

## Anti-Bullying Policy

**This policy applies to the Senior School and is published to parents, pupils and employees.**

This policy has regard to Department of Education Guidance:

- *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)*;
- *Supporting Children and Young People who are Bullied: Advice for Schools (March 2014)*,
- *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (November 2014)*,
- *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (May 2018)* and
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024)*.

This policy operates in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Agreement.

### 1. Aims and Objectives

- All governors, employees, pupils and parents should have a clear understanding of what type of behaviour is considered to be bullying as defined below;
- All governors, employees, pupils and parents should know what Bradford Grammar School's (the School) policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying occurs;
- All pupils and parents should be confident that there will be prompt action when bullying occurs and that there will be support for both the bully and the victim; and
- The School's policy covers all forms of bullying: physical, verbal, emotional, cultural, religious, psychological and online 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 online bullying via social media or gaming platforms, which can involve the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities.

Bullying can take place anywhere and at any time, including the journey to and from school, in changing rooms, corridors and the playground. It can happen outside school hours and away from the school site. It may involve sending notes or making phone calls intended to offend or upset another person. Bullying may occur via social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat, via gaming platforms or via email and may involve sending online messages, pictures or videos (sometimes of a sexually suggestive or explicit nature i.e. sexting or youth produced sexual imagery, also referred to as nudes or semi-nudes), or posting them on websites or social media, with the intention of hurting or humiliating someone. Online bullying of this kind will be treated just as if the bullying occurred face-to-face in school.

The School has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring away from the school premises, such as on school buses or public transport, or in the local community. Where bullying outside school is reported to School employees, it will be investigated and acted on. The School will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police.

Forcing unwanted attention on someone else, particularly in a sexual way, is also a form of bullying. The School recognises the need to manage all reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment between children in accordance with government guidance, involving external

agencies, including the police, as appropriate.

Bullying can involve using a third party to tease or torment someone and can involve complicity ("being a bystander") which falls short of direct participation. Bullying is not confined solely to relationships between young people but may also occur between employees and pupils. **At the School, bullying in any form will not be tolerated between pupils, or between employees and pupils.**

The School is committed to the emotional wellbeing of its pupils and takes all allegations of bullying seriously. All incidents of alleged bullying will be investigated thoroughly and before any adjustments or sanctions are imposed the School will work closely with the victim to ensure their views and wishes are considered. In extreme cases, if it is felt that a criminal offence has been committed (in terms of threatening behaviour or harassment) advice and assistance from the police may be sought.

The School will usually try to reconcile bully and victim, and help them both to move forward, the victim's wishes will always be considered before deciding on the most appropriate next steps and sanction.

The School openly acknowledges the seriousness of bullying, and its potential to affect the social, mental and emotional health of the victim. Victims of bullying are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem, and even blame themselves for "inviting" the bullying behaviour. This unhappiness is likely to affect their concentration and impair their learning. Some victims may experience stress-related symptoms such as stomach aches and headaches, nightmares or anxiety attacks. Some may avoid being bullied by not attending school. In extreme cases, bullying can lead to serious self-harm and even suicide.

The School also acknowledges that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways; it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

As stated in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the School recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Such child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in a number of ways e.g. sending or requesting nudes or semi-nudes, being sexually harassed or assaulted, boys being subject to initiation / hazing type violence. The School will never tolerate child-on-child abuse or pass it off as "banter" or "part of growing up" but the School recognises that the use of offensive language can itself have a significant impact on its target and, if left unchallenged or dismissed as "banter" or "just having a laugh". This can lead to a reluctance to report further bullying behaviour. The School aims to ensure early intervention in order to set clear expectations of what is and is not acceptable behaviour and stop negative behaviours escalating.

The School recognises relational aggression as a form of bullying which involves attempts to damage another person's friendships and social inclusion. This may include deliberate exclusion from friendship groups and generating or encouraging conditional friendships and hurtful gossip. Although such behaviour can be covert and difficult to prove, and perpetrators and witnesses often try to excuse it as "just joking", the School aims to investigate, identify and deal with relational aggression in line with the other forms of bullying identified in this policy.

