendship, mutual trust, respect and consideration for each person within the community. This Policy should be read in conjunction with Appendix A - preventing bullying - a guide for parents.

The school will react firmly and promptly to all allegations of bullying.

Allegations of bullying may in the most serious cases raise child protection concerns in which case the reporting procedure under the School's child protection policy should be followed.

Although Bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Aims

To create a community in which each member is respected and encouraged to reach her full potential and behave in accordance with the code of conduct.

To be a community in which the values of integrity, compassion, tolerance and justice are fostered.

To provide a secure framework in which pupils can grow towards independence and self-discipline and take their place responsibly in society.

To establish an ethos where girls set a good example to younger pupils

To encourage all members of our school community to recognise bullying, acknowledge its unacceptability and report it.

To encourage the girls to lead a healthy lifestyle and have the confidence and skills to make good lifestyle choices

Bullying is behaviour which:

Deliberately makes another person feel uncomfortable, distressed, threatened or under pressure

Is repeated over time

Makes those being bullied feel powerless to defend themselves

In serious cases bullying can cause serious and long term psychological damage and may be a contributing factor in suicide.

Bullying may arise from or target:

Racial background

Religious beliefs or none

Cultural background

Sexual orientation

Homophobia

Gender

Special educational needs

Disability

Adopted children and those that are in care or care for others.

Bullying may take many forms, such as:

physical: for example, hitting, pushing, kicking or any use of aggression and intimidation

emotional/psychological: excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books & possessions, threatening gestures) ganging up on someone, taunting or mocking, spreading rumours, dirty looks

verbal abuse: name-calling face-to-face, in writing, by phone, on-line, or by text message, making jokes to make someone look 'small', making racist, religious, cultural, sexist, gender or disability based comments, jokes or graffiti

cyber: all areas of internet, chat room and social media misuse, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones & video facilities, mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Cyberbullying is the use of ICT deliberately to upset someone else; It includes: threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyber-stalking'; vilification/defamation; humiliation; manipulation, whether open or anonymous; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised use of private information or images, posting without consent.

Sexual: sexual bullying involves unwanted and unwelcome attention of a sexual nature. This may be physical or verbal or involve the denigration of an individual on sexual grounds or by sexual means. Any unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for the recipient may be regarded as sexual bullying.

Racial: Racial bullying is offensive action and behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, relating to race, colour, ethnic or national origin directed at an individual or group, which is objectionable to the recipient and which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Religious or Cultural

Religious or Cultural Bullying is bullying because of a person's religion, belief or culture. This includes a broad definition of belief and cultures and includes minority religions, humanists, atheists and people of different nationalities.

Homophobic or sexual orientation

This is bullying directed at persons or groups on the grounds of a perceived or actual sexual orientation (applying equally to homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual boys or girls) NB. In terms of sexual orientation, discrimination can occur because of an association with a gay or bisexual person (friend or relative etc.)

Disability

Bullying in respect of a person's disability or impairment.

The School recognises that bullying behaviour, particularly cyber bullying, may take place in or out of school and considers all such behaviour unacceptable and subject to the school's anti-bullying policy and related sanctions.

Procedures to deal with alleged incidents of Bullying

Any girl being bullied or knowing that someone is being bullied should report what is happening to her parents or guardians or to someone in authority within the school. The following are available:

- Housemistress, tutor or any other teacher
- Assistant Housemistress or cleaner
- A School Officer, House Captain or a senior student
- A Counsellor (contactable through the Medical Centre) or the Independent Listener
- Nurse in the Medical Centre
- The Head
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Head of Junior School)
- The Deputy Head
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team
- They may also wish to contact:
Social Services LADO: 03302 223309 or 07912298265
NSPCC Helpline 0808 8005000

ChildLine: 0800 1111

A victim or a witness of bullying may be uncertain about taking this step, for a variety of reasons:

- She does not want to tell tales
- She does not want the bully to be punished
- She is afraid of what the bully will do
- She has become demoralised and feels that she does not deserve any better

