



**BURTON  
BOROUGH  
SCHOOL**

# Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Reviewer	Kim Stephens	Date of review	March 2023
Date Presented to Governors	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2023	Date of next review	March 2024

## **Statement of Intent**

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable. Burton Borough is an inclusive, community school and as such we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students to learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We advocate for a Culture of Kindness at Burton Borough School.

## **Why do we need an Anti-Bullying Policy?**

Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a student's ability to learn effectively. The negative effects of bullying can have an impact on a person for their entire life. Burton Borough school wishes to promote a secure and happy environment free from unkindness, threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour. This policy promotes practices within the school to reinforce our vision, and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

## **The Education and Inspections Act 2006**

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. Although bullying is not 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 Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends 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, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

## **Definition of Bullying (as defined by Anti-bullying Alliance)**

- 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 through cyberspace.
- It can happen in school or whilst travelling to or from school.

The whole BBS community has worked together to co-produce the BBS definition of bullying. This has been agreed as:

Bullying is the deliberate and repeated attempt by a person (or group of people) to physically or emotionally hurt another person (or group of people).

It is intimidating and it can be illegal. It can happen face-to-face or online.

It includes:

- Peer pressure.
- Body shaming.
- Name-calling and taunting.
- Any kind of behaviour that the victim is frightened to report.
- Gossiping about and deliberately excluding from friendships.
- Bodily contact which is aggressive or hurtful.
- Taking personal belongings.
- Sending offensive or hurtful information on social media.
- Any form of extortion.

### **Specific Types of Bullying**

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of any of these characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation. These are often referred to as protected characteristics. Staff at BBS act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school of these protected groups.

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

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. Burton Borough recognises this and provides Hubs and Engage for use in social time as well as a Buddy Club for KS3 students. We have introduced Shine, a low sensory room that allows students struggling with over-stimulation to self-regulate. This area is staffed by a HLTA who also supports EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) students in returning to school after periods of anxiety or poor mental health. The ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) also delivers workshops with students who are struggling to develop robust friendship bonds.

#### **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. Staff are trained to challenge all body-shaming. We also provide information and education to students about health conditions such as allergies, so that students are better informed. Where students require additional support with health or body image, they are referred to the school nurse.

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

Evidence of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying suggests that children and young people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered (trans) person (or perceived to be) face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic and biphobic bullying is bullying of people based on sexual orientation, whilst transphobic bullying is bullying based on whether someone is – or is assumed to be – trans.

HBT bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. People do not have to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans to suffer HBT bullying. This bullying not only impacts on the individual person, but on their families and others perceived to be from that same group. It may be based on gender stereotyping.

We provide a safe space in the Rainbow Room for LGBTQi+ students to feel part of a supportive community. We expect all members of staff, regardless of role, to challenge and address HBT bullying, if they witness it or if it is reported to them. Our list of unacceptable words clearly identifies words that we would not expect to be used by any member of the school community. We are all responsible for calling out those who use these words. We expect all members of staff to log incidents of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying by victim and perpetrator so we can gather a clear pattern of behaviour. Pastoral staff are responsible for sanctioning perpetrators. We address all incidents with a clear pattern of restorative education. We actively encourage students to anonymously report all bullying or discrimination on Tootoot if they do not feel they can do so in person.

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

Students 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 not living with their birth parents or because they have fallen behind in their studies. Some students 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 students may themselves be the subject of bullying by association. BBS works closely with Telford Young Carers to support these students.

### **Sexist or Sexual bullying**

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. 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.

### **Bullying Related to Race, Religion or Culture**

Some surveys across the UK have found that a high proportion of bullied students have experienced racist or faith-based bullying. Recent political and social issues also appear to have been a factor in bullying and harassment. There is research to support the suggestion that where black and minority ethnic (BME) students experience bullying, it is more likely to be severe bullying. BBS works with TAARC (Telford African and Afro-Caribbean Centre) to provide a monthly support club for students of African Heritage and staff also offer a European Club for students of Eastern European Heritage. We develop the education of all students by providing a Religious Studies education to all students to Y11. We also improve education through assemblies, such

as ensuring all students are aware of Ramadan and how that will affect their peers. We support all religious festivals and events and hold an annual Diversity Day. We have established a Diversity Council and we are working with the local community to ensure this has a cross-community impact.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is a “method” of bullying, rather than a “type” of bullying. It includes bullying via text message; via instant messenger services and social network sites; via email; and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the previously discussed types of bullying – i.e. technology can be used to bully for reasons of race, religion, sexuality, disability etc. Though the evidence base is narrow, UK studies indicate that around 20% of children and young people have suffered cyberbullying. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can affect a child for 24 hours a day and invade their personal space and even enter the ‘safe’ home environment. Every year, BBS students take part in Safer Internet Day. This includes assemblies and tutor time activities and is supported in PSHE and Philosophy lessons. The safe use of the internet is also a part of the Y7 computer studies curriculum.

### **Recognising Bullying**

It is often hard to recognise if a student is being bullied. However, some signs that a student is being bullied may be:

- Changes in academic performance.
- Appears anxious.
- Regularly feeling sick or unwell. Wanting to visit first aid regularly.
- Reluctance to come to school.
- Clothes/bags torn or damaged.
- Money/possessions going missing.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Unexplained behaviour changes, e.g. moody, bad-tempered, tearful, unhappiness.
- Loss of appetite, not sleeping, loss of weight.
- Seen alone a lot .
- Not very talkative.