## **2. Procedures to follow**

### **2.1 Reporting**

- Pupils are encouraged to bring any instance of bullying to the attention of an employee.
- All employees must be responsive to allegations of bullying and must inform the relevant form tutor(s) and/or Head(s) of Year if they are aware of an allegation.
- It is essential that pupils have the confidence that all allegations are taken seriously and acted upon. The incident must always be recorded on the Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) and investigated thoroughly.

### **2.2 Investigation and Response**

- Initial investigation will involve speaking to the victim and gaining and understanding of their feelings and wishes. As much as possible, these will be taken into account. However, the School will work in the best interests of the pupils involved in order to reduce harm. If an incident is extreme, then the police may be involved due to there being a criminal offence occurring.
- The parents of the bully and the victim may be informed, and the parents of the bully may be asked to come into school for a meeting.
- In some cases, assistance will be sought from the School Counsellor and/or external specialist agencies (such as local authority children's services, or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) to support the victims and bullies.
- Victims of bullying will receive support and help to develop strategies for dealing with bullying. It is recognised that the self-esteem of victims of bullying may need rebuilding.
- Consideration will also be given to the reasons for the bully's behaviour and to how they can be helped to avoid repeating such behaviour in future.
- Disciplinary action may be taken against the bully, who may be required to give a written assurance that they will not be involved in or responsible for any further incidents of bullying.
- After an incident, steps will be taken to ensure that the problem does not re-surface. Experience suggests that bullying will not take place again if the perpetrator knows that there will be follow-up. A member of the Pastoral Team will follow up an incident of bullying with at least one further meeting with the perpetrator after the initial incident with the aim of ensuring there is no repetition of this behaviour.

## **3. Raising awareness of bullying**

All members of the school community have a responsibility to prevent such occurrences of bullying. It is important that everyone at the School knows that bullying will not be tolerated and this message must be reinforced frequently. All pupils must understand the School's approach and be clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves faced with the choice of being an "upstander" rather than a "bystander. The message will be delivered through:

- the Personal Development (PD) programme;
- assemblies (both year group and whole school);
- the work of Form Tutors and Heads of Year;
- the Pastoral Prefects' work with younger year groups (including mentoring);
- the Student Voice councils;
- Anti-Bullying Week activities;
- the student version of the Anti-Bullying Policy (see appendix) displayed in form rooms;
- meetings with and letters to parents to raise awareness of the key anti-bullying messages delivered to pupils at the School;
- projects, drama, stories, literature, with discussion of current affairs and of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language; and

- training for employees both within School as part of continued professional development, and through external courses attended by individuals, from which they feed back to colleagues.

All employees at the School are required to read and familiarise themselves with the School's Anti-Bullying Policy. Employees are expected to set a good example to pupils and to encourage and promote good behaviour from pupils and an expectation that bullying will always be challenged by the School.

It is particularly important that pupils are encouraged to speak to an employee if they experience or know of incidents of bullying taking place. Research suggest that bullying rarely ceases without intervention from employees, and although victims often worry that telling an employee will make matters worse, it is clear that the unchallenged bully may consider their behaviour acceptable or lack the emotional intelligence to appreciate the impact that they have on their victim.

The PSHE scheme of work includes various themes which promote an understanding of the issues involved in bullying, such as self-esteem, dealing with difference, having respect for others, forming positive relationships, and being a responsible member of the community.

It is also important for parents to be informed of the anti-bullying message by means of School correspondence and the School's website. The School will consult pupils, through Student Voice councils and occasional surveys, in order to ascertain the incidence of bullying within the School and also to enable any patterns to be identified.

Where appropriate, the School will involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the School does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied.

The School takes bullying very seriously.

The School will regularly evaluate and update its approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating the School's ICT Acceptable Use Agreements.

The School will provide effective employee training to ensure that all School employees understand the principles and purpose of the School's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.

The School will also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school.

