



KING EDWARD VI
SCHOOL LICHFIELD

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Ratified by:	Student & Staff Welfare Committee

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Statement of Intent

King Edward VI School Lichfield believes that all students are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. Bullying of any kind can have devastating effects on the personal mental health and wellbeing, identity-formation and self-esteem of any child or young person. This can have an impact on socialisation and academic achievements.

We educate all in our community about the dangers of bullying and how to treat one another with respect, in line with our code of conduct, *Ready, Respect, Strive*. Any form of bullying is unacceptable. We treat bullying as a serious issue and deal with any bullying complaints firmly, fairly and promptly. This policy outlines our proactive efforts to prevent

bullying, and how instances of bullying are dealt with. These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of the school's Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all students, school staff and parents. All staff, parents and students work together to prevent and reduce bullying at the school.

1. Legal framework

1.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

1.2 This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

1.3 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

2. Definitions

2.1.1 For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as "**persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.**"

2.1.2 Target = the person who has been/is being bullied

Perpetrator = the person is/has been bullying the target

These terms are preferred, as the words 'victim' and 'bully' can be unhelpful labels.

2.2 Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

- 2.3 Vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.
- 2.4 Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:
- Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
 - Students who are adopted from care, or who are currently in care.
 - Students suffering from a health problem, including mental health difficulties.
 - Students with caring responsibilities.

3. Types of bullying

- 3.1 Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying.
- 3.2 Teasing another student because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.
- 3.3 Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:
- Verbally
 - Physically
 - Emotionally
 - Online (Cyber)
- 3.4 Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- 3.5 Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- 3.6 Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- 3.7 Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- 3.8 Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or nonverbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- 3.9 Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.
- 3.10 Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone - usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 The Governing Body is responsible for:
- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory. The overall implementation of this policy.
 - Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
 - Ensuring the school is inclusive.
 - Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- 4.2 The Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion) is responsible for:
- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
 - Keeping a record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
 - Analysing the data in the record at regular intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
 - Arranging appropriate training for staff members.
- 4.3 Achievement Leaders are responsible for:
- Monitoring incidents of bullying across their respective year groups
 - Liaising with Student Support over incidents of bullying
 - Ensuring accurate records of bullying are maintained including follow-up actions taken
- 4.4 The Student Support Team are responsible for:
- Investigating any reports of bullying behaviour
 - Offering emotional support to targets of bullying.
 - Liaising with the relevant Achievement Leaders and Tutors regarding any incidents of bullying
 - Communicating directly with parents/carers over specific incidents of bullying
- 4.5 Teachers are responsible for:
- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
 - Being available for students who wish to report bullying.
 - Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
 - Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the student's Tutor and Achievement Leader of such observations.
 - Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
 - Understanding the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the targets of bullying.
 - Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.
- 4.6 Parents are responsible for:
- Informing the school if they have any concerns that their child is the target of bullying or involved in bullying in any way.
 - Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

- 4.7 Students are responsible for:
- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a target of bullying.
 - Not making counter-threats if they are targets of bullying.
 - Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other students in incidents.
 - Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they become the target of cyber bullying.

5. Statutory implications

- 5.1 The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, targetisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 5.2 The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.
- 5.3 The Headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the Headteacher understands that they cannot do this without involving staff.
- 5.4 Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:
- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
 - The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
 - Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
 - Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

6. Prevention

- 6.1 The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole school.
- 6.2 All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.

- 6.3 Staff will encourage student cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work.
- 6.4 All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum.
- 6.5 Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- 6.6 Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- 6.7 Potential targets of bullying are placed in working groups with other students who do not abuse or take advantage of others.
- 6.8 Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- 6.9 All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- 6.10 All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- 6.11 A safe place, supervised by a member of staff, is available for students to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone.
- 6.12 The staff member supervising the area will speak to students to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.
- 6.13 Students deemed vulnerable, as defined in section two, will meet with their Form Tutor/Pastoral Support Assistant regularly to ensure any problems can be addressed quickly.
- 6.14 Student Support Staff will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing students to discuss any bullying, whether they are targets or have witnessed an incident.
- 6.15 Before a vulnerable student joins the school, the student's Achievement Leader will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening - this will include giving the student a buddy to help integrate them into the school.
- 6.16 The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst students, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- 6.17 The school will ensure potential perpetrators of bullying are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.
- 6.18 The school's student wellbeing ambassadors will be given appropriate training to help them identify signs of bullying and how to report this to staff

7. Signs of bullying

- 7.1 Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a target of bullying:
- Being frightened to travel to or from school
 - Asking to be driven to school
 - Unwillingness to attend school
 - Truancy
 - Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
 - Saying that they feel ill in the morning
 - Decreased involvement in school work
 - Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
 - Missing possessions
 - Missing dinner money
 - Asking for extra money or stealing
 - Cuts or bruises
 - Lack of appetite
 - Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
 - Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
 - Lack of eye contact
 - Becoming short tempered
 - Change in behaviour and attitude at home
- 7.2 Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues which should be investigated.
- 7.3 Students who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.
- 7.4 In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:
- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the student becoming aggravated
 - They have been the target of domestic abuse
 - Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed
- 7.5 If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will report this to the Safeguarding Team. The Team will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.
- ## **8. Staff principles**
- 8.1 The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.
- 8.2 Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- 8.3 Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored.

