



George Washington
Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approval: November 2024

Anti-Bullying

At George Washington Primary School, we are committed to providing a caring, safe and friendly environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment and learn to the best of their potential. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all cases of bullying seriously.

Aims and Objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities regarding the eradication of bullying in our school.

What is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying. *Kidscape* describe bullying as '*any behaviour that is intended to hurt, is repeated and where there is an imbalance of power (or it is hard for the person on the receiving end to defend themselves.*'

Meanwhile, the Anti-Bullying Alliance and its members have an agreed shared definition of bullying based on research from across the world over the last 30 years.

'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.'

(Anti-Bullying Alliance).

There are four key elements within these definitions:

hurtful
repetition
power imbalance
intentional

Bullying behaviour can be:

Physical Bullying

This kind of bullying includes a range of aggressive behaviours in which one person aims to cause bodily harm to another person.

- *pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.*

Verbal Bullying

It is often said that 'words will never hurt you.' However, if you have been on the receiving end of verbal bullying, including cruel words or scary threats, this can undeniably be very hurtful.

- *name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.*

Emotional Bullying

In emotional bullying, children use friendship and the threat of taking away their friendship to hurt others. It can also involve a range of other behaviours designed to make the person on the receiving end feel worthless.

- *isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.*

Online/Cyber

This specific form of bullying involves technology. Cyberbullying can be especially destructive because of how quick cruel messages can be spread to others, and how long they can remain in the public domain.

- *posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion*

Sexual

Sexual bullying can involve verbal or physical actions towards a victim or involve a cyber element with online pictures or videos being used.

- *unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.*

Indirect

- *can include the exploitation of individuals*

As a school, we take our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 very seriously. As a part of this, we seek to eliminate any discrimination or harassment on grounds of disability, race, religious belief, gender, pregnancy, or sexuality. School has a progressive and planned PSHCE/RSE curriculum which ensures that children in all key stages are educated about these protected characteristics. They are taught that everyone is equal no matter who they are and are aware that there are consequences for actions that are discriminatory. Any such actions are recorded and school checks records regularly to spot any trends developing. If a worrying trend is found, then school will immediately put a plan in place to address it.

Bullying and Keeping Children Safe

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989 (Department for Education, England).

School takes bullying very seriously and considers it a form of child-on-child abuse. On certain occasions, it would be appropriate for the school's safeguarding policy to be consulted (e.g. if a child has been physically or sexually assaulted or has assaulted another child; if a child has been subject to threats of harm; if a child's mental or physical health has been seriously impacted)

Bullying is Not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling or arguments.

It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. We all must learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

However, if you would like support to do this, any member of school staff will be happy to help and guide you to working on these relationships.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

The most important thing is that you tell someone so that we can deal with the situation as swiftly as possible. Here are some strategies to help you.

- Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, a teaching assistant, a lunchtime supervisor, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
- Keep a diary of what has been happening and refer to it when you tell someone.
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
- Do not suffer in silence.
- Do not blame yourself for what is happening.
- Call a helpline, such as the NSPCC (Childline) free on 0800 1111

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU SEE SOMEONE BEING BULLIED? *(The role of the bystander)*

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means the bully has won and gives them more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger. Here are some strategies below:

- Do not smile or laugh at the situation.
- Do not rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Do not be made to join in.
- Shout for help.
- Let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- If you do not feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and give a note to someone you trust.
- Call a helpline for some advice, such as the NSPCC (Childline) free on 0800 1111

The Role of the Governors

The board of trustees supports the Executive Head Teacher, and in turn the Head of School, in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school.

This policy statement makes it very clear that the board of trustees does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The local governing body monitor the incidents of bullying that occur, and review the effectiveness of the school policy regularly.

The board of trustees require the Executive Head Teacher to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

The Role of the Head of School

It is the responsibility of the head of school to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.

The Executive Head Teacher reports to the board of trustees about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Head of School ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head of School draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, during assembly and through our PSHCE/RSE curriculum.

The Head of School ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Head of School sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The Role of the Teacher

Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They report all incidents to the Head of School.

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Head of School, the school informs the child's parents.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. Class teachers report this to the Head of School (or, in their absence, the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher) without delay, to ensure that the appropriate strategy is put in place. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has been bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.

If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Head of School and the SENDCo. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Head of School may contact and refer the case to external support agencies such as Social Care or Behaviour Support.

Teachers routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

The Role of Parent/Carers

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Executive Head Teacher, who reports to the board of trustees about the effectiveness of the policy on request.

FURTHER INFORMATION, SUPPORT AND HELP

There is a lot of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

Name of organisation	Telephone	Website
Act Against Bullying	N/A	www.actagainstbullying.org
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	N/A	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Family Lives	0808 800 2222	www.bullying.co.uk
National Bullying Helpline	0300 323 0169	www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk
Antibullying Pro - The Diana Award	Text DA to 85258	www.antibullyingpro.com/
NSPCC (Childline)	0800 1111	www.nspcc.org.uk
Kidscape	020 7823 5430 (parent advice line)	www.kidscape.org.uk