There should be an atmosphere within the School which encourages girls to be completely open regarding bullying. Moreover, girls should be encouraged to realise that it is always better to tell someone, because:

- sharing what is happening will help the victim to deal with their feelings
- bullying thrives on secrecy – it is best dealt with by being brought into the open
- it may save other people from becoming victims of the same bully

Any person in authority who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:

- firstly, offer advice and support to the alleged victim
- report the allegation to their Tutor or a member a staff they feel comfortable sharing this information with or the school nurse as soon as possible.
- The member of staff will record this and, if they consider it appropriate they will report this to the Head of Section or Deputy Head depending on the severity of the allegation. An interview will take place with both the alleged victim and bully and any possible witnesses.
- These interviews will be recorded together with action taken in the case as a whole.
- It is essential that tutors, Head of Section and if appropriate the Deputy Head of both the victim and the bully continue to monitor the situation regularly. If the victim and the bully are from different tutor groups and Section of the school, the relevant staff should discuss their findings regularly during the first few weeks after an alleged incident, until they are satisfied that further incidents are unlikely. They should record their results.
- Relevant staff must notify the Deputy Head of all alleged bullying incidents.
- Tutor, Head of Section or in significant cases the Deputy Head, will be in contact with parents of both the victim and the bully about the case and any action taken.

The welfare of the victim should be considered of paramount importance. The student should be informed of any actions taken. They might need help to deal with their feelings and to understand and overcome their vulnerability.

The bully should be given help and support in trying to change their behaviour.

What to do if you are being bullied?

If you are being bullied, there a range of strategies you can adopt to deal with the situation:

- Always remember that no one deserves to be bullied - bullying is always the bully's fault. Bullies seek out and need victims and just happened to pick you.
- Tell a friend what is happening. Ask him/her to help you. It will be harder for the bully to pick on you if you have a friend with you for support.
- Ignore the bully or say 'No' really firmly, then turn and walk away. Don't worry if people think you're running away. Remember, it is very hard for the bully to go on bullying someone who won't stand still to listen.
- Don't show that you are upset or angry. Bullies love to get a reaction. Keep calm and hide your emotions; the bully might get bored and leave you alone.
- Make up funny or clever replies in advance. Replies don't have to be brilliant, but it helps to have an answer ready. Practice saying them at home.
- Don't fight back if you can help it. If you fight back, you could make the situation worse, get hurt or be blamed for starting the trouble.
- Stick with a group, even if they are not your friends. Bullies tend to pick on people when they are on their own.
- Practise 'walking tall' – look in a mirror. If you look positive and confident, the bully will find it harder to identify you as a target – even if you don't feel that way inside.
- Keep a diary about what is happening. Write down details of incidents and your feelings. When you decide to tell someone, a written record of the bullying makes it easier to prove what has been going on.
- Tell your parents or other adults such as your tutor or Nurse - you need their help. Don't suffer in silence and let the bullies win.

- Don't answer texts, emails or messages which are abusive. Log them and report them to your parents or a teacher, for example your Tutor, or Nurse. Don't delete them. You don't have to read them but you should keep them as evidence. Do not give out personal details on the internet or by text. If you use chat-rooms, always stay in the public areas.
- Don't answer texts, emails or messages from someone you don't know.
- Speak to someone you trust.

If you have been bullied:

If you are persistently bullied, you might start to believe what the bully says – you are ugly and awful and that no one will ever like you. This is not true: this is 'victim-think'. To help you start feeling better about yourself:

- Try doing some mental exercises to build up your self-confidence, for example, focussing on your breathing to calm the mind
- Make a list of all the good things you can think of about yourself. We all have talents. The next time you feel down, think about the good things on your list
- Learn to talk to yourself in a positive way
- If you have a particular interest, develop your skills, whatever they are
- Change your mobile phone number.
- Introspection is important – reflect on how you might move forward

Helpful approaches:

Saying no

- When you say NO, say it firmly
- Listen to your body and to your feelings: What do you really want to say?
- Try not to get caught up in arguments
- If you don't want to do something, don't give in to pressure. Be firm. Remember, we have the right to say NO!
- When you say No to someone, you are only refusing the request. You are not rejecting the person.