- 8.4 Staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- 8.5 Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the target has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- 8.6 If a member of staff believes a student is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) immediately.
- 8.7 Follow-up support is given to both the target and perpetrator in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9. Preventing peer-on-peer sexual abuse

- 9.1 The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- 9.2 Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline.
- 9.3 Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence.
- 9.4 Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:
- Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- 9.5 The school's Safeguarding Policy outlines our stance on addressing peer-on-peer sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence are uncovered.
- 9.6 To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate students about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE/RSE lessons.
- 9.7 The school will also ensure that students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE/RSE lessons, and group sessions. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as the following:
- Healthy relationships
 - Respectful behaviour

- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
 - Body confidence and self-esteem
 - Prejudiced behaviour
 - That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
 - Addressing cultures of sexual harassment
- 9.8 All staff will be aware that students of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers and will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.
- 9.9 All staff will be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, students being sexually touched or assaulted, and students being subjected to hazing/initiation type of violence which aims to cause physical, emotional or psychological harm.
- 9.10 All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of students with SEND, who are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.
- 9.11 Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the student’s SEND and will always explore indicators further.
- 9.12 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) children can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBT, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBT children.
- 9.13 Students will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled - this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.
- 9.14 If a child has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to social services (First Response).

Managing disclosures

- 9.15 Targets will always be taken seriously, reassured, supported and kept safe.
- 9.16 Targets will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem or made to feel ashamed.
- 9.17 If a friend of a target makes a report or a member of staff overhears a conversation, staff will act - they will never assume that someone else will deal with it. The basic principles remain the same as when a target reports an incident; however, staff will consider why the target has not chosen to make a report themselves and the discussion will be handled sensitively and with the help of social services where necessary. If staff are in any doubt, they will speak to the DSL.
- 9.18 The DSL will be informed of any allegations of abuse against students with SEND. They will record the incident using the school’s monitoring system, working with the SENCo, decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the student in mind at all times.

Confidentiality

- 9.19 The school will only engage with staff and agencies required to support the target and/or be involved in any investigation.

- 9.20 If a target asks the school not to tell anyone about the disclosure, the school will not make this promise.
- 9.21 Even without the target's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm.
- 9.22 The DSL will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:
- Parents will be informed unless it will place the target at greater risk.
 - If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to Social Services (First Response).
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes – reports containing any such crimes will be passed to the Police.
- 9.23 More information regarding the school's stance on preventing peer-on-peer sexual abuse is available in our Safeguarding Policy.
- 9.24 Student confidentiality will be maintained in line with the Safeguarding Policy, Data Protection (GDPR) Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

10. Cyber bullying

- 10.1 The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying.
- 10.2 The school views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in section 12 this policy if they become aware of any incidents.
- 10.3 The school will support students who have been targets of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the student about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with section 13 and section 14 of this policy.
- 10.4 In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.
- 10.5 If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there are reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the Police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
- 10.6 If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the Headteacher or an SLT member will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.
- 10.7 The school's Behaviour Policy will be followed at all times in relation to any searches conducted by staff on students.

11. Procedures

- 11.1 Minor incidents are reported to the Student Support Team, who investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and informs the Achievement Leader and Form Tutor, recording the incident and outcome.

- 11.2 When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:
- The target, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately
 - Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students being interviewed, including electronic communication
 - If a student is injured, members of staff take the student for first aid and trained staff will assess if further medical intervention is required
 - A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
 - A second staff member will be present during interviews involving serious incidents
 - If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the target and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
 - Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
 - Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
 - All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students
- 11.3 Due to the potential for sexist/transphobic/sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for a safeguarding referral to be made.

12. Sanctions

- 12.1 Achievement Leader/Student Support Staff member is satisfied that bullying did take place, the student will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- 12.2 The Achievement Leader/Student Support Staff member informs the student of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (e.g. reflection task, detentions) and future sanctions if the bullying continues. Further instances, or one-off instances of a serious nature would result in more significant sanctions such as isolation or exclusion.
- 12.3 If possible, an appropriate member of staff will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the target (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the target's full consent. Discretion is used here; targets will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.
- 12.4 Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- 12.5 The Student Support Team member informally monitors the students regularly to ensure no further incidents occur.

13. Support

- 13.1 If necessary, negative group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes.
- 13.2 The target is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

- 13.3 The target is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining a lunchtime or after-school club or activity.
- 13.4 The school will work with the target to build resilience, e.g. by offering mentoring or counselling support.
- 13.5 The school realises that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Where appropriate, perpetrators will be given support with any such issues.
- 13.6 The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems, where appropriate.

14. Follow-up support

- 14.1 The progress of both the perpetrator and the target are monitored by their Achievement Leader.
- 14.2 One-to-one sessions to discuss how the target and perpetrator are progressing may be appropriate.
- 14.3 If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents after the incident.
- 14.4 Students who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:
- Being listened to
 - Having an opportunity to meet with a trusted adult
 - Being reassured
 - Being offered continued support
 - Being offered counselling, where appropriate
- 14.5 Students who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:
- Receiving a consequence for their actions
 - Being able to discuss what happened
 - Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
 - Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
 - Appropriate assistance from parents
- 14.6 Students who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the Inclusion Manager will, if necessary, refer the target of bullying to CAMHS.
- 14.7 In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the student cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the school will consider a transfer for the student to another mainstream school.
- 14.8 Where a child has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the student who has been the target of bullying, their parents, the Headteacher/SLT Member will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

15. Bullying outside of school

- 15.1 The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Headteacher/Principal the power to regulate

students' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

- 15.2 Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.
- 15.3 Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on.
- 15.4 In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the student on school premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.
- 15.5 The Headteacher or SLT member is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the Police of the action taken against a student.
- 15.6 If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the Police are always informed.