

## Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures

BETHANY SCHOOL  
CURTISDEN GREEN  
GOUDHURST  
KENT

**Pupils' views on why Bethany has an Anti-Bullying Policy**

Bethany has an anti-bullying policy to protect our safety and happiness.

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## 1. Introduction

This policy is provided to parents of all pupils and is both known and available to all staff and all pupils.

The School aims to create a safe and secure environment in which pupils develop confidence and self-discipline and expects all members of the community to treat one another with kindness and consideration. Pupil behaviour is expected to reflect high standards of courtesy and self-control. We strive to ensure that all our pupils' time at Bethany is a happy one encouraging kindness and consideration for one another and actively discouraging bullying. Isolated acts of unkindness or a lack of proper consideration for others may not be seen in themselves as bullying but are, nonetheless, serious offences, as each individual has the right to be treated with kindness and respect.

All pupils and staff should avoid at all times prejudice-based language. The issues of unkindness, lack of consideration for one another and bullying, whether it be cultural, relating to disability, emotional, LGBTQ+, physical, racial, religious, relating to Special Educational Needs, sexual, sexist or any type of cyber-bullying, form part of the Tutor and PSHCE programmes. The School will do its utmost to protect pupils from any action that may damage them in any way and staff will take appropriate and timely action when pupils are found guilty of them. Pupils who are unkind, lack consideration or bully can therefore expect to be punished, in line with the School Disciplinary Policy, including the possibility of exclusion for repeated or very serious cases.

However, the School is limited in its ability to intervene or act with regard to any form of unkindness, lack of consideration or bullying unless we are made aware of the incident or situation. Pupils should not hesitate to, in fact they **must**, talk to someone. This could be a Tutor, a member of House staff, the School Nurse or Counsellor, the Chaplain, the Deputy Head or the Headmaster - we all have a duty of care not only to protect potential victims but also to help those who are the perpetrators. Pupils may prefer to talk to a Prefect or House Monitor; they understand the duty of care and will pass on their concerns to the appropriate person. There is also a mailbox in the dining room and we carry out regular anti-bullying surveys of the pupil body. Our younger pupils have a genuine sense of duty and they are encouraged to find someone to talk to about acts of unkindness, lack of consideration as well as a (potential or real) bullying incident.

Any member of staff will help and support both victim and perpetrator but the School Counsellor / Therapist, in particular, is 'out of the loop' and she fulfils a valuable role in talking through all the issues surrounding incidents of unkindness, lack of consideration and bullying as well as offering support, advice and coping strategies for either party.

## Our aims:

- The School aims to create a stable and secure environment in which pupils develop confidence and self-discipline. Routines, structures and rules are a necessary means to achieving these aims.
- Pupils should be familiar with behavioural expectations; be treated as individuals within the overall School context and perceive correction as a learning experience.
- Sanctions should be known, clear and as brief as possible in application. Incidents should be dealt with without undue delay and once dealt with should not be resurrected, other than as part of a positive learning experience. Disapproval should be of the action, never the person.
- Pupils' Tutors have responsibility for their day-to-day well-being, as well as for their academic progress. House Staff have *in loco parentis* responsibility for boarders and a watching brief for day pupils.
- The School will encourage pupils and staff to speak to someone if they feel under pressure from others. The pupils will have the name of someone outside the School with whom contact can easily be made.
- School and House officials will be encouraged to take seriously the need to actively support pupils under pressure and to communicate to staff any incident of bullying or any other aspect of pastoral concern.
- Pupil and Staff behaviour is expected to reflect high standards of appearance, courtesy and self-control. A lack of proper consideration for others is a serious offence.

## 2. Bullying

“Bullying is among the top concerns that parents have about their children’s safety at and on the way to and from school. Bullying is also a top concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on its victims attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people’s lives. At worst, bullying has been a factor in pupil suicide.”

*Executive Summary #1, Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in school*

The School aims to create a safe and secure environment in which pupils develop self-confidence and self-discipline. In such an environment bullying has no place and we as staff must take a firm line whenever an instance of bullying is brought to our attention. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

Bullying is the deliberate and repetitive attempt, usually/often over a period of time, by one person or group to intentionally hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group. It can cause great distress to the victim(s), it may cause psychological damage and in extreme circumstances it can lead to children committing suicide. It can take many forms: emotional, physical, verbal and it can occur through cyberspace and other impersonal means.