The School will make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside School, including online bullying.

The School aims to create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination.

#### **4. Sanctions**

Although the School will usually try to reconcile bully and victim, and help them both to move forward, it may also deal with the bully by making use of the full range of sanctions available, including:

- Monday evening detention or a Deputy Head's detention;
- temporary exclusion (suspension);
- regulation of the mode of transport used to and from school;
- withholding participation in school teams, events or trips;

- police involvement; and
- permanent exclusion.

By using these sanctions, the School aims:

- to make the bully recognise the seriousness of their behaviour and deter them from repeating it;
- to demonstrate to the school community that bullying is not acceptable, and to deter others from behaving in a similar way; and
- to help the victim of bullying feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop immediately.

## 5. Online bullying

The School recognises the widespread use of technology as a vehicle for online bullying, or "cyberbullying". Online bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, which is intended to harm others.

Online bullying is sometimes a channel for continuing face-to-face bullying in School. It may consist of harassment, intimidation, defamation, impersonation, unauthorised publication of images (or manipulation of images) and may encourage exclusion or peer rejection. It can take place online, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories to the act as others share the bullying material. Sending or sharing sexually suggestive images or messages via social media is recognised by the School as a potential vehicle for bullying behaviour.

The PSHE programme promotes online safety and the responsible use of social media and gives guidance on dealing with and reporting online bullying. All employees and pupils sign the School's Acceptable Use Agreement before they are allowed to use the school's computers and network.

When an employee has concerns about a pupil's misuse of technology, they must report it to the Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will request that the pupil reveals the content of the relevant material and who may confiscate equipment. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle online bullying by providing a specific power to search for inappropriate files on computers and mobile devices.

## 6. Bullying and the law

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is "*reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm*". Where this is the case, the School's concerns will be reported to the local authority children's social care.

Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the School may need to draw on a range of external services to support any pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a pupil engaging in bullying.

Although bullying is not in itself a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour (or communications) could be a criminal offence (for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the Communications Act 2003). If the School feels that a criminal offence may have been committed, assistance from the police will be sought.

**Policy reviewed by:** Miss J Watson, Assistant Head (Pastoral)  
**Last policy review date:** Summer 2024  
**Next policy review date:** Summer 2025

## Anti-Bullying Policy (Student version)

**Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. At this School, bullying in any form will not be tolerated.**

- Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.
- Bullying can happen outside school hours and away from the school site. It may involve sending messages or making phone calls intended to offend or upset another person.
- “Cyberbullying” is bullying that occurs online, usually on social networking sites, and may involve sending images or posting them on websites or social media, intended to hurt or humiliate someone.
- Cyberbullying will be treated just as if the bullying occurred face-to-face in school.
- **Pupils should always bring bullying to the attention of an adult.**
- All School staff must respond to allegations of bullying and inform the relevant form tutors or Heads of Year when this happens.
- The School will try to reconcile bully and victim, and help them both to move forward, but it will also deal with the bully by using the full range of sanctions, up to and including permanent exclusion.
- The School recognises the seriousness of bullying, and its potential to cause significant psychological damage.

**The School will never tolerate child-on-child abuse or pass it off as *banter* or *part of growing up*.**

### What will the School do?

- In serious cases, the parents of the bully and the victim will be informed, and the bully’s parents will be asked to come into school for a meeting.
- Victims of bullying will receive support and help to develop strategies for dealing with bullying and their feeling and wishes will be considered before any adjustments or sanctions are imposed.
- The School will look at why the bully is behaving like this and how they can be helped to avoid such behaviour in future.
- The School will usually try to reconcile bully and victim and help them both move forward, but with all things considered deal with the bully appropriately.
- **Any disciplinary action taken against the bully** aims to help the pupils recognise the seriousness of their behaviour and others can see that bullying is not acceptable.  
Afterwards, there will be a "follow-up" to check that the victim feels safe and that the bullying behaviour towards them has stopped.

**The School takes all allegations of bullying seriously. If the School feels that a criminal offence may have been committed, assistance from the police will be sought.**