



GREATFIELDS SCHOOL

## **Bullying policy**

**Approved by SLT:**

**Date: April 2023**

**Approved by Local Governing Board:**

**Date: April 2023**

**Next Review**

**Date: April 2026**



Partnership Learning



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## The Equality Act

The Act strengthens and simplifies existing equality legislation. The Act brings together existing duties not to discriminate on grounds of race, disability and gender which schools are already bound to comply with, and it extends these to include duties not to discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and gender re-assignment. It places a requirement on governing bodies and proprietors of schools to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities, some of which they will already be doing. It will apply to school policies for tackling prejudice based bullying.

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed 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 staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

## Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that 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, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

This policy forms a part of the schools Behaviour Policy. The aim of this policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

- All members of the Greatfields community have the right to work in a safe and secure environment and have the right to be supported when feeling insecure
- We want Greatfields to be a school where bullying is viewed as unacceptable, treated seriously and dealt with effectively
- Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone.

Bullying is defined as 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 (for instance,





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cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and can sometimes be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a student is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between students, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously the school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; we have to make our own judgements about each specific case.

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences, unexplained weight loss or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. In all instances Greatfields encourages students to discuss their concerns with other members of the school community. The whole school community, therefore, must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly with issues as they arise.

Examples of bullying can be:

- Physical - Pushing, shoving, tripping up, kicking and spitting.
- Emotional - Humiliating someone, name calling, using insulting names or comments.
- Driven by a prejudice - This might be homophobia, racism, or victimising those who have special needs or disabilities. It may be picking on a student because they are cared for away from home or it may be picking on a student who cares for a sick relative.
- Indirect - Spreading rumours whether true or not.
- Cyber bullying - Any form of bullying using a mobile phone or the internet, group chats, social networking sites, instant messaging or email.

It may also be bullying when:

- The same person or group always leaves someone out or shuns them.
- Someone makes threats of violence against someone else.
- Someone damages someone else's kit or clothing deliberately.
- Someone takes someone else's belongings deliberately.
- Someone tries to force someone else to do something they do not want to do.
- Someone tries to force another to do something sexual they do not want to do.

Although all of these actions are serious and adults should always intervene, they may not always be regarded as bullying unless they are part of an on-going pattern of behaviour against the victim.

## Prevention

Greatfields School aims to prevent bullying by:

- Encouraging students to talk to someone about bullying
- Involving students in discussions about bullying through the curriculum
- Educating students about bullying and how to help
- Giving students strategies to avoid bullying





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- Providing supervision
- Early intervention by staff
- Promoting positive social behaviour

Each case of bullying will be treated individually and depending on circumstances the following strategies may be used:

## **Staff:**

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with at the earliest opportunity by staff
- A staff and student statement will be completed and given to the Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher responsible for behaviour who will agree on an appropriate outcome
- A member of the Pastoral Team will contact the parent/carer to inform them of the incident
- Strategies to stop behaviour will be used as appropriate with all parties involved
- Involvement of outside agencies may be taken
- Regular monitoring by subject teachers, Pastoral Team and Assistant Headteacher responsible for behaviour will occur after the incident as occurred to ensure this behaviour does not continue

## **Students:**

Students who have been bullied will be supported by Greatfields by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of the Pastoral Team
- Counselling within school from the Learning Mentor and outside agencies
- An offer of continuous support and reassurance to the student
- Opportunities to discuss their concerns with parties involved
- Safe areas to be given to students who feel vulnerable at particular times of the school day

Students who have bullied will be supported by Greatfields by:

- Discussing what and why the incident happened
- Opportunities to discuss their concerns with Pastoral Team
- Opportunities to discuss their concerns with the learning mentor or outside agencies
- Learning from their wrong doing and need to change
- Informing parents/carers of the incident and help to change

The following sanctions may also be taken:

- Altered finish time
- Detention
- Suspension

Greatfields schools will:





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- **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. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home;
- **involve pupils.** All pupils understand the schools' approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- **regularly evaluate** and update their approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers;
- **implement disciplinary sanctions.** The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable;
- **openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying,** such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Schools can also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable;
- **work with the wider community** such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. Successful schools also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school;
- **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 cyberbullying;
- **create an inclusive environment.** Greatfields will create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination;
- **celebrate success.** Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

## SEND students

Staff should be aware that SEND students could be particularly vulnerable to bullying. At Greatfields we create a safe space for students by ensuring that:

- All incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately as a matter of priority;
- Staff are trained so that they are aware of the social challenges faced by children with SEND;
- All members of staff understand that they are responsible for identifying and reporting any concerns around potential bullying to the pastoral team;
- Heads of Year have time to consult with the SENCo to discuss any concerns;
- Students are taught about social and friendship groups, interventions will be used to ensure students are able to understand peer relationships.





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## Schools Accountability

At Greatfields, the students will learn best in a safe and calm environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus.

### Adults:

- Adults at the school also have a right to work free from bullying and the philosophy of this policy applies to all members of the school community
- Any adult who feels they are being bullied should be encouraged to discuss this with Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher.
- If a member of staff feels they are being bullied by the Headteacher they should be encouraged to raise this with the Chair of Governors, Alan Lazell, (alazell@greatfieldsschool.com)

## Bullying Outside of School Premises

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The head teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