Examples of bullying include

Threats

Teasing

Name-calling

Interfering with someone's property

Making fun of someone because: they are adopted, they are carers, of their appearance, colour, culture, disability, faith, gender, race, religion, special educational need, sexuality, shape or speech

Spreading rumours

Homophobic behaviour

Deliberate shoving and pushing

Physical assault

Any method electronic or digital of cyber-bullying via, for example, text messages, instant messenger services, social network sites, email, images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phone

Initiation ceremonies that are intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation (NMBS 2.4)

### What do we do about it?

The issue of bullying forms part of the Tutor and PSHCE programmes starting in Year 7 and developing as a pupil moves up the school. It will also be addressed within the curriculum, in subjects like English, History and RS, as well as in House and School Assemblies and Chapel. Cyber bullying forms part of the School's bi-annual cyber safety evening, usually held in November.

Pupils will be given the opportunity to discuss various aspects of the problem with the aim of helping not only victims cope more easily with bullies, but also getting potential bullies to see things from the victim's point of view; and help them to realise that adults

do have the ability to stop bullying. This also includes discussion of the differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.

Staff and senior pupils (School Prefects and House Monitors) are made aware of the seriousness of and impact that bullying can have on pupils through their induction and ongoing training; this includes encouraging them to be active in watching out for those unsupervised areas, situations and times when bullying could take place. Such training ensures that the principles of the school's policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems and sources of support are available. Where appropriate the school will source additional training to support the understanding of the needs of our pupils should they include these with special educational needs or disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils.

When psychological damage results from such behaviour appropriate medical advice and guidance will be sought via the school Medical Centre.

Whilst remaining alert and vigilant at all times, we act most effectively if we are kept informed.

- Pupils who are being bullied should inform a member of staff they feel they can talk to. (See page 3 paragraph 3)
- Pupils who think someone else is being bullied should inform a member of staff. Stamping out bullying is everybody's responsibility.
- In both these cases pupils might find it easier to talk, in the first instance, to a School or House official. They will have received training in how to deal with such issues.
- Staff, we must act promptly according to the school's Anti-bullying Policy & Procedure.

### 3. Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedure

This policy is written mainly with pupils in mind but the policy applies equally to every member of the School community as no one should be subject to bullying nor need to suffer in silence.

#### 3.1 Aims:

- To ensure that pupils are able to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- To ensure that pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders

- To ensure that all staff are trained, vigilant and alert to the signs of bullying
- To ensure that all staff act promptly and firmly against incidents of suspected or reported bullying
- To ensure that clear steps are taken to help and support the victim
- To ensure that appropriate disciplinary sanctions are applied and that clear steps are taken to help and support the perpetrator
- To ensure a satisfactory outcome by working with the parents of both parties and also, when and where appropriate, outside agencies
- To protect confidentiality as necessary
- To ensure that the school is in line with the requirements of:  
'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (DfE 2013)  
'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools' (DfCSF 2007)  
'Education and Inspections Act 2006'  
'School Standards and Framework Act 1998'

Further information and guidance can be accessed from various websites;

[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

[www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)

[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

## 3.2 Implementation:

1. Incidents of suspected or reported bullying should be referred to and dealt with by Tutors in the first instance. Depending on the nature or the seriousness of the incident Housemasters/mistresses and/or Deputy Head and/or Headmaster will then become involved.
2. A Tutor should offer an immediate opportunity for the pupil who has been bullied to report and discuss the bullying incident. The pupil's concern for confidentiality (and possibly 'no action') should be noted but the pupil should be reassured that their safety is paramount. The tutor should explain to the pupil what they intend to do about the incident.
3. A Tutor should record written notes as soon as possible using, in the first instance, the Anti-bullying Incident Aide Memoire Form ensuring the accuracy in recalling events later. A copy should be given to the relevant Housemaster/mistress and, if necessary, the Deputy Head and/or Headmaster. For a more serious incident then the Safeguarding Incident/Concern may also be used, copied and passed on.
4. The Tutor of the victim(s) should then make contact with the tutor (and if appropriate the Housemaster/mistress) of the perpetrator.
5. If the victim is in agreement the tutor of the perpetrator should give him or her the opportunity to put their side of the incident.
6. This tutor should record written notes as soon as possible using, in the first instance, the Pupil Statement form and if further information needs to be gather then the Anti-bullying Incident Aide Memoire Form to ensure accuracy of recalling

