



# Godmanchester Bridge Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy -May 2024

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## **Legislation**

*'Every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.'*

## **[Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Department for Education](#)**

### **Statement of Intent**

Bullying damages children's physical and mental health, including their self-confidence and ability to build and sustain relationships. It can also destroy self-esteem sometimes with devastating consequences and with the effects lasting into adult life. Bullying undermines the ability to concentrate and learn and can impact children's chances of achieving their full potential at school and later in life. Bullying causes harm to those who bully, those who are bullied and those who observe bullying. This school believes that all children have the right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and that is free from harassment and bullying. The purpose of this policy is to communicate how the school aims to create a climate and school environment in which everyone agrees that bullying is unacceptable and is committed to tackling it to improve outcomes for children.

At Godmanchester Bridge Academy, we are committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe environment in which all children are free from the fear of being bullied. As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Bullying of any form is not tolerated in our school, whether carried out by a child or an adult.

Staff, children and parents or carers will be made aware of the school's position on bullying. Bullying behaviour is unacceptable in any form. The school has high expectations of outstanding behaviour, and we consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

Any child who is a victim of bullying will be dealt with in a sympathetic manner. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff informed, and then discussed with the senior leadership team. A clear account of the incident will be recorded on Arbor. All staff will be informed so that close monitoring of the victim and bully can begin. Parents of both parties will be informed.

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is a subjective experience that can take many forms. Various national and international definitions of bullying exist and most of these definitions have three things in common which reflect children's experience of bullying and evidence gained from extensive research in this area. The three common aspects in most definitions of bullying are that:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- It is repeated over time.
- There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

We recognise that many children and young people will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and young people and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

At Godmanchester Bridge Academy, our definition of bullying is:

***“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.”***



### **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

There is considerable evidence to show that bullying has both short term and longer-term impact on pupils. Bullying impacts on pupils’ wellbeing, can impact on attendance and become a significant barrier to learning. Bullying is associated with lower levels of school engagement and achievement both in primary and secondary schools and can lead to mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression.

**Bullying is unacceptable. Our school will respond promptly and effectively to reported incidents of bullying.**

In our school community:

- Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- Everybody has the right to feel happy and safe.
- No-one deserves to be a target of bullying.
- Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

### **Our Shared Values**

Ready	- <i>To learn, to listen and to be a success.</i>
Respectful	- <i>To yourself, others and property.</i>
Responsible	- <i>You are responsible for your learning, actions and choices.</i>
Resilient	- <i>We always try our best, even when things are hard.</i>
Reflective	- <i>We learn from our past actions and mistakes.</i>

### **Implementing our Anti-bullying policy**

As part of our overall behaviour management, we have introduced the ‘Positive Behaviour policy’ We encourage children to be responsible for their own behaviour and the choices they make. We encourage them to make the right choice in all situations in school and when they make the wrong choice we use these incidents as a learning opportunity. The children reflect on their behaviour and consider how it could be improved. This is in addition to any measures to combat bullying.

- Staff will make the Senior Leadership team aware of any major incidences that they feel are bullying.

- If an incidence of bullying can be classed as a Prejudice Related Incident (PRI) then a PRI form will be completed and stored electronically.

The following steps **may** be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated by the member of staff who has been approached.
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team will interview all concerned and will record the incident on an Incident Log Sheet
- Class teachers will be kept informed and if it persists the class teacher will advise other staff as appropriate.
- Parents will be informed if the bullying continues.
- Protective Consequences will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.

### **Pupils:**

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher or member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.

The following protective measures can be taken:

- Further support around appropriate behaviour
- Restriction from certain areas of school premises
- Supervised playtime/lunchtime
- Individual behaviour plan
- Regular parent meetings with staff

If the bullying persists, school will follow the behaviour policy.

### **Types of Bullying Behaviour**

Bullying behaviour can represent itself in a number of different forms. Children can be bullied in ways that are:

**Physical** – e.g. by being punched, pushed or hurt; made to give up money or belongings; having property, clothes or belongings damaged; being forced to do something they don't want to do.

**Verbal** – e.g. by being teased in a nasty way; called gay (whether or not it's true); insulted about their race, religion or culture; called names in other ways or having offensive comments directed at them.

