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Beechwood Park School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Website: www.beechwoodpark.com

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OVERVIEW

Beechwood Park School (hereafter the School) understands its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate unlawful bullying (including cyber-bullying), discrimination, harassment, victimisation, discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the act, whether in or out of School. The School will not tolerate or condone any of these and will, where necessary, take disciplinary action.

Legal Status

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence; for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. When staff feel that a criminal offence may have been committed, they will seek assistance from the Police.

All bullying is unacceptable at Beechwood Park and is manifestly contrary to our Purpose, Vision and Mission. Where proven, it is a serious disciplinary issue. Our aim is that every member of the Beechwood Park community does everything possible to ensure that bullying doesn't happen at our School and that when it does that it is managed quickly and effectively.

Related Policies

Please read this policy in the context of:

- BWPS EYFS Policy
- BWPS PSHE, RSE and SMSC Policy
- BWPS Academic Handbook
- BWPS Curriculum Policy
- BWPS Learning Support Policy
- BWPS Staff Whistleblowing Policy (within Employee Handbook)
- BWPS Complaints Policy
- BWPS Equal Opportunities (Pupils) Policy
- BWPS Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- BWPS Health & Safety Policy Statement
- BWPS Health & Safety Policy
- BWPS Staff Social Media Policy
- BWPS Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- BWPS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2024)
- BWPS Statement of Boarding Principle & Practices (NMS1)
- BWPS Pupil Attendance Policy
- BWPS Pupil Conduct Policy
- BWPS Pupil Positions of Responsibility Policy
- BWPS Pupil Supervision Policy
- BWPS Staff Wellbeing, Stress and Mental Health Policy

This policy defines for pupils, staff, parents, governors and the outside community the actions which the School understands as 'bullying'. It demonstrates that the School takes bullying seriously and will not tolerate it. It also

- Establishes measures to prevent all forms of bullying throughout the School, its boarding house, and on off-site activities
- Supports those who identify and protect victims of bullying or those who disclose bullying incidents
- Demonstrates that the School can enhance the safety, happiness and educational success of all pupils by dealing positively with bullying
- Encourages pupils to tell someone that they, or someone they know, is being bullied

Communication

The School places the highest priority on the effective communication, implementation and maintenance of this policy throughout the School community, through the publication of this document for parents, pupils (including boarders and those in the Early Years Foundation Scheme), staff and governors.

The Senior Deputy Head publishes this policy:

- On the school website
- On the School's Staff Sharepoint;
- In boarding policies and in the BWPS Parents' Guide to Boarding.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is an insidious form of behaviour that has no place at Beechwood Park. The School is committed to combating bullying and this policy recognises the need to respect and support each individual in this area.

‘Bullying is repeated behaviour which is intended to make someone or a group of people feel upset, uncomfortable, unsafe or is meant to be hurtful.’

Types of Bullying

Verbal bullying is the repeated, negative use of speech, sign language, or verbal gestures to intentionally hurt others, e.g. using hurtful words, discriminatory or offensive language, or swear words;

Physical bullying is the repeated, negative use of body contact to intentionally hurt others, e.g. kicking, punching, slapping, inappropriate touching, or spitting;

Indirect (or manipulative) bullying is the repeated, negative use of actions, which are neither physical nor verbal, to intentionally hurt others e.g. spreading rumours, purposefully excluding another person in activities and/or conversations, damaging or stealing someone's property, or cyberbullying;

Cyberbullying is the repeated, negative use of technology to intentionally hurt others e.g. posting unwanted pictures or messages, accessing another person's account without permission, creating fake accounts to impersonate or harass someone, and sharing other people's private information online.

Further descriptors of these types of bullying are available in **APPENDIX A**.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate). Please refer to the BWPS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, the School will follow the guidance outlined in Part five of KCSIE 2024.

The School recognises that sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here.' We recognise sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable. Please refer to the BWPS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The Beechwood Park Anti-Bullying Strategy

At the beginning of every School year the Head or Senior Deputy Head informs all pupils throughout the School that:

- Beechwood Park is committed to providing a nurturing, friendly, and safe environment for all its pupils, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere
- Beechwood Park has an Anti-Bullying Policy, which contains definitions of bullying and a School Anti-Bullying Strategy
- Beechwood Park staff are aware that young children can be clumsy with their developing emotions and their relationships with others and that not all negative interactions between pupils are bullying
- In order to avoid accusations of bullying, pupils should act at all times in accordance with the School's Mission
- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Beechwood Park
- Beechwood Park is a **TELLING SCHOOL** Even though strong bonds of loyalty exist between friends, bullying is too damaging to be kept hidden. Pupils should **TELL** their Form Teachers or other members of staff without delay
- Beechwood Park is a **LISTENING SCHOOL** and through its academic, co-curricular and pastoral structures provides the opportunity for children to seek help when they are feeling uncomfortable about anything. All staff **LISTEN** to pupils who feel uncomfortable about relationships
- If they cannot speak to their Form Teacher, they should speak to another trusted adult in School, perhaps another Form Teacher, Head of Year or Head of Pre-Prep / Middle or Upper School

- Pupils can also talk to the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, who are pupils who completed training at School and who wear a distinctive badge
- They also inform their parents as to how they are feeling and ensure that their parents inform their Form Teacher as soon as possible
- Pupils who witness bullying have a duty to **TELL** a member of staff. This is not 'snitching' or 'grassing', it is 'supporting others' in line with our School Mission
- All staff are trained to take note of concerns, investigate any previous instances of bullying related to these individuals, put in place interventions or sanctions which prevent problems recurring, inform parents (of both perpetrators and victims) in writing of instances of bullying and record incidents and interventions

