

BRIGHTON GIRLS POLICY

ANTI BULLYING

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	32.	33.	33.1	33.2	43.3	53.4	63.5	63.6	83.7	83.8	93.9	113.10
	113.11	113.12	113.13	123.14	123.15	124.	14					

1. PURPOSE & APPLICABILITY

This policy provides guidelines for the arrangements that have been made by Brighton Girls to try and prevent bullying, as far as possible, and to assist staff, pupils and parents deal with bullying when it occurs. This policy is applicable to Brighton Girls.

2. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & MEANINGS

BG	Brighton Girls
DfE	Department for Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
Firefly	The learning platform, school intranet and VLE
GDST	Girls Day School Trust
ICT	Cyber Bullying
ISI	Independent Schools Inspectorate
IT	Information Technology
JLT	Junior Leadership Team
KS2	Key Stage Two
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer
PSHE	Personal, Social & Health Education
RE	Religious Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMS	Short Message Service
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

May / Should Advisory

Shall / Must Mandatory

3. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

- Our school community is based on an ethos of mutual respect and consideration. The school and the GDST are committed to providing a safe and happy learning environment for all.
- We do not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination of any kind and work hard to prevent these or to tackle them if they occur.
- Bullying is a whole school issue and we take a whole school approach in response. Any member of the community may bully or be a victim of bullying: we regard all incidences of bullying equally seriously and in turn expect all staff, pupils and parents to play their part in preventing and tackling bullying.

Aims of Policy

This policy aims to:

- Try and prevent bullying, as far as possible, and
- Help staff, pupils and parents deal with bullying when it occurs.

3.2 DEFINITION OF BULLYING

The Department for Education defines bullying as ‘behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally’.

This definition highlights the fact that bullying can be by an individual **or a group** against another individual **or group**. It is commonly accepted that bullying is deliberately hurtful (including aggression), causes feelings of distress/fear/loneliness in the victim, is difficult for victims to defend themselves against (as there is an imbalance or perceived imbalance of power between the perpetrator and victim) and repeated over a period of time. However, it is important to remember that, depending on its nature, a one-off incident may be considered to constitute bullying (although this is not recognised in the DfE definition) and can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour. 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.

Forms of bullying can include:

- Physically hurting or attempting to hurt, harm or humiliate another person or damaging their property
- Verbal abuse such as name-calling, taunting, mocking or writing unkind notes
- Emotional manipulation such as excluding someone or spreading malicious rumours about them, building negative alliances based on gossip, or deliberately betraying former confidences to humiliate or isolate another pupil
- Cyberbullying, i.e. via social networking websites, phone calls, text messages, photographs or emails

- Unpleasant remarks or actions related to any of the following:
 - Race, religion or culture
 - sex (i.e. talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way)
 - Gender, gender identity or perceived gender identity
 - Sexual orientation (e.g. homophobic or biphobic bullying)
 - Disability or Special Educational Needs
 - Intellectual or other abilities
 - Appearance or health conditions
 - Being adopted or a care

No form of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

- 3.2.1 Any behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was intended to hurt or upset the victim is wrong and could constitute bullying, including complicity that may fall short of participating directly in the bullying. It is no justification that the perpetrator says or believes that the victim is not upset or hurt by his or her actions or words.
- 3.2.2 Much bullying is performed in subtle ways, which are not easy to detect; a bully can use a simple look, word or gesture to a victim to signal an intended threat or insult. Some pupils are adept at changing a bullying situation into an apparently harmless one when an adult approaches. This makes it all the more important for the victim or another pupil to be able to come forward to report bullying, and for staff and parents to be alert to symptoms of bullying.
- 3.2.3 Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, religious or cultural and which focus on special educational needs, disabilities or physical attributes (such as their appearance, hair colour or body shape), or a person's sexuality. Bullying may also involve damage to property and isolation. 'Banter' is a form of bullying.
- 3.2.4 Using ICT in these ways is also bullying – we call it as 'cyber-bullying'. It can involve using mobile phones, social or networking sites, like Facebook and Myspace, emails, text and SMS messages, voicemails and the posting of photographs, sexting, video clips and other electronic media on the internet.
- 3.2.5 Bullying is always hurtful to the victim and damaging to the whole school community. Anyone and everyone who is involved in or witnesses bullying is affected by it. It can cause great distress, unhappiness and psychological damage and at its worst lead to suicide. It can also be a criminal offence, for example if the behaviour amounts to harassment or threatening behaviour.