## **Preventing and Responding to Bullying**

At Burton Borough School, we want to create a whole school culture where bullying is not tolerated and any incidents will be dealt with quickly and robustly. We believe that eliminating bullying requires all stakeholders to challenge unkindness and discriminatory language and to model acceptable behaviour. This will only be achieved if we work hard to prevent bullying alongside acting when bullying is disclosed. We will achieve this by:

### **1. Prevention and Education**

Staff model kindness and tolerance. Staff do not shout and remain calm. We do not belittle or humiliate. Staff will challenge all incidents of unkindness, explaining why the behaviour is unkind.

We have a highly effective and unique small school system. All students are part of one of 3 small schools with each small school providing 4 non-teaching pastoral staff (School Manager, Assistant School Manager, PP Mentor and SEND Mentor) and a Head of Small School (at Assistant Principal, senior leadership team level). This means that students are supported as one of only 400 students in a small school and within that system some students will receive more personalised support from a specific mentor. The small school staff work closely with students and parents to address all academic and pastoral issues. This system of personalised support creates established relationships of trust between families and pastoral teams and means that incidents of bullying are reported and dealt with in a clear and timely manner.

All students are part of a vertical tutor group where a sense of community is fostered and relationships are developed between students from different year groups. This further extends the support network around the school for students.

We have also established systems of student support, including our Gold Carnegie Award recognised Mental Health provision, which supports victims of bullying.

Our Code of Conduct has been developed by the Student Council showing clear expectations of behaviour at Burton Borough School.

We have established an active Bullying Prevention Work Group with representatives of students, staff, governors and parents established to ensure transparency and relevance of anti-bullying actions.

We are an active Member of the Anti-bullying Alliance (ABA) and some of our students are Student Advisors to the ABA, working with them to develop our Anti-Bullying Policy. In 2021-22 we successfully completed the United Against Bullying Program and were awarded the Silver Award in recognition of our work.

We audit of students' views twice a year as part of United Against Bullying Programme. We use this information to shape policy and procedure at Burton Borough.

Anti-Bullying is an integral part of the PSHE/RSE curriculum each half-term. Bullying is covered in the PSHE scheme for learning as follows:

Year 7 – Uniqueness - Autumn 1.

Friendships / Breakdown of friendships- Autumn 1.

Peer Pressure- Spring 2.

Prejudice / Diversity / Unacceptable Language - Summer 2.

Year 8- Friendships / Breakdown – Autumn 1.

Peer Pressure – Spring 1 / 2.

Cyber Bullying – EEL Day Spring 1.

Gangs – Summer 2.

Year 9 – Peer Pressure – Autumn 2.

Prejudice / Unacceptable language – Summer 2.

Mental Health – PSHE EEL day.

Year 10- Mental Health – Spring 1.

Positive/ Negative relationships/ Harassment – Spring 2.

Peer Pressure – Summer 2.

Domestic abuse – PSHE EEL day (Autumn 2).

Year 11 – Peer Pressure – Spring 1.

Mental Health – Spring 2.

Students receive regular anti-bullying assemblies from the Senior Leadership Team and the local police. These are calendared into the school year and focus specifically on matters such as Homophobic bullying, sexting, and matters that arise during the school year.

Information about bullying is prominently displayed on classroom walls, around the school, and in the school's outward face through its website, twitter feed, and newsletters.

We have Trained Lunchtime Supervisors so that they are familiar with ways of managing student behaviour and are valued by staff and students.

The BBS Community has co-produced a list of words that are not tolerated at Burton Borough and which will be challenged and sanctioned by staff. Students understand why these words are unacceptable.

We hold an active Anti-Bullying Week which involves the wider school community through work in feeder primary schools, local community cafes and work with families.

### **Spaces and Places**

We have worked with students to identify any areas within school or the community where students feel scared, threatened or anxious. We work with the police to raise awareness of these areas with the community.

We respond to all reported bullying on buses or whilst walking to and from school.

We have quiet spaces available at social time.

### **Restorative Action**

We believe in a joint approach of sanction and education to address the behaviour of perpetrators of bullying. We work with the Local Authority Behaviour Support Team when we identify patterns of sustained bullying. The Pastoral Staff receive restorative action training and completed education work is saved to student files for reference.

### **Reactive strategies**

We expect staff to model kind behaviour and to challenge all incidents of unkindness. All incidents of unkindness are logged and monitored so that patterns of bullying behaviour can be identified and addressed. This also allows us to identify victims of bullying and to offer these students timelier support.

We encourage students to report all incidents of bullying and unacceptable language either through the Pastoral Offices, through their tutors, through a Peer Wellbeing Mentor or via [speakout.bbs@taw.org.uk](mailto:speakout.bbs@taw.org.uk). We have also provided [www.Tootoot.co.uk](http://www.Tootoot.co.uk) as an app for students to report incidents of bullying. All students have a unique login for this website.

When there is an incident of bullying reported we:

- a. Respond quickly.
- b. Clearly explain next steps to parents and students.
- c. Recorded all incidents of perceived bullying onto Bromcom.
- d. Put in place risk assessments and anti-bullying contracts, where applicable, that clearly outline an individual student's expectations.
- e. Address wider issues with social group/year group.
- f. Put in place mental health support for the victim.
- g. Provide Respite provision on school site where a bullied student is at risk of becoming a school refuser.

We use direct sanctions because it sends a clear message that bullying is not tolerated. It is effective in stopping and preventing bullying.

There is a need to be flexible in adapting sanctions to fit the age of the student, incident, severity and frequency of incidents and that also takes into account the type of bullying.

**Direct Sanctions** can include the following:

- Verbal reprimands.
- Being placed on a report with a behaviour focus.
- Meetings with parents.
- Temporary removal from class.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- School Community Service.
- Detentions.
- Internal exclusion.
- Fixed Term suspensions.
- Managed move to another school.
- Permanent Exclusion.