**Relational / indirect** – e.g. by having nasty stories told about them; being left out, deliberately ignored or excluded from groups.

**Electronic / 'cyberbullying'** - for example, via text message; via instant messenger services and social network sites; through messaging on computer games; via email; and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phone.

### **Specific Types of Bullying**

The school recognises that although anyone can be bullied for almost any reason or difference, some children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others. Research has identified various types of bullying experienced by vulnerable groups of children. These include bullying related to:

- ethnic cultural, and religious backgrounds
- gender and/or gender identity
- special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities
- being gifted or talented
- appearance or health conditions
- sexual identity
- home circumstances e.g. young carers or children in care

Bullying is a complex type of behaviour occurring between individuals and groups. Different roles within bullying situations have been identified and include:

- The ring-leader, the person who through their position of power can direct bullying activity.
- Assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader)
- Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing.
- Outsiders/bystanders, who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour.
- Defenders, who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort pupils who experience bullying.

*Some children can adopt different roles simultaneously or at different times e.g. a bullied child might be bullying another child at the same time, or a 'reinforcer' might become a 'defender' when the ringleader is not around.*

### **Recognising Signs and Symptoms**

The school recognises the fact that some CYP are more vulnerable to bullying than others and is sensitive to the changes of behaviour that may indicate that a child or young person is being bullied. CYP who are being bullied may demonstrate physical, emotional and behavioural problems. The following physical signs and behaviour could indicate other problems but bullying will be considered as a possibility:

- Being frightened of walking to or from school
- Losing self confidence and self-esteem

- Being frightened to say what's wrong
- Developing unexplained cuts, bruises and other injuries
- Unwilling to go to school, development of school phobia and unusual patterns of non attendance
- Failing to achieve potential in school work
- Becoming withdrawn, nervous and losing concentration
- Becoming isolated and disengaged from other CYP
- Developing changes in physical behaviour such as stammering and nervous ticks
- Regularly having books or clothes destroyed
- Having possessions go 'missing' or 'lost' including packed lunch and money
- Starting to steal money (to pay the perpetrator)
- Becoming easily distressed, disruptive or aggressive
- Developing problems with eating and food
- Running away
- Developing sleep problems and having nightmares
- Developing suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide.

Where CYP are exhibiting extreme signs of distress and changes in behaviour, the school will liaise with parents/carers and where appropriate, relevant health professionals and agencies such as the school nurse / G.P. and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

### **Bullying related to race, religion or culture**

Racist or faith-based bullying is bullying based on a person's background, colour, religion or heritage. Some surveys and focus groups have found that a high proportion of bullied pupils have experienced racist or faith-based bullying. Recent political and social issues also appear to have been a factor in the rise in this type of bullying and harassment. There is research to support the suggestion that where black and minority ethnic (BME) children experience bullying, it is more likely to be severe bullying. Moreover, bullying incidents can be a subset of the indirect and direct racist hostility which BME children, children of different faiths and Traveler children can experience in a number of situations.

When racist or faith-based bullying takes place, the characteristics singled out not only apply to the individual child but also refer to their family and more broadly their ethnic or faith community as a whole. Racial and cultural elements in bullying can be seen to heighten the negative impact on a child's sense of identity, self-worth and self-esteem.

### **Responding to incidents of cyberbullying**

The Senior Leadership Team will follow the above procedures and will seek guidance on responding to different forms of cyberbullying via organisations which provide information on the safe and responsible use of technology.

### **Responding to incidents of bullying which occur off the school premises.**

The school recognises that bullying can and does happen outside school and in the community. Bullying is a relationship issue and its occurrence reflects the ways in which CYP socialise in school and in the wider community. The school believes that bullying is unacceptable wherever and whenever it happens.

### **Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities**

Research shows that children and young people with SEN and disabilities are more at risk of bullying than their peers. Public bodies have new responsibilities to actively promote equality of opportunity for all disabled people and eliminate disability-related harassment.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, whether in mainstream or special schools, do not always have the levels of social confidence and competence and the robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying. Where children with SEN and disabilities are themselves found to be bullying, in most cases (except those related to specific conditions) schools should expect the same standards of behaviour as those which apply to the rest of the school community, having made the reasonable adjustments necessary.

### **Bullying related to gifted and talented children and young people**

Children and young people who are gifted and talented can be vulnerable to bullying. Their achievements, different interests and advanced abilities can set them apart from their peers and can lead to a sense of not 'fitting in' and feelings of isolation. Their talents and abilities may cause feelings of resentment and jealousy among their peers which may make them targets for bullying behaviour.

### **Bullying related to appearance or health conditions**

Those with health or visible medical conditions, such as eczema, may be more likely than their peers to become targets for bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can result in bullying, and obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it), can also be exploited.

### **Bullying related to sexual orientation**

Homophobic bullying involves the targeting of individuals based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation. Evidence of homophobic bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers.

Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The young person may not want to report bullying if it means "coming out" to teachers and parents before they are ready to.

Homophobic bullying includes all forms of bullying but it can include:

- Verbal abuse - the regular use, consciously or unconsciously, of offensive and discriminatory language, particularly the widespread use of the term 'gay' in a negative context. Also spreading rumours that cause an individual's perceived sexual orientation to be ridiculed, questioned or insulted
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault and threatening behaviour
- Cyberbullying – using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

### **Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying**

Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes that when expressed demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name calling, comments and overt "looks" about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used. Children and young people identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also become a target of bullying.

### **Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise linked to home circumstances**

Children and young people may be made vulnerable to bullying by the fact that they provide care to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem. Young carers may be taking on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research has highlighted the difficulties young carers face, including risks of ill-health, stress and tiredness, especially when they care through the night. Many feel bullied or isolated. Children in care may also be vulnerable to bullying for a variety of reasons, such as their not living with their birth parents or because they have fallen behind in their studies. Some children and young people are heavily influenced by their communities or homes where bullying and abuse may be common. Some bullying at school may arise from trauma or instability at home related to issues of domestic violence or bereavement or from the experience of being part of a refugee family. Siblings of vulnerable children may themselves be the subject of bullying by association.

### **Working with parents/carers**

Where the school has become aware of a bullying situation, parents/carers of the child/young person who is being bullied will be invited to the school to discuss their child's situation. The school will endeavour to involve parents/carers of children who have been bullied constructively at an early stage to support the process of working together to find ways of resolving the situation and bringing about reconciliation. The outcome of the meeting and agreed actions/responses will be recorded by the school. The school will work alongside those parents/carers whose children have been bullied to support them in developing their children's coping strategies and assertiveness skills where appropriate.

The school takes parents/carers reporting bullying seriously. Parents/carers are initially encouraged to refer their concerns to the class teacher. The Senior leadership team will be involved where appropriate. Parents/carers are encouraged to note details of the incident to share with the class teacher. Again, a record of the incident and the agreed actions/response made at the meeting will

be recorded by the school. The school will discuss the possible responsive options with the parents/carers and the bullied child and agree a way forward.

Where a Restorative Approach has failed to modify the behaviour of a perpetrator and the bullying is continuing or when sanctions are to be used, the parents/carers of the perpetrator will be invited to the school to discuss their child's behaviour. The outcome of the meeting and agreed actions/responses will be recorded by the school. The school adopts a problem solving approach with parents/carers e.g. *'It seems your son/daughter and (other child) have not been getting on very well'* rather than *'your son/daughter has been bullying...'* While the school firmly believes that all bullying is unacceptable and that the perpetrators should be made to accept responsibility for their behaviour and make amends, the school understands that a cooperative ethos is desirable when trying to reach a resolution that is effective and long lasting. Parents/carers of those causing the bullying will also have support to come to a balanced view of what is happening and appreciate their role in helping their children to learn about the consequences of their actions and adopt alternative ways of behaving.

The school ensures that staff and all parents/carers remain fully aware of the measures that have been put into place to prevent the occurrence of further incidents. Follow up appointments are made with parent/carers to share these agreed measures and to monitor their success in preventing further bullying.

Guidance for parents/carers regarding advice on recognising the signs and symptoms of bullying in CYP and how to approach the school to register concerns/incidents and seek support is available on the school website.

