



High March

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Person responsible for latest revision:	Mrs S Walker-Stidder and Mrs M Honiball
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This policy applies to the Early Year Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

High March

Anti-Bullying Policy

The High March core values are kindness, friendship and educational excellence – these are the antithesis of bullying. The aim of this policy is to develop a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable, produce a consistent and effective school response to any bullying incident that may occur and make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from anxiety. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should know where and how they can get appropriate support and advice and that their voice will be listened to and incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that any pupil who knows or witnesses bullying happening is expected to tell a staff member. We create opportunities for pupils to speak confidentially to members of staff about concerns and make sure pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying including when they find themselves as bystanders. If staff members know or witness bullying happening, they are expected to inform the Form Teacher, Head of Junior House (HoJH), Head of Upper School (HoUS), Designated Safeguarding Lead, or Headmistress.

This policy also applies to the EYFS. It is written with regard to the DfE Guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying (updated June 2017) [Preventing bullying - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616222/preventing-bullying-guidance-june-2017.pdf) – advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies. This policy has regard to the Independent Schools' Standards regulations (ISSR Part 3), and KCSIE 2025. Child on child abuse involves any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control exercised between children/young people both on and offline.

Our Anti-Bullying policy and procedures form part of a suite of documents and policies which relate to the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff in School. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour and Pastoral Care policy, Safeguarding Policy, PSHE and Relationships Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and Acceptable Use and Mobile Phone Policy. Parents may access these policies on the School website.

How do we define bullying?

Bullying is the action of intentionally hurting one person or group by another either physically or emotionally. It is usually, but not always repetitive or persistent. Bullying results in physical or emotional pain and distress to the victim. It undermines confidence, self-esteem and victim's sense of security and can have a life-long impact on some victims' lives. It is difficult for victims to defend themselves against bullying.

We recognise that bullying could be a form or feature of child-on-child abuse and should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. Although the following list is not exhaustive, these are the main types of behaviour which this policy is designed to cover. Fortunately, instances of any type of bullying are rare at High March.

Objectives of this Policy

- To ensure all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents understand what bullying is.
- To ensure all governors and teaching and non-teaching staff know what the School policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- To ensure that all pupils and parents know what the School policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises, particularly where they can report it and get help and support.
- To assure pupils and parents that the School takes bullying seriously and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- To promote an open atmosphere in which victims and witnesses know that it is right and safe “to tell”.
- To ensure staff can identify different sorts of bullying and know how to deal with cases sensitively, supportively and effectively.
- To work with children in a range of ways to equip them with social and emotional skills in order to reduce bullying and to be able to counter and deal with bullying.
- To work with parents and assist them to understand what constitutes bullying, especially cyber bullying and how it may be different to friendship issues.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Social: ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating
- Sexist: the use of sexist language or negative stereotyping based on gender
- Physical: kicking, hitting, pushing, punching, intimidating behaviour or interference with personal property or any use of violence
- Verbal/Psychological: e.g. threats, taunts, sarcasm, shunning/ostracism, name-calling/verbal abuse or spreading of rumours, being unfriendly, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)

Bullying can be related to:

Race, religion or culture

This may include physical, verbal, racial taunts, gestures, written, graffiti, on-line or text abuse or ridicule based on differences of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, culture or language and negative stereotyping, name-calling or ridiculing based on religion, belief or culture.

Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

Bullying may be physical or emotional, and adults should be aware that it may be harder for SEND pupils and those with learning difficulties to build friendships and relationships. This may include name-calling, innuendo, negative stereotyping or excluding from activity based on disability or learning difficulties.

Family circumstances such as an adopted child or a young Carer

Bullying may be physical or emotional, such as ostracism, teasing, put downs. Adults should be aware that it may be harder for a young carer to build friendships.

More Able /Talented Bullying

E.g. name-calling, innuendo, ostracism or negative peer pressure, based on high levels of ability or effort.

Appearance or health

This may include taunts, name calling, teasing and put downs.

Online activity

All areas of the internet and social media. This may include abuse on-line or via text message, interfering with electronic files, setting up or promoting inappropriate websites and inappropriate sharing of images from webcams/mobile phones, email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.

Sexual, Gender or homophobic

The use of verbal insults, name calling or spreading rumours, innuendo or negative stereotyping based on sexual orientation, gender identification or use of homophobic language or unwanted/inappropriate physical contact or sexual innuendo. This may also include upskirting.

Signs and Symptoms

Children may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when an online message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Why is it important to respond to Bullying?