- events later. A copy should be given to the relevant Housemaster/mistress and, if necessary, the Deputy Head and/or Headmaster. For a more serious incident than the Safeguarding Incident/Concern may also be used, copied and passed on.
7. The tutor(s) or Housemaster(s)/mistress(es) and/or the Deputy Head and/or the Headmaster should make contact with the parents of both parties and meetings may be arranged.
  8. Support is offered to both parties; in house, via the School counsellor therapist or with outside agencies.
  9. A 'conflict resolution' or Restorative Justice meetings between parties may be used.
  10. Occasionally parents telephone a tutor to report a bullying incident on behalf of their child (often without the child's knowledge). Tutors should consult with the Housemaster/mistress and/or Deputy Head and/or Headmaster so that a specific procedure for that particular incident can be instigated – this may often involve staff, both academic and ancillary, as well as School & House officials keeping a 'watching brief' for this particular child.
  11. Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the matter is then treated as a child protection issue and will then be reported, as appropriate, to external agencies including as appropriate the police or children's social care by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff should have no hesitation in consulting with the DSL.
  12. To record incidences of bullying, the school uses a bullying aide-memoire and there is a central log held and updated by the DSL. Where there a child protection concern a green form is completed by the DSL and a child protection file is opened.

### 3.3 Procedures:

Bullied children can be extremely scared that talking to an adult who then intervenes will make matters worse; giving the child reassurances is therefore a vital first step. A child's wish to speak in confidence should be respected, with the clear proviso that if the adult (or School or House official) is told something which is cause for concern about the child's safety or well-being the adult (or School or House official) will have an obligation to discuss the matter with someone in authority – the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or Headmaster.

#### **A discussion with a bullied child should:**

- Reassure them that, as far as possible, confidentiality will be kept
- Identify clearly what is upsetting them
- Encourage their sense of self-worth
- Remind them that no one deserves to be treated unkindly



- Look at assertive ways to respond to unkindness
- Encourage them to help themselves by identifying moments which may have triggered unkindness and look at ways to handle such situations
- Encourage their sense of humour
- Reassure them that more help and support will be forthcoming

### A discussion with a bullying child should:

- Clearly identify what is unacceptable in their behaviour
- Ask the child for their point of view
- Try to get them to see the other person's point of view
- Try to get them to appreciate the other person's feelings
- Look at other ways to handle an irritation or dislike
- Make a clear statement that this behaviour must stop
- Explain why sanctions have been issued

If the bullying behaviour continues then the Tutor, or adult who has been handling the situation, will inform and work in conjunction with the appropriate Housemaster/mistress and then consult the Deputy Head and/or Headmaster if more assertive intervention is necessary. The bullying child will be told clearly which aspects of their behaviour must change immediately and that the consequences of continuing to act unkindly will be severe. It may well be appropriate at this point to involve the bully's parents. The peer group(s) should be made aware of their collective responsibility to support the bullied child and to help the bully to effect a change by expressing their liking of them but their disapproval of their behaviour. Throughout the various processes and procedures dealing with bullying incidents any sanctions imposed will be in accordance with the School's disciplinary procedures. If these steps are ineffective then the School reserves the right to express its strong opposition to bullying by suspension and, *in extremis*, expulsion.

## 4. Cyber-Bullying -

Mobile, Internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide. But their popularity provides increasing opportunities for misuse through cyber-bullying. It is crucial that children and young people, who are particularly skilful at adapting to new technology, use their mobiles and the Internet safely and positively, and that they are aware of the consequences of misuse. School staff, parents and young people have to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying and tackle it wherever it appears.

The advent of cyber-bullying adds new dimensions to the problem of bullying. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyber-bullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours; there is no safe haven for the person being bullied. Cyber-bullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed, and can often remain unseen and unidentifiable. They will often act anonymously.

At the same time, recent national media coverage has shown that this new technology has the potential to be used by pupils to abuse and undermine staff and therefore implicit in the guidance, policies and sanctions set out is the need to protect staff as well.

There is also the potential for staff to misuse the technology to the detriment of colleagues and / or pupils. Such cases would be classed as misconduct and as such would consequently be dealt with through standard staff disciplinary procedures. Further information about school procedures with reference to e safety and cyber-bullying may be in the E Safety and Computer Usage Policy.

### What is cyber-bullying?

Research commissioned by the Anti-Bullying Alliance from Goldsmiths College, University of London, identifies seven categories of cyber-bullying:

**Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.

**Picture/video-clip bullying** via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.

**Phone call bullying** via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.

**Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.

**Chat room bullying** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.

**Bullying through instant messaging (IM)** is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online.

**Bullying via websites and social media** includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber-bullying.

**Bluetooth bullying** involves messages or images being sent from one user to another via bluetooth in an attempt to belittle that person or to intimidate and upset them.