### **Prevention**

The school believes that the whole school community should work together to reduce bullying as part of our efforts to promote a positive and inclusive whole school ethos and create a safe, healthy and stimulating environment. Alongside the school's responsive strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying, the school adopts, as part of our pastoral support system, a whole school approach to implementing proactive and preventative interventions to reduce bullying. These interventions are implemented at a school, class and individual level. Our approaches include:

- Implementing an effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos
- Adopting positive behaviour management strategies as part of the school's Behaviour Management Policy
- Implementing a whole school approach to the teaching of PSHE. Implementing a Personal Safety Programme as identified in the Cambridgeshire Personal Development Programme
- Providing opportunities to celebrate effective anti-bullying work.
- Providing a school council and regular Circle Time, enabling CYP to talk about their feelings and concerns in a safe environment and to enable them to share concerns about bullying
- Providing peer support systems
- Participating in the annual national Anti-Bullying Week and supporting learning on bullying through whole school activities, projects and campaigns

- Reviewing the development and supervision of the school inside and outside including the outdoor areas and playground to ensure provision is safe, inclusive and supports CYP's emotional wellbeing.
- Providing publicity including information leaflets for CYP and parents/carers to raise awareness of bullying and support those who are being bullied or have witnessed bullying to report incidents and seek help
- Providing social skills groups for vulnerable individuals and groups
- Providing a transition programme to support CYP moving across year groups and key stages.
- Providing information on support agencies such as ChildLine, Kidscape and Beatbullying including telephone numbers for help lines and addresses for supportive websites

### **Delivering the Curriculum for Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying in our school**

The school acknowledges the role of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum in preventative work on bullying. The PSHE and Citizenship curriculum supports the development of CYP's self esteem and their emotional resilience and ability to empathise with others. The curriculum provides opportunities for CYP to learn and develop the skills to identify manage and challenge incidents of bullying as well as providing opportunities for CYP to learn about bullying in relation to the wider context of diversity and inclusion.

- The school adopts the Primary Cambridgeshire Personal Development Programme for PSHE and Citizenship in which learning related to bullying, diversity and difference is covered within themes such as Myself and My Relationships, Citizenship and Healthy and Safer Lifestyles
- The school recognises and participates in the national Anti-Bullying week, which provides an annual intensive focussed week on the subject of recognising and combating bullying.

See the school's PSHE and Citizenship Policy for further detailed information on curriculum planning, teaching methodologies and teaching resources.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Anti-Bullying Policy**

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy and practice is regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness. This process includes reviewing the school's definition of bullying and identifying new types and forms of bullying as they emerge. The Policy review is coordinated by the Pastoral Lead and involves monitoring and evaluating anti-bullying preventative and responsive strategies to ensure the school's practice is effective and successful in fostering an ethos that inhibits bullying and promotes inclusion and respect for diversity.

The review process involves collecting data on the prevalence of bullying at the school and gathering the views and different perceptions of the whole school community including staff, governors, CYP and parents/carers using a range of methods such as:

- Surveys and questionnaires
- Focus groups and interviews

The school regularly analyses behaviour records and records of bullying incidents to identify patterns of behaviour regarding individuals and groups of CYP, and places and times where bullying may be occurring. Other informative data includes:

- Parental complaints to the school or local authority regarding bullying
- Records of the Educational Welfare Service identifying where bullying is a factor in non attendance
- Suspension data relating to bullying
- Risk assessment for CYP who exhibit sexually inappropriate or harmful behaviours
- Transfer and admissions data, specifically requests for transfer due to bullying or harassment
- Outcomes achieved as part of the school's work on promoting children's wellbeing



Type:	Race/religion/culture Sexual/sexist/transphobic/ Homophobic SEN/disability
	Home circumstances Gifted/talented Health conditions Other
Parents/carers of alleged target(s) informed: Yes / No	
Date:	Time:

**SECTION B: ACCOUNTS OF THOSE INVOLVED**

Alleged Perpetrator(s) account of the incident:

Name(s):

Age:

Year Group:

Class:

Bystanders' /Witnesses account of the incident:

Name(s):

Age:

Year Group:

Class:

Parents/carers of alleged target(s) informed: Yes / No

Date:

Time:

**SECTION C: ACTION TAKEN**

Details of Immediate Action Taken:

Monitoring of action taken and details of follow up and longer term action taken