'Broken record'

- Stay calm and focussed
- Repeat over and over the same phrase (such as 'No' or 'I'm not interested')
- Make your phrase short and precise ('it's my pencil' or 'Go away')

Fogging

- Imagine that you are inside a huge, white fog-bank: the insults are swallowed up by the fog long before they reach you. Nothing touches you.
- Reply to taunts with something short and bland: "That's what you think." "Maybe." Then walk away.

- Practise by thinking of the worst things the bully says to you and pretend that you are inside your fog bank – nothing reaches you.

Phone calls

- If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off. Once the bully realises they can't get you rattled, they usually get bored and stop bothering you. Always tell someone else.
- Use your voicemail to vet your calls.
- Remember that almost all calls can be traced.
- Get help from your network provider.

Cyber Abuse

Never reply to unpleasant communications. The sender wants a response – don't give them that satisfaction. Keep a screen shot as evidence and report it.

- Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there is an option to 'unsubscribe' and check privacy settings including blocking
- Contact or ask an adult to contact the sender's internet service provider to report the abuse.

Take Your Time

- Once the bullying stops, many former victims say that they don't feel brilliant immediately. It takes time to get over bullying – you will feel better eventually.
- Continue to take advantage of support in place even after the event.

Further Information and related documents:

www.bullying.co.uk (available 24/7) throws a lifeline to despairing parents whose children are being bullied and who don't know what to do. Contains advice for both children being bullied and their parents.

www.kidscape.org.uk has lots of leaflets, booklets and help for parents of children suffering bullying. They can also train teachers, children and parents' groups in dealing with or preventing bullying.

www.childline.org.uk is the UK's free national helpline for children and young people in trouble or danger who can call free 24 hours a day on Telephone 0800 1111.

CEOP - <http://www.ceop.police.uk/> - Child Exploitation and Online Protection advice regarding sex and relationships with particular attention to social media and on-line issues.

Burgess Hill Grils works to prevent bullying by:

- Having a clear statement about bullying and guidelines for pupils, parents and staff on how to deal with it
- Having an agreed code of conduct established for all school members.
- Providing a Student Planner (diary) for all girls containing anti-bullying guidance on the procedures to follow and who to tell
- Making bullying an explicit theme in assemblies and through PSHE programmes to support the prevention of bullying.
- Providing a forum for pupils to share and consider behavioural issues
- Ensuring good communication between school and parents
- Providing, from time-to-time, INSET to help staff to deal with bullying within the School, to give training to new staff as part of their induction programme
- Ensuring that staff are fully informed, available to deal with incidents and able to offer support
- Recording concerns relating to bullying behaviour to enable patterns to be identified
- Providing all families with a copy of the School's 'Preventing Bullying' guidelines.
- Establishing an 'Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy' which is signed by pupils and parents
- Providing internet safety training for pupils, highlighting the seriousness of cyber-bullying
- Providing internet safety workshops for parents, highlighting the seriousness of cyber-bullying
- Being approachable for parents and pupils to raise issues of concern, confident that matters will be addressed with positive and sensitive action.
- Ensuring that matters of pupil welfare, health and safety are addressed in Pastoral Leadership Team (PLT) meetings held at least twice a term.

- Participating in national anti-bullying week using assembly time to address the issue of bullying with the whole school.
- Applying sanctions which are proportionate to reflect the seriousness of any incidence of bullying and convey a deterrent effect. Sanctions are designed to support the perpetrator in understanding the consequences of their actions and stopping their bullying behaviour. In cases of severe and persistent bullying strong sanctions may be used, including suspension or exclusion.

To be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy: General statement
- Behaviour Policy: Pupil Discipline and Exclusion Policy
- Preventing Bullying – A Guide for Parents
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy (Particular reference to guidance about the taking of official and parental photographs in school)
- Student Planner (Reference to guidelines to students – page 11)