3.3 How does bullying differ from friendship difficulties?

- 3.3.1 Sometimes pupils can feel hurt or upset because they have fallen out with a friend. This is not the same as bullying.
- 3.3.2 Bullying:
 - Is deliberately intended to hurt or humiliate;
 - Involves a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves;
 - Is usually persistent;
 - Often involves no remorse or acknowledgement of the victim's feelings;

3.3.3 School staff are ready to help and support pupils who have fallen out with friends, but such situations will not be treated in the same way as a case of bullying. However, the strategies we use may be similar because we acknowledge that over a period of time the impact on the pupil may be the same, and the situation could become bullying if it escalates.

3.4 The Bully

3.4.1 People bully for different reasons. We stress that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable not the person - if the behaviour changes, then the person will find it easier to make good friends. Some people bully because they feel unhappy about themselves or lack the skills to make good friends. Bullies are often bullied themselves and need our support.

3.5 Preventing Bullying

3.5.1 We aim to prevent bullying by:

- Fostering a whole school ethos of good behaviour, mutual respect, and consideration. We aim to create a safe, happy, and inclusive environment for learning.
- Developing a culture in which diversity is championed and celebrated and in which the school takes a proactive role in educating pupils and other members of the school community in issues around equality.
- Developing a culture in which the vulnerable are protected and incidents which might demonstrate prejudice or intolerance are tackled and addressed, for example by challenging inappropriate or prejudicial language.
- Encouraging all members of the school community to have high expectations and model how to behave towards each other.
- Raising awareness about bullying through opportunities in the curriculum, the PSHE programme, assemblies, and national events such as Anti Bullying Week, amongst others.
- Developing pupils' social skills, confidence, resilience and self-esteem; and defining the value of assertiveness in relationships as opposed to aggression, whether direct or indirect.
- Educating pupils and other members of the school community about how to keep themselves safe when online or using social media or other electronic means of communication, so they take maximum precautions to help prevent themselves being victims of cyberbullying.
- Ensuring that all pupils sign up to the school's Acceptable Use Agreements, which make it clear that cyberbullying is unacceptable. This message is regularly reinforced in lessons and pastoral sessions. The school also has e-safety information pages for parents on Firefly.
- Making it clear to all that there are effective procedures for reporting, investigating and tackling bullying, and encouraging pupils to report instances of anything they perceive to be bullying.
- Making it clear to all that incidents of cyberbullying or bullying of any kind that occur off the school premises but have an impact on the classroom environment or relationships between pupils will be pursued with the same seriousness as bullying occurring within school.
- Making it as easy as possible for pupils who are being bullied to talk to someone they trust and get help confidentially.
- Having a strong pastoral team dedicated to pupil welfare and experienced in dealing with bullying issues. All our staff are trained in recognising and responding to bullying and staff awareness is raised through regular discussion of pupil issues in pastoral meetings. Action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying where and when it is known to be most likely to occur. The member of staff with overall

responsibility for anti-bullying work is *Wendy Fox* in the senior school and *Laura Comerford* in the Prep school.