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying, and everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying can cause serious and lasting psychological harm and may even lead to suicide. Harassment and threatening behaviour are criminal offences. The School always takes bullying seriously and will involve external agencies, including the police or social services, where necessary. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the matter will be treated as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Strategies to prevent bullying

- 1) **Effective school leadership** that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
 - **Raising awareness** of staff through training, so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to report, resolve and prevent problems and sources of support are available.
 - **Working with external partners** such as the NSPCC to develop awareness and strategies to support victims of bullying and the perpetrators of bullying.
 - **Using opportunities in the School day** or year through pastoral values themed assemblies, topics discussions during form periods, PSHE and RSE lessons, Circle Times, Girls on Board sessions (Upper School), RS or indeed any lesson, to raise awareness of issues surrounding bullying and reinforce the core values of the School and our zero tolerance of bullying.
 - **By example** - the staff are careful to be seen to treat the children fairly and respectfully. They do not 'pick on' children. They would never humiliate a child nor hold them up to public ridicule. Any 'low-level' concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the or Headmistress.
 - Staff interactions with other staff members are courteous and respectful to model good behaviour.
 - Displays are used to highlight the importance of children's rights, anti-bullying attitudes, behaviours and remedies.
- 2) By **using recognised methods** for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:
 - pupils formulating their own set of school or classroom rules
 - class members signing a behaviour contract
 - writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
 - reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
 - making up role-plays to show the dangers of bullying and how to deal with it
 - having discussions about bullying and why it matters

- Engaging pupils in the process of developing and delivering anti-bullying messages and advice through the Pupil Council
- 3) **By practical measures** taken during the parts of the day when bullying from one child to another is most likely to occur – such as non-lesson times.
- Ensuring there is **adequate supervision** at all times of the school day. Playground and lunchtime duties as well as beginning and end of the day duties are performed by the staff and the lunchtime supervisors. All staff are watchful in order to prevent instances of bullying from developing.
 - There are **good play facilities** and resources for the children in the gardens and play areas designed to encourage purposeful and co-operative playtimes. This equipment is updated and improved on an on-going basis.
 - **Organised activities** such as clubs, orchestra practice, library sessions, and small money-raising activities for charities of the children's choice are encouraged at play times.
 - **Staff are prompt and punctual** in moving from one lesson to another to ensure that children are well supervised and gainfully employed.
 - **Supervision of pupils on residential trips**, particularly in 'down time' is carefully planned and provided.
- 4) We **reward and praise** kind and considerate behaviour, e.g. Stars of the Week certificates for Kindness, Esprit de Corps Cups in Upper School and in Junior House, two cups for Kindness and Friendship.

Online bullying: Preventative Measures

In addition to the preventative measures described above, the School, Wishford Governance team and proprietor ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – [see paragraphs 151 - 155, KCSIE 2026](#) for further information). The training is regularly updated.

Children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material through our whole school approach to online safety which protects and educates children and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms including filtering and monitoring systems to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving but can be categorised into four areas of risk (the 4Cs): content, contact, conduct and commerce. ([See KCSIE 2026 paragraph 162 - 166](#)).

The School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its rules for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by systems, and our Network Manager and DSL Team monitor and filter pupils' use.
- Ensures pupils understand where and how they may use a computer other than in lessons.

- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of technology and the internet.
- Offers guidance to pupils on the safe use of social networking sites and online bullying.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Offers guidance, at age-appropriate levels, on grooming, internet sites containing violent content, and the dangers of sharing of personal information/photographs.
- Offers guidance on keeping safe from financial and economic scams online.
- Does not permit children to bring a smart mobile phone to School or to any School related activities.
- Does not permit children to use mobile phones in School.
- Where parents require a Year 6 pupil to have a non-smart mobile phone for use when travelling to and from School independently, pupils are required to hand the phone in to a member of staff on arrival and collect only when leaving the School site at the end of their day.
- Provides guidelines for the use of mobile phones, cameras and smart watches by staff, in the Early Years [EY] and the rest of the School, and the taking of official and parental photographs of pupils in School.
- Has clear information in the Staff Code of Conduct about online contact between parents, pupils and staff.
- Offers guidance and signposting to further information and tools to parents on keeping their child safe when online.

What will the School do?

Staff are vigilant for signs of bullying and work to build positive, supportive relationships with pupils and parents so concerns can be shared openly and dealt with promptly.

- Children are regularly reminded that bullying is unacceptable and are made aware of the need to tell an adult if they feel that they are being bullied. Children are also given strategies for dealing with bullying behaviour.
- Any Upper School pupil may ask for time to talk with the Head of Upper School, Assistant Head Wellbeing and Mental Health or Head of Learning Support or a tutorial with her Form Teacher.
- In Upper School, a girl could also use the 'Sharing Box' or the 'worry box' in form room to alert pastoral staff that she would like to talk to someone.
- In Junior House, pupils are encouraged to speak to their form staff (Teacher or Classroom Assistant), or Head of Junior House.
- Staff are regularly reminded to be on the lookout for signs of bullying in any of the children that they come into contact with.
- Staff help in building up pupils who lack confidence or vulnerable children, wherever an opportunity exists e.g. Drama, Circle Time, and PSHE.
- All staff aim to establish positive relationships with the children so that they feel able to approach staff with concerns. Staff will regularly and on an on-going basis let the children know that they are there to advise and support them.
- All staff aim to establish sound and supportive relationships with parents where there can be a mutual sharing of any concerns and where parents know that their

concerns will always be taken seriously.