### Who is most vulnerable?

Because of the anonymity that new communications technologies offer, anyone with a mobile phone or Internet connection can be a target for cyber-bullying. What's more, bullies can reach much larger numbers within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on a website, for instance, can be seen by a large audience, as can video clips sent by mobile phone.

Research suggests that most cyber-bullying is done by students in the same class or year group. Although it leaves no visible scars, cyber-bullying of all types can be extremely destructive and is taken very seriously by Bethany School.

### What can be done about it?

While other forms of bullying remain prevalent, cyber-bullying is already a significant issue for many young people. School staff, parents and young people need to work together to prevent this and to tackle it whenever it occurs. All pupils, staff and visitors sign the school's ICT acceptable use policy (see Annex C of the Behaviour and Discipline Policy)

There are a number of strands to the Bethany policy, including:

- Bullying via mobile phone or the Internet is included in our mandatory anti-bullying policies. These policies are regularly updated. Teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyber-bullying in school. The PSHCE curriculum teaches pupils about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely.
- E-communications used on the school site *or as part of school activities off-site* are monitored as far as it is possible
- Clear policies are set about the use of mobile phones at School and at other times when young people are under the School's authority

- Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked and we work with pupils and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local and national guidance and good practice We work with police and other partners on managing cyber-bullying. Parents are kept informed of the school standards and policies so that they can be applied at home as well as at school.
- We also work closely with our Area Safer Schools' Police Unit in order to monitor, educate and report incidences.
- Any sanctions imposed will be in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy and applied as and when appropriate.

### 5. Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are now a feature of modern society and most pupils, staff and parents own one. Increasing sophistication of mobile phone technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The high value of many phones
- The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential safeguarding and data protection issues.
- The potential to use the phone (eg. for texting or sending images) whilst on silent mode.

It is not realistic to prohibit phones being brought to School, nor is it logistically possible for schools to collect phones in each morning and return them in the afternoon. The current Bethany policy is to allow pupils to have a mobile phone with them in School under the conditions outlined in the policy below.

There should be very few occasions when pupils ever need to use a mobile phone for either sending or receiving information during any School day. However, it is appreciated that travel and other School arrangements can change at short notice and that many parents feel happier knowing that their son/daughter has access to a telephone for emergency use, and that on some occasions it would not be possible for School phones or the School Office to deal with a large volume of calls at short notice without delay and inconvenience for many or all concerned.

#### Rules for mobile phone use:

Pupils are not permitted to have their mobiles phones switched on (or in silent mode) during lessons, private study times, other formal school sessions or when in the dining room during normal school hours (8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.)

Phones must not be used for any purpose (e.g. phoning, texting, surfing the internet, taking photos, taking videos) at the above times.

Phones should never be used to take photos or videos either on school premises or during any school related activity (*the same applies to cameras, except with staff permission*).

Phones must never be taken into examinations.

### **Emergencies.**

If a pupil needs to contact their parents / guardians urgently they will be allowed to use a School phone (or their mobile at break-times).

If parents need to contact children urgently they should phone the School Office, in the first instance, and a message will be relayed promptly.

## Sanctions.

Pupils who do not observe the above rules will have their mobile phones confiscated for one week. The phones will be stored securely by the Senior Management Team. The member of staff confiscating the phone will insert the phone into a sealed A5 envelope with the pupil's name, date of confiscation, reason for confiscation and date of return written on the outside of the envelope when they hand it in to the SMT.

In cases where a pupil is found to have abused the use of a phone by indulging in cyber-bullying or similar, additional sanctions may be applied in accordance with the Bethany anti-bullying policy.

## Responsibility for Phones

The School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure mobile phones are properly insured and looked after.

## Staff Use.

As in other areas of school life, staff should set an example in the above areas. Therefore, mobiles phones should not be used by staff except in the above areas and staff should certainly not be using mobile phones during their teaching time.

**6. Appendix I Bullying Incident Aide Memoire Form**

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# Bethany School

## Bullying Incident Aide Memoire Form

Pupil name:	DoB:
	Year:                      House:

Your name & position:	Date of incident / concern:
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Incident / Concern (who, where, when, what):

How did that make you feel?

How do you think we can resolve this problem?

Action taken:

Signed:	Date:
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