



**The Study Prep**  
WIMBLEDON

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

This Policy applies to all pupils including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Study Preparatory believes that members of our school community should be treated with respect and consideration. We are committed to ensuring that everyone is treated equally and that the School provides a safe and happy environment for all, including those who are particularly vulnerable. Our school policy is to promote this belief so pupils, parents and teachers are fully aware that if there are any indications of bullying, action will be taken immediately. All concerns or suspected cases will be dealt with promptly, sensitively, fairly and firmly.

We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination of any kind, and we work hard to prevent these, or deal with them appropriately if they do occur. The School is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, religion, culture, sex and sexual orientation, gender, belief, gender reassignment special educational needs, disability or learning difficulty, or the fact that a child is adopted, in care or is a carer.

This policy has been drafted with regard to the DfE advice 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2017), the ISI Regulatory Handbook, the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education guidelines (2021) and the Equality Act 2010.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY**

1. To define what we understand as bullying.
2. To prevent bullying as far as possible.
3. To ensure that, where suspected cases do occur, all pupils, staff and parents know what procedures to follow.

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

The DfE's definition of bullying:

**"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 (including: 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.”**

Bullying is a perpetual problem which cannot be eliminated entirely. It may happen at school or outside of school. It occurs in the context of children growing up and learning how to get on with each other. Being bullied can seriously affect a child’s mental and physical health and their educational development.

**Bullying can be:**

**Physical:** hitting, kicking, pinching, and grabbing an individual.

**Verbal:** name- calling, teasing, sarcasm, spreading rumours, insults, including racist taunts.

**Emotional:** excluding, tormenting, being unfriendly or threatening, including taking belongings.

**Intellectual:** making someone feel uncomfortable regarding academic, intellectual performance or ability.

**Cyber:** bullying via social networking websites, phone calls, text messages, photographs or emails) - deliberately to upset someone else. Cyberbullying can include a wide range of unacceptable behaviours, including harassment, threats and insults, and, like face-to-face bullying, is designed to cause distress and harm.

In girls’ schools, if bullying occurs, it often takes the form of name calling, or exclusion from groups or friendships. This should not be confused with the “falling out”, and “making up the next day” that frequently occurs between girls of this age (which is addressed in school too). For this reason, bullying can be defined as the repeated unkindness by individuals or groups. The Merton Council threshold for what constitutes bullying defines it as behaviour that is **intentional** and **usually repeated over time** that physically or emotionally hurts another individual or group.

**Vulnerable Children**

Some children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others. For example:

- Children who are ‘different’ in some way (for example, children with special needs, from different cultures etc).
- Children who have recently suffered bereavement.
- Children with irritating habits.

Some children may be more likely than others to become bullies. For example:

- Children who don’t ‘fit in’ with others.
- Children who may have been ‘spoiled’.
- Children who may themselves have been bullied e.g. by adults or older siblings.
- Children under great pressure to succeed.
- Children who have no sense of achievement.
- Children who have recently suffered a ‘traumatic’ event eg parental divorce, birth of a new baby.

**PREVENTION/STRATEGIES TO MINIMISE BULLYING**

**Promote a culture of kindness and consideration**

The best way to cut down on bullying within a school is to promote a culture of consideration. Pupils should all learn to be kind and respectful of each other’s needs. The behaviour of adults must serve as a role model. This culture should be promoted at all times in school - as well as being highlighted specifically in circle time, class discussion time, PSHE lessons and assemblies - and not just introduced when there is a perceived need. This culture must involve everyone within the school – all pupils and all adults. Year 6 pupils are ‘buddies’ to Year 4 and pupils in Years 1-3 are ‘playground buddies’ and approach any pupil sitting on the Friendship Bench. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to be trained by EQPrep (our school counselling/mental health service) as ‘peer mentors’ to support pupils in the Spencer House playground.

Our Values Based Education enriches our school community and helps fulfil our aim to provide a learning environment that fosters academic and creative achievement while nurturing well-rounded, confident, caring girls with a love of learning, a broad outlook, good manners and a real zest for life. Each half term there is a focus on one value and this involves everyone: teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, as well as the pupils. Parents are encouraged to reinforce this value at home, as well as building on the other values we have covered. Values include Kindness, Resilience, Courage, Compassion, Honesty

EQPrep run PSHE workshops with Reception to Year 6, once a term, to foster the development of emotional intelligence and support our pupils to become well rounded, happy, resilient and confident individuals, able to cope with the ups and downs of life, including in a cyber-context. These workshops support our PSHE curriculum. EQPrep also run bespoke workshops with particular groups of pupils when a particular issue is identified.

### **Promote a culture of ‘speaking out’**

The School encourages a culture of ‘speaking out’ so that pupils understand the importance of ‘telling’ when they, or one of their peers, is being made unhappy by the behaviour of others, including behaviour occurring outside school. However, pupils will only tell if they know that within the school telling someone is acceptable and that this is to improve the situation and not to get others into trouble. Children who are victims of bullying should feel safe to tell someone – this may be a friend, a teacher or a parent. They should know that whoever they tell about the problem will then do something to help. They should know that they will not get into trouble for ‘telling’ and that the adult will do something about the problem. Children who know that bullying is happening should always tell an adult, who will then do something about the problem. Children who see bullying taking place should intervene if this is sensible, and tell an adult the details of the incident as soon as possible. All of this is made clear to pupils at The Study through PSHE lessons, assemblies and form time.

EQPrep offers a weekly drop-in ‘chat’ session at Spencer House. This provides an opportunity for girls to work through any concerns or friendship troubles. EQPrep encourages mindful problem resolution whilst developing self-esteem, resilience and relationship skills. If a girl presents a problem which they think constitutes ‘bullying’ or another issue that needs support, they will speak directly to the Deputy, one of the DSLs or Assistant Head, depending on the nature of the issue.

### **Build self-esteem and promote good social skills**

Both children who bully, and those who are bullied, frequently have low self-esteem or poor social skills. Building self-esteem is essential. At every opportunity staff should give pupils (and the whole class) positive comments and lots of compliments, and cut down on moans! Staff should try to always be positive and approach problems from a “What do you think we should do to help ....?” rather than an “I think you should.....” perspective. Pupils should be encouraged to make their own decisions and the School has Golden Rules (for behaviour) at both Houses which were drawn up by the pupils through the School Council. They are clearly displayed around the School and are regularly mentioned in assembly and class time, linking them where appropriate to the current Value. To encourage positive behaviour and joint responsibility in the playground and at lunch time, the pupils have also drawn up *Playground* and *Lunchtime Rules*. The School Council acts as a ‘pupils’ voice’, enabling pupils to feel involved/empowered.

### **Ensure safe and respectful e-safety culture**

Pupils are taught how to use the technology systems in accordance with the School’s acceptable user policy (for Prep school pupils these are stuck into their Link books) and all pupils sign a Computing Agreement at the beginning of every new school year. The School expects pupils to treat each other on-line with the same standards of consideration and good manners as they would in the course of face to face contact. All pupils are encouraged to look after each other and to report any concerns about the misuse of technology to a member of staff. The School will impose a range of sanctions on any pupil who misuses technology to bully, harass or abuse another pupil in line with this policy. Older pupils who walk to school are permitted to bring a mobile phone into school but they must be handed into the office at the start of the school day. Permitted use of cameras and mobile phones is detailed in the ‘Digital Camera and Mobile Phone Policy’ and

is explained to prep school pupils as part of their PSHE lessons. Pupils are taught about cyber bullying and its consequences through Computing and PSHE lessons, as well as regular E-Safety training. Further details of this are set out in the E Safety policy. We have an annual visit from Child Net to reinforce our education programme on-line safety.

### **Staff training and awareness**

All staff receive training on E-safety and cyberbullying forms part of the Safeguarding training. New staff are briefed on anti-bullying strategies as part of their Induction and our Policy is reviewed by staff annually. Staff are encouraged to discuss bullying and behaviour incidents at Staff Briefings to ensure a deep understanding of issues. Staff are aware that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In the event of this happening, staff will inform the DSL, who will investigate the matter and consider the need to seek advice from social services to support the pupil being bullied and/or to tackle any underlying issue, which has contributed to a pupil engaged in bullying. All efforts should be made to find out the cause of the bullying to enable the correct response to be made. At The Study, bullying will not be passed off as 'part of growing up' or banter. Staff are aware that bullying can include matters such as gender based violence, sexual assaults and sexting but given the School's profile, these are not deemed high risk.

### **Strategies:**

- Close supervision of pupils within the school – especially in the playground.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to discuss feelings of vulnerability.
- Staff are always available to talk to pupils.
- Motivate peer pressure so that pupils take an active stand against bullying behaviour.
- Encourage pupils to utilise the counselling 'drop in' sessions held by EQPrep or talk to any trusted adult

### **Cyber-bullying**

#### **Roles and responsibilities for online safety:**

**DSLs:** The School's Designated Safeguarding Leads have all been trained in safety issues resulting from misuse of the internet and online safety

**Technical Staff:** The School's ICT staff are responsible for ensuring that the IT infrastructure is not open to misuse or malicious attack and ensure that users may only access the networks through an enforced password protection policy. He/she will also ensure that appropriate filters are in place for pupils to access the internet safely and will implement any agreed monitoring software. He/She will alert the Head/DSL to any safeguarding issues or security breaches that arise. Personal data is managed in line with statutory requirements- please see the School's Privacy Notices.