- Staff discuss, monitor and review our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis to ensure the School has a clear and consistent approach to bullying.
- Senior managers ensure there is a common understanding of the definition of bullying, how to identify bullying and how to react to bullying issues.
- All staff, including non-teaching staff, recognise types of bullying and signs of possible victims, including perpetrators of bullying who may themselves be victims of possible bullying too.
- Sign posting information about where pupils can get help from e.g. Childline posters and wallet cards in travel wallets and well-being notice board with Y6 well-being prefects and Assistant Head (Wellbeing & Mental Health) photographs.

All staff agree to:

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Not make premature assumptions
- Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same thing does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth
- Protect and support a child who has been bullied
- Support the perpetrator of any bullying to recognise the effect of their behaviour, take responsibility for it and change their behaviour
- Apply appropriate sanctions
- Inform and involve senior managers who may involve parents
- Involve outside agencies where necessary
- Follow up repeatedly, checking that bullying has not resumed

Investigation, Support and Restorative Steps

- Following a report or concern of bullying, the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator will each be spoken to sensitively and separately by the Form Teacher, Head of Upper School or Head of Junior House. A calm and thorough investigation will be undertaken to establish the facts and understand the needs of all pupils involved.
- Appropriate support and guidance will be provided to both the victim and perpetrator. The focus will be on ensuring the victim feels safe and supported, and helping the perpetrator understand the impact of their behaviour and make positive changes. Bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must cease immediately.
- Where appropriate, restorative conversations may be facilitated between those involved to repair relationships, promote understanding and reduce the likelihood of further incidents.
- Pupils involved, including any witnesses, may be asked to provide an account of the incident. These records will be documented by the member of staff leading the investigation.
- Parents or carers of both the victim and perpetrator will be informed and, where appropriate, invited to meet with relevant school staff to discuss the matter and agree supportive next steps.
- Parents or carers will be kept informed of significant developments and any actions

taken.

- Follow-up meetings will be arranged with both the victim and perpetrator to review progress, confirm that the behaviour has not recurred, and identify any ongoing support or restorative measures required.
- All bullying incidents will be monitored following investigation to ensure the behaviour has ceased and that all pupils involved continue to feel supported and safe.
- The Head of Upper School and Head of Junior House will regularly review Complete-Ed records and maintain a centralised record of bullying incidents to support monitoring, identify patterns and inform preventative action (see Appendix 1).
- Cases involving serious, persistent or targeted bullying will be referred to the DSL and Headmistress. Following investigation and consultation with the Wishford Governance Team where appropriate, sanctions may include suspension or exclusion. In exceptional circumstances, the DSL or Headmistress may also make a referral to the Police or Children's Social Care.

Actions and Recording incidents of bullying

- Reassure the person who makes the allegation that the matter will be fully investigated.
- Make a record of the allegation and keep records of all follow-up actions taken on Complete-Ed.
- Where bullying incidents are related to protected characteristics this will be identified and recorded.
- Head of Upper School or Head of Junior House (who are Deputy Heads (Pastoral)), record all bullying allegations and actions taken on the annual Bullying Monitoring Log.
- Inform the pupil's form teacher and other staff as necessary so that all staff can support and monitor the affected child or children.

Sanctions in cases of bullying

The School's Behaviour Policy will be followed for all incidents of bullying. This may include the Head of Junior House, the Head of Upper School or the Headmistress applying appropriate sanctions.

In the case of repeated instances of bullying behaviour, the school's Behaviour Policy relating to Stage 4 and above sanctions will be followed.

Bullying off the school premises

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the School premises which may cause harm to others, damage to property and tarnish the reputation of the School "to such an extent as is reasonable". 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 will be investigated and acted upon. The Headmistress will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour officer of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be

informed. More detailed advice on teachers' powers to discipline, including their power to punish pupils for misbehaviour that occurs outside school, is included in ['Behaviour in Schools – advice for head teachers and school staff'](#).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Senior Leadership will monitor the procedures and effectiveness of this policy and make changes as appropriate.

Opportunities for further training are brought to the attention of staff by the Assistant Head for Professional Development.

Guidance documentation on Bullying

Preventing and tackling bullying - DfE June 2017 [Preventing bullying - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying – DfE 2014 [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Related Policies and Documents:

Behaviour and Pastoral Care Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Acceptable Use and Mobile Phone Policy

Useful Websites

<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Appendix 1

INCIDENTS OF BULLYING – BLANK MONITORING LOG

Principles of review: When a complaint is added to the Log, it will be cross-referenced with other incidents in order to identify any patterns. If further action is needed as a result, it will be added here and in the child's comment sheet on Complete-Ed. The Head of Upper School and the Head of Junior House monitor this Log and it is signed off by Governors annually.

See Pupil's Notes on Complete-Ed for full details of incidents and actions taken

Date of incident	Name and Form of victim	Name/s and Form/s of child/children involved	Reviewed

Log reviewed by Governors on (insert date here)

Signed: