



# Anti-Bullying Policy

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## Key Document Details

School Name: Devizes School

Version no: 1

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Owner: Owner Name

Approved by: Susan Marshall

Ratified date: 8/9/21

Interim review date: n/a

Next review date: 1/9/22

## Statement

There is a statutory duty (Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) to draw up procedures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students. These duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside of school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools also have a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of students' (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004). This policy also addresses bullying of staff by students, parents or colleagues (DfE, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2017).

## Objective

The purpose of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that students are able to learn in a safe, supportive and caring environment without fear of being bullied. The policy gives clear guidance to students, staff, governors and parents on the school's view of bullying and our commitment to supporting victims of bullying, sanctioning perpetrators and reducing incidents of bullying in the school. This policy applies to all members of the school community including students, parents, visitors and staff. This policy sets out a range of proactive strategies, reactive strategies and intervention systems which are in place to:

- Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way
- Safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for them
- Apply appropriate consequences to the student/s causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, in some cases through multi-agency support, and using restorative justice techniques where applicable

## Relationship to other policies

The Anti-Bullying Policy relates to other policies, including:

- The Behaviour & Wellbeing Policy
- The Child Protection Policy
- The Equality Policy
- E-Safety and Online Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy

## What is Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts or harms. All children have a right to feel safe both in school, and on the way to and from school. Devizes School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all its pupils so that they can learn in a secure and relaxed atmosphere. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in the school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know such incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. 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.

### **In order to support this the school:**

- Acknowledges that bullying does take place
- Promotes the ethos of respect and responsibility for each other
- Has a planned approach to antibullying in the curriculum
- Encourages pupils that it is right to tell if they see or experience bullying
- Takes seriously all reported acts of bullying
- Records all acts of bullying and what action was taken
- Informs and involves parents
- Offers support to those who bully and their victims
- Delivers regular training to staff and pupil/student volunteers, especially about cyber bullying
- Sanctions persistent bullies who are unable or unwilling to respond to the support and guidance given by the school
- Fully support interventions from other agencies
- Reports incidents of cyber bullying to parents and advises parents to inform police when this takes place outside of school

### **Pupils at the school will:**

- Show respect to everyone in the school
- Avoid saying or doing anything which will hurt others
- Report all incidents of bullying
- Take every opportunity to show they are anti-bullying and not 'follow the crowd' or 'turn a blind eye'
- Support school projects against bullying
- Offer support to anyone they see being bullied
- Advise the school about ideas that they think will help to stop bullying

### **Bullying can be:**

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (hiding possessions, threatening gestures)
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, jostling or any use of violence
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact and sexually abusive comments
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, via email and mobile phone
- Cyber bullying- pupils are being targeted by phone text, instant messenger and by abusive websites and forums

### **Cyberbullying- a new method of bullying**

This differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity and the profile of the person doing the bullying. New technologies have meant that students are likely at some point to be a target of cyberbullying. This technology includes mobile phones, instant messenger, chatrooms and message boards, email, webcams and social network sites.

This can result in:

- Threats and intimidation
- Harassment or "cyber-stalking"
- Vilification/defamation
- Exclusion or peer rejection
- Unauthorised publication of private images or information manipulation

It is important to recognise that cyberbullying can constitute a criminal offence in the UK, if it is considered to be a form of harassment. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a medium for “virtual” bullying, which can occur in or outside school. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 have given schools stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. The school may wish to hand the phone or contents found over to the police if deemed appropriate.