**The School's Computing Lead:** He/She will report e-safety incidents to the DSL and ensure that staff receive training on E-safety and the School's policies. He/She will ensure that parents are offered regular E-safety guidance and information on online safety.

**Role of Teaching and Support Staff:** Teaching staff should have an up to date awareness of e-safety matters and of the current School E-safety Policy and practices. They should report any suspected misuse or problem to the DSL. Staff are not permitted to give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to parents or pupils and should not communicate with them by text message, personal email or social media. Full details of these guidelines are set out in the Staff Code of Conduct and associated policies, including the IT Acceptable Use Policy and Digital Camera and Mobile Phone Policy.

**Teaching staff** should be aware that e-safety issues are embedded in all aspects of the curriculum and other School activities and should ensure pupils understand and follow the School E-Safety Policy. They monitor ICT activity in lessons and extra-curricular activities and are aware of e-safety issues related to the use of mobile phones, cameras and hand

held devices, as well as monitoring their use and implementing current School policies with regard to these devices. In lessons where Internet use is pre-planned, pupils should be guided to sites pre-viewed as suitable for their use and if unsuitable material is found in Internet searches, this is reported immediately to the Computing Lead and/or ICT staff.

## **DEALING WITH BULLYING**

### **Recording Incidents of Bullying**

We use an electronic system, CPOMS, for recording and monitoring all pastoral, safeguarding and well-being issues. All staff are trained on the use of CPOMS as part of their induction. If they have any technical issues, they should liaise directly with the Office Manager.

### **Staff**

Should staff observe bullying, or a problem is reported, whether this concerns bullying in school, bullying outside of school or cyberbullying, normally the incident should be referred to the form teacher and/or Assistant Head to deal with. They will:

#### **1. Find out the facts:**

- Check CPOMS, and pupils' individual files if necessary, for previous incidents and consult with colleagues to find out relevant history/background (The Pastoral Care Issues Record, in the shared folders, should also be referred to for incidents prior to January 2022.)
- Consult with relevant staff. Talk first to the pupil who is being bullied. Make her feel at ease, give her time to explain the situation, make notes and pass no immediate judgement.
- Make it clear that the problems will be treated seriously and looked into as a matter of urgency.
- Talk to the bully/bullies/other pupils involved (e.g. passive by-standers). Listen to her/their side; try to get them to understand how the pupil being bullied is feeling; make it clear that the bullying behaviour must stop immediately; encourage them to make their own suggestions as to what they can do to help. When talking be firm but be careful not to use bullying techniques yourself (i.e. don't threaten or humiliate).

#### **1) Take appropriate measures**

Depending on the situation, normally it is appropriate to get the pupils concerned together so the bully can apologise and the pupils can be reconciled. Clear expectations should be laid down e.g. expected behaviour and attitudes. Both the bullied and bullies should know that the situation will be monitored by the teacher concerned.

- Arrange a follow-up session to see how things are going.
- Always inform the Deputy Head.
- Take any practical measures which you feel are necessary e.g. change seating in class, etc.
- Inform the parents (in certain circumstances it may be more appropriate for the Assistant Head or Head to do this).
- All staff should be made aware of the situation at the Weekly Briefing, or sooner if necessary by email.
- Record the incident, the measures taken and any follow up action on CPOMS, copying in all relevant staff.
- This acts as a central registry for incidents to detect any trend.
- Both the perpetrator and the bullied pupil should be given appropriate subsequent pastoral care and monitoring
- Disciplinary measures will be applied consistently and fairly, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities, as well as the needs of more vulnerable pupils
- If the behaviour is serious or continuous, the Assistant Head, Head or Deputy will talk to the pupil about her behaviour. The School will implement disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. In cases of severe and persistent bullying, exclusion may be necessary.

## **2) Monitor the situation**

The situation should be monitored until everyone is satisfied there is no further issue. As well as short term monitoring, staff will review over two or three months whether the action taken has prevented the recurrence of the bullying and ensured that the pupil feels safe again.

All staff are responsible for monitoring and dealing with bullying behaviour within the School.

All issues recorded on CPOMS are monitored by the Deputy Head to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

### **Children**

Children who are victims of bullying or feel that bullying is happening know that they should tell someone – in school, this is likely to be their form teacher, but they know that they can go to any member of staff. They know that whoever they tell about the problem will then do something to help. They know that they will not get into trouble for ‘telling’ and that the adult will do something about the problem. All of this is made to clear to pupils through PSHE lessons and assemblies.

### **Parents**

Parents who suspect that a child is either the victim or the perpetrator of bullying, including cyber-bullying and bullying both in and outside school, are encouraged to discuss the matter with their daughter’s form teacher as soon as possible, or in her absence, the Assistant Head, Head or Deputy. Often it is difficult to detect bullying and so it is important that parents should inform a member of staff if they are concerned.

### **LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

**Policy Reviewed: February 2022**