- Taking pupils' views into account through the school council, and developing the roles that pupils can play in anti-bullying work, for example Sixth Form Mentoring and Year Peer Supporters.
- Ensuring that the IT filtering and monitoring systems are effective in protecting members of the school community.
- Working in line with national guidance, and the requirements of our regulatory bodies.
- Encourage all our pupils to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place. This could be via peer supporters or peer supporter emails or via Sixth Form mentors (Senior School) / via a House Prefect or Buddy (Prep School).
- Encourage all our pupils to make sure nobody is isolated and encourage a bullied person to join in activities and groups.
- Encourage all our pupils to show the bully that they disapprove of her actions.
- Encourage a child to record incidents/her feelings in her 'Thoughts and Feelings' book or speak to their teacher. The teacher will follow up as required (Prep School).
- Encourage a child to follow the 'help' notices in school e.g. in the toilets, with Head of Pastoral care (Prep School).
- Provide leadership training to our Y10 Peer supporters which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils (Senior School).
- Provide a point of contact for parents to report incidences of bullying through Heads of House (Senior School) / Prep Head or Deputy (Prep School).
- Investigate and record all reported incidents immediately and regular monitoring of reported incidents. Monitor bullying records so that any emerging patterns may be identified.
- Ban initiation ceremonies designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation.
- Expect all pupils and staff to adhere to our Codes of Conduct (*see Safeguarding Code of Practice*) which are displayed in classrooms (Prep and Senior Schools) and are printed in the students' planners (Senior School).
- Expect all pupils to adhere to the Anti-Bullying Code and Cyber Bullying Code of Conduct which are displayed in all classrooms (Senior School).
- Expect all pupils to adhere to Brighton Girls code of conduct for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our ICT Department monitors pupils' use.
- Impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Issue all pupils in KS2 upwards with their own personal school email address. Access to sites such as "Hotmail" is not allowed.
- Adhere to guidelines regarding online safety and the internet.
- Offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in WellBeing lessons, which covers blocking and removing contacts from "buddy lists".
- Offer guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Mobile phones are not permitted out in classrooms or where they may cause annoyance to others (Senior School).
- Mobile phones are not permitted in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others and are given to the School Office for safe keeping. If a parent considers that it is necessary for a Prep School pupil to have a mobile, this must be given into the Reception desk upon arrival at school for safekeeping. (Prep School).

3.6 Being aware – possible signs of bullying

3.6.1 Changes in behaviour that may indicate a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to go to school or return after a break;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, work that appears to have been copied, or interfered with or spoiled by others;
- Belongings suddenly going missing or being damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, sitting in the library instead of going out at playtime);
- Diminished levels of self-confidence;
- Inability to concentrate;
- Anxiety, depression, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class;
- Reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of lessons or school day;
- Choosing the company of adults;
- Frequent visits to the medical centre with symptoms such as stomach pains or headaches, especially at particular times or during particular lessons;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Difficulty in sleeping, nightmares;
- Talking of suicide or running away;
- Messages written in the 'Thoughts and Feelings Book' or put into *Miss Parker's* post box (Prep School).

3.6.2 Although there may be other causes for these symptoms, teachers, parents and fellow pupils should be alert for these possible signs of bullying and contact a member of the pastoral team if they are concerned.

3.6.3 Sadly, some individuals are more vulnerable to bullying, and less likely to speak out – including LGBTQ pupils and those with SEND. Again, staff, parents and peers should bear this in mind in cases of possible or suspected bullying. Further guidance for staff on preventing, identifying and dealing with such types of bullying can be found in the Anti-Bullying Guidance on the staff intranet.

3.7 Managing bullying.

3.7.1 We are proactive and provide the following preventative measures:

- Use appropriate Assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our Wellbeing programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Utilise other lessons, such as RE, History, English and Drama to highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- A strong and experienced pastoral team of *Sharon Honeycombe* (School Nurse), *Natasha Edwards* (School Counsellor), *Valeria Zinola* (SENDCO), *Matt Gregory* (Head of Wellbeing), *Nicci Plank* (Head

of Grey), *Nicki Scotcher* (Head of Stanley), *Rebecca Pearson* (Head of Gurney), *Caroline Hart* (Head of Lyttelton), *Lucy Mears* (Head of Sixth Form), *Guy Winter* (Deputy Head of Sixth Form) and *Wendy Fox* (Deputy Head Pastoral and Designated Safeguarding Lead) are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of self-harm (Senior School).