### **Sexting and the sharing of inappropriate pictures**

Sexting is the sharing of very personal images to another person and is a growing means of communication and relationship building by young people. When young people take and share images of themselves this could also be an indicator of other underlying vulnerabilities that may place them at risk. At the very least is the fact they have made themselves vulnerable to potential future sharing of these images which often leads to issues in school and potentially by adults who may acquire these images on-line. As such, we take the sharing of images without consent very seriously as cyberbullying behaviours often follow. The emotional damage that young people who find themselves in this situation suffer is a cause for concern for parents and the school and as such we will investigate any such matter brought to our attention. The sharing of images is illegal and we will always work in partnership with our Community Police Team; however, safeguarding is at the heart of any intervention. This approach is informed by Section 1 (1) of the Children’s Act 1989 and reinforced by Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 which places a duty on key persons to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Where we are aware that personal images are on a student’s device and have been, or have been alleged to have been shared, designated school staff will use their powers to delete these images for the purpose of safeguarding the victim and liaise with local police if deemed necessary. We have developed a broader range of sanctions that specifically deal with cyberbullying and the sharing of inappropriate images and this includes an Acceptable User Policy for internet and mobile device use within school.

### **Reporting an incidence of bullying:**

Students can report an incident of bullying to any member of staff, however we would encourage where possible for this to be their tutor, Raising Achievement Leader or Pastoral Leader. Investigating incidents in school can be challenging, as it is often based on the perspectives and level of honesty displayed by students. Therefore, school investigations collect evidence objectively, and then make decisions on what is known as the ‘balance of probabilities’. To ensure there are appropriate control checks within that process, those responsible for such investigations will consistently follow the steps outlined below: *(as per the school’s behaviour policy)*

#### **Step 1: Evidence gathering**

All relevant students (victims, perpetrators, observers) are collected to provide statements on formal statement sheets. Statements should be written independently, without access to a mobile device at this time. This process may be completed without discussion with parents. Whilst the investigation is being conducted, all relevant students involved must be kept separate. Investigating staff should ask further clarifying questions on statements, to ensure that a full picture of the incident is obtained. Any screenshots/CCTV should be studied as required.

#### **Step 2: Summarising**

Investigating staff will read through all statements thoroughly, highlighting key points clearly. An incident overview sheet is completed, and any appropriate actions/consequences recommended by that staff member.

#### **Step 3: Presenting & Assessing**

If the incident requires consequences at a C2-3 level, the Raising Achievement Leader will make the final decisions on what actions should be taken. For incidents that require a higher level of sanction (a C4/FTE), the incident will be taken to a Senior member of the pastoral team for discussion/decision. If insufficient evidence is presented, the overseeing member of staff may ask for those investigating to return to step 1/2.

A consequence will then be confirmed and actions clearly laid out on the overview sheet.

#### **Step 4: In the event of an exclusion**

All exclusions have to be ratified by the Principal or delegated members of staff on the Senior Leadership Team. The student(s) being excluded will be taken to meet the relevant Senior Leader (preferably their office) to be formally excluded from school. The relevant members of staff will then complete the FTE notification form and contacts parents to inform them, arrange collection and agree a time for a readmission meeting.

#### **Step 5: Recording**

All bullying incidents (this includes threats of violence), must then be reported to the DSL AND recorded on CPOMs. All racially motivated incidents are recorded by ISR Manager and then submitted to the Local Authority.

#### **Strategies to reduce bullying:**

The culture and ethos of our school supports students and staff in dealing with bullying. A positive culture that encourages students to “tell” whether they are the target of bullying or the bystanders will help us to achieve our overall objective of reducing incidents of bullying within school and for students to feel safe to be in school and learn. The following proactive strategies are designed to gather intelligence about issues that may lead to bullying and to stop bullying from happening in the first place by raising awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour, including:

- the consistent promotion of the school’s behaviour policy which requires all pupils to respect the rights of others
- the reinforcement of the clear message that violence has no place at Devizes School
- consultation with the ‘Student Voice’ on appropriate action
- take part in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week
- training for all members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy
- the supervision by school staff of all accessible areas at lunch times and breaks
- providing information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if the suspect their child is being bullied
- a clear policy of mobile phones not permitted to be in use during school hours or on school site.
- the celebration of all student’s backgrounds and cultures through assemblies
- during assemblies and PHSE learning sessions discuss and explore bullying issues with the children
- raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching children to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, internet)
- all websites accessed in school are screened. This software screens the language used in all documents, emails and websites. Rude or offensive emails, websites, documents are sent to the Headteacher. Action will be taken and recorded
- effective recording systems
- work with multi-agency teams including police and children’s services as appropriate
- contact the parents of both the child being bullied and the bully
- challenge sexual content within verbal abuse, especially challenging homophobic or other prejudice language
- Advice and guidance made available to students on the dangers of sharing personal and inappropriate pictures through social media and mobile phones (sexting)
- Continuing professional development for all staff
- Systems that support parents and carers involvement such as an “open door” policy
- Adult modelling of positive relationships
- A restorative culture and ethos that supports the development of social and emotional skills
- School environment reviews to ensure that areas where students feel unsafe are monitored
- Daily duty across the school (dining hall, corridors and playground) provided by teams of staff who monitor student behaviour and interaction
- Opportunities to gather student voice used regularly, including for students from vulnerable groups such as SEN, Young Carers, LGBT, ethnic minority groups, travellers and those who are looked after or in foster care. Students from vulnerable groups closely monitored through their additional support in school to ensure that they are not the targets of bullying

## **Bullying outside of school premises**

In the modern world, bullying often extends beyond, or begins outside of the school day. Technology has made it harder for victims to escape from bullying behaviour. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, states that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include 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 such bullying is reported to staff, it will be investigated and acted on where possible.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

We consider that everyone within our school community has a part to play in ensuring that our school is a "telling and talking" school. In order to tackle the issue of bullying we recognise that we need a range of strategies to deal with it. A whole school approach to educate students and staff to ensure that it is not tolerated, and that it is dealt with sensitively and consistently.

### **Students**

All of our students have an important role in ensuring that our policy is effective by reporting bullying incidents to members of staff. Students should support the Anti-Bullying Policy by not being bystanders when they see and hear incidents of bullying within the school environment. All students must consider the wishes and feelings of other members of the school community in regard to their own behaviour with specific awareness of how bullying behaviour may adversely affect the emotional well-being of others. All students will have an active part to play to ensuring that our school is a safe place to learn. This will involve them in actively learning about all types of bullying, considering the impact of this behaviour on their peers and vulnerable members of their school community, and through participation in surveys and student voice opportunities where their views will be sought on the policy and its implementation.

### **Staff**

Staff have a crucial part to play in ensuring that students feel safe to learn. Staff will play an active role by addressing any incidents of bullying that are reported to them, following the agreed process for investigating incidents as laid out in the 'reporting' section. Incidents will be recorded and plans for supporting students and monitoring their behaviour implemented, working in partnership with parents and carers at all times. Staff will be involved through the school's national anti-bullying week, in delivering lessons that seek to educate and inform students, develop greater awareness and ensure students are equipped with the skills to deal with bullying if they are a target of it or see it within school. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that this policy and the procedures within it are fully implemented. Staff training and induction provide opportunities to reflect on the issues surrounding bullying and have an understanding of how the school policy is reflected in its practice. Bullying of all forms will be regularly discussed during assemblies throughout each school year. All staff have a responsibility to be alert for the signs and symptoms that a student may be being bullied; this may be either in their classroom environment or in the wider school. Staff receive training on signs of bullying and tackling "bullying or banter" and they are expected to be alert to language use between students, to respond swiftly and decisively to ensure that our classrooms are places of emotional safety and to follow-up any issues individually with students who have been a target of such incidents.

### **Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying behaviour to a member of the school staff and allow the person investigating the incident the time to ensure it is a full and accurate investigation that ensures student safety remains uncompromised. The role of parents/carers in supporting their child to develop the range of social and emotional skills which minimise the chances of their child bullying cannot be underestimated and will significantly support the school in seeking to reducing incidents of bullying or preventing incidents of bullying.

### Useful Websites:

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
[www.each.education](http://www.each.education)  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)  
[www.youngstonewall.org.uk](http://www.youngstonewall.org.uk)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
[www.stoptextbully.com](http://www.stoptextbully.com)  
[www.beyondbullying.com](http://www.beyondbullying.com)  
[www.childnet-int.org](http://www.childnet-int.org)  
[www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org)  
[www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com)  
[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)