- A strong and experienced team of teaching staff including *Laura Comerford* (Designated Safeguarding Lead), *Poppy Pointon* (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead), *Sharon Honeycombe* (School Nurse) and class teachers support the Prep Head and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of self-harm (Prep School). Instances of bullying should be taken to the class teacher in the first instance who will refer onwards if necessary. (Prep School)
- Our pastoral team give support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- Advice is displayed in our Nurse's Room, on the Peer Supporter notice board and in the girls' school planners (Senior School) / by the Medical Room, in the cloakrooms and the Playground (Prep School) on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, Kidscape, Get Connected, Samaritans.
- In the Prep school staff are well trained in alerting both *Laura Comerford* and *Poppy Pointon* who work closely with all staff and, where necessary, outside agencies. Pupils are also able to ask all members of staff for support and can ask for a specific time with *Laura Comerford* if they would like to. These requests are always taken seriously.
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
- Reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

3.7.2 The school's Behaviour Policy alongside the Discipline and Exclusions Policy, provide support for the victim and the bully and support this policy.

3.8 Dealing with Bullying

3.8.1 If you are being bullied:

- Stay calm and try to appear confident. Tell the bully to stop and get away from the situation as quickly as you can.
- Do not suffer in silence: talk to a member of staff. This could be your class teacher, tutor or year group head, the school nurse or counsellor, or any other member of staff you trust. If you are unhappy about talking to a member of staff directly, you could talk to someone in your family, a friend, a Sixth Form Mentor or a Year 10 Peer Supporter. Telling does not make you a 'grass' or 'snitch': not telling means that the bullying is likely to continue. Remember you may not be the only victim.
- Be assured that we take every report of bullying seriously and will act upon it, even if it occurred outside the school. We will keep records of what has happened, and consult you and support you in whatever action we take.
- Remember being bullied is not your fault – nobody ever deserves to be bullied.
- If you feel you are being bullied by a member of staff you should take the same action as if it were another pupil, that is, report the matter to someone you trust. All forms of bullying are unacceptable and all reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with irrespective of who the person responsible for the bullying incident might be.

3.8.2 If you know that someone else being bullied:

- Talk to a member of staff, so that the school can take steps to help the victim.
- Stand up for them – studies show that one of the most effective ways of stopping bullying is for fellow pupils to show their support for the victim.
- Be sceptical about rumours concerning other pupils. Don't add to them. Put yourself in the position of the person targeted.
- Don't be drawn into simply standing by. Many perpetrators will not persist in bullying unless they have an audience to play to, and by not taking action it could be argued you are condoning what is happening.

3.8.3 What the school will do:

The exact course of action will vary with each situation. The immediate objective should be that bullying incidents are brought into the open and strategies agreed to help resolve the problem, encouraging all involved to return to responsible, caring behaviour.

- All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated immediately.
- Bullying on the basis of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously
- It is not possible for any person who receives a report of a bullying incident to promise that it will be kept confidential. However, the action to be taken will be discussed with the victim at every stage.
- Everything that happens will be carefully recorded.
- The most important thing is to stop the bullying and ensure the victim is safe.
- We aim for a peaceful resolution: revenge is not helpful for the victim or appropriate.
- The victim will be supported throughout the process.
- Sanctions may be imposed (see below) but guidance and help will also be available for the perpetrator(s) to help change her/their behaviour.
- Staff will monitor the situation to ensure that the bullying does not continue. If bullying recurs, further action will be taken.
- The school will keep a log of all bullying incidents which is categorised and monitored in order to identify trends and inform preventative work in the school and future development of policies and procedures.

3.8.4 Further guidance for staff on responding to bullying can be found in the Anti-Bullying Guidance on the staff intranet.

3.9 Sanctions

- 3.9.1 It is important that those found responsible for bullying are held to account and accept responsibility for the harm caused. Action taken in response to bullying will be intended to communicate unambiguous disapproval of the bully's activities, and this will usually include sanctions. Sanctions help reassure the victim that the bullying will stop; they help those responsible recognise the harm caused by their behaviour and deter them from repeating it; they demonstrate to the school community that bullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving in a similar way.
- 3.9.2 If sanctions are warranted, the person(s) responsible will receive a sanction in accordance with the school's behaviour policy. Any sanctions imposed will be fair, proportionate and reasonable, take account of any special educational needs or disabilities that pupils may have, and consider the needs of vulnerable pupils.
- 3.9.3 In any serious case of bullying the Head will be informed and the school will work with the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator. The school will remain in regular contact with parents until the situation is resolved.
- 3.9.4 In the most serious cases, the sanction may be fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- 3.9.5 A bullying incident will be regarded as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' (Children Act 1989). Where this is the case, after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Social Services and in certain cases the police.

3.10 Responses to Staff Bullying

- 3.10.1 Bullying and the failure to resolve the matter informally is clearly a matter for grievance procedure. Clear guidelines exist in staff contracts about the process and who is to be involved.
- 3.10.2 If a case of bullying is proved, then the Trust's disciplinary procedures are invoked - these are laid down in staff contracts.
- 3.10.3 We are an equal opportunities school, which includes equality of opportunity in employment. Sexual harassment or bullying of any kind in the workplace will not be tolerated.

3.11 Partnership with Parents

- 3.11.1 We believe that working with parents/guardians is essential to establishing the school's anti-bullying ethos and resolving any issues that arise.
- Parents are encouraged to reinforce the principles of the Anti-Bullying Policy at home
 - Parents are asked to let their daughter's Head of House (Senior School) or the named member of staff on the Code of Conduct (Prep School) or the Deputy Head know directly if they have cause for concern, either on behalf of their own children or because of rumours about others.
 - In any serious case of bullying parents will be informed by the school and may be invited in to discuss the matter. We will keep in regular contact with parents until the issue is resolved.

3.12 Links to other policies

- 3.12.1 This policy operates in conjunction with:
- Brighton Girls Discipline and Behaviour Policy

- Brighton Girls Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- GDST Acceptable Use Agreements
- GDST Inclusion Policy
- GDST Exclusions Policy
- GDST Equal Opportunities Policy
- Brighton Girls On-line Safety Policy
- The school's PSHE and Well-Being programme

3.13 Monitoring and evaluation

3.13.1 The effectiveness of this policy and the school's anti-bullying strategies will be evaluated annually through a review of the bullying log and consultation with the school council.

3.13.2 This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Innovation and Learning, in consultation with schools..

3.14 Further information and guidance

3.14.1 A list of useful websites, contacts and resources can be found in the Anti-Bullying Guidance on the staff intranet.

3.15 Key Contacts

3.15.1 SLT member with lead responsibility for anti- bullying: *Wendy Fox* – w.fox@brightongirls.gdst.net

3.15.2 JLT member with lead responsibility for anti- bullying: *Laura Comerford* – l.comerford@brightongirls.gdst.net

3.15.3 EYFS staff member with responsibility for anti-bullying: *Alison Cardownie Clare* a.cardownieclare@brightongirls.gdst.net

3.15.4 Pastoral team (Senior School):

- Deputy Head Pastoral: *Wendy Fox*- w.fox@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Head of Wellbeing: *Matt Gregory*- m.gregory@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Head of Grey: *Nicci Plank* – n.plank@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Head of Stanley: *Nicola Scotcher* - n.scotcher@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Head of Gurney: *Rebecca Pearson* - r.pearson@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Head of Lyttelton: *Caroline Hart* - c.hart@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Sixth Form: *Lucy Mears* - l.mears@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Deputy Head of Sixth Form: *Guy Winter*- g.winter@brightongirls.gdst.net

3.15.5 E-safety Coordinator:

- Senior School – *Wendy Fox* – w.fox@brightongirls.gdst.net
- Prep School – *Laura Comerford* – l.comerford@brightongirls.gdst.net

- SENDCO (Senior): *Valeria Zinola* - v.zinola@brightongirls.gdst.net
- SENDCO (Prep): *Helen Hausdoerfer* h.hausdoerfer@brightongirls.gdst.net

3.15.6 Pastoral Team (Prep School)

- *Laura Comerford* l.comerford@brightongirls.gdst.net
 - *Jenny Blacker* – j.blacker@brightongirls.gdst.net
 - *Poppy Pointon* – p.pointon@brightongirls.gdst.net
-
- School Nurse: *Sharon Honeycombe* - s.honeycombe@brightongirls.gdst.net
 - School Counsellor: *Natasha Edwards* - n.edwards@brightongirls.gdst.net
 - Childline: 0800 1111

4. APPENDIX

END OF POLICY