At the beginning of the School Year

The Senior Deputy Head reminds the following staff of their specific anti-bullying responsibilities:

- The Head of Digital Learning briefs all pupils about Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying in accordance with the BWPS Online-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- The Head and /or Senior Deputy Head presents an online-safety assembly to all year groups
- The Senior Deputy Head reminds all staff and particularly Form Teachers to be vigilant about all forms of bullying and cyber-bullying, asking open questions so as to establish open discourse about each pupil's online life
- The Senior Deputy Head and Head of PSHE use National Anti-Bullying Week to reinforce the School's Anti-Bullying Strategy and advice
- The Head of PSHE and Form Teacher focus on anti-bullying in the first two weeks of the academic year as part of the introduction to the School year
- The Head of PSHE and Form Teacher focus in the first two weeks of the academic year on the 10 Key Principles of the Anti-Bullying Charter for Schools as part of Beechwood Park's membership of the Anti-Bullying Alliance: <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>
- The Head of Boarding informs all boarders about the measures in place to prevent and deal with any instances of bullying or cyberbullying
- Academic Heads of Department (AHoDs) and Co-Curricular Heads of Departments (CCHoDs) identify areas within their subject curriculum that offer opportunities for discussions about anti-bullying, for example discussions about race in Geography, sexual orientation in Biology and culture in TPR (Theology, Philosophy and Religion). They foster positive relations between pupils
- Teachers exploit every opportunity to promote the School's Anti-Bullying Strategy. They discuss bullying when it is pertinent and consider carefully the most appropriate strategy for developing discussion

- Teachers manage classroom etiquette to promote co-operative activity and discussion among pupils
- All teachers are responsible for ensuring that pupils learn to listen to one another, to respect opinions they do not themselves hold, and for fostering an appropriate degree of assertiveness that permits pupils to express their own emotions and their own opinions

Procedures

A Culture of Awareness

Pupils who are victims of bullying may show changes in behaviour or signs or symptoms of bullying (see **APPENDIX B**).

All staff are aware of behaviour changes that bullying can bring about and report any disclosures, allegations, concerns or suspicions about bullying, however small **without delay** to the Form Teacher, copying in the Head of Pre-Prep, Middle or Upper School.

All pupils are aware of behaviour changes that bullying can bring about and report any disclosures, allegations, concerns or suspicions about bullying however small to a member of staff and their parents, who should contact their child's Form Teacher, copying in the Head of Pre-Prep, Middle or Upper School.

Parents who become aware of behaviour changes that bullying can bring about, report any report any disclosures, allegations, concerns or suspicions about bullying, however small **without delay** to the Form Teacher, copying in the Head of Pre-Prep, Middle or Upper School and the Senior Deputy Head.

Listening to and recording disclosures and allegations about concerns or suspicions of bullying

All staff LISTEN carefully to disclosures, allegations, concerns or suspicions about bullying, however small. They will:

- Always take seriously what is said
- Not promise to keep secret what is said
- Reassure the pupil that disclosure is aligned to Beechwood Park as a **Telling School**
- Listen, making notes as necessary

Staff identify:

- What happened
- Who was involved, including bystanders
- Where it took place
- Whether there are any past incidents of the same behaviour
- Whether there were any other relevant circumstances
- What action the pupil(s) would like the member of staff to take

The member of staff

- Explains what will happen next and
- Ensures that the pupil(s) feels safe and is not in danger of significant harm

- Reports all disclosures, allegations, concerns or suspicions about bullying, however small, on CPOMS copying in the
 - a) Form Teacher;
 - b) Head of Pre-Prep, Middle or Upper School
 - c) Senior Deputy Head

Managing Allegations, Concerns or Suspicions

The Senior Deputy Head discusses the report with the member of staff, taking further notes as required. They will then either lead an investigation themselves or delegate this investigation to another member of staff, usually the Form Teacher.

The Senior Deputy Head or Form Teacher will:

1. Evaluate the alleged victim's emotional state, reassuring him/her that it is always right to disclose bullying and giving priority to stabilising the pupil's emotions and protecting him/her from further upset;
2. Ask the pupil to write a statement stating:
 - What happened
 - Who was involved
 - Where it took place
 - Whether there are any past incidents of the same behaviour
 - Whether there are any other relevant circumstances
 - What action the pupil(s) would like the member of staff to take

They sign and date their statement.

3. Meet with witnesses **individually, not as a group**, asking them to write an honest statement as to what happened, including:
 - What happened
 - Who was involved
 - Where it took place
 - Whether there are any past incidents of the same behaviour
 - Whether there are any other relevant circumstances
 - What action the pupil(s) would like the member of staff to take

They sign and date their statement.

The Senior Deputy Head or Form Teacher will:

1. Read all of the statements in the light of their own knowledge of the pupils concerned and conduct further enquiries with pupils as necessary
2. Consider whether this constitutes a bullying incident in accordance with the definition of bullying
3. If it is considered bullying, identify the kind(s) of bullying (physical, verbal, indirect/manipulative, racist, sexist or homophobic, exploiting disability or special needs and / or cyberbullying)
4. Decide on an intervention or sanctions for the perpetrator(s), victim(s) and bystander(s)

which in severe cases or in cases of repeated bullying could attract sanctions including in the most severe case, permanent exclusion of the bully from the School

5. Write a letter to the parents of both victims, perpetrators and bystanders, explaining:
 - a) The original disclosure, allegation, concern or suspicion about bullying
 - b) That the School always takes these matters seriously and Beechwood Park is a **Telling School**
 - c) What happened
 - d) How many other pupils were involved (without naming them)
 - e) Where it took place
 - f) Whether there were any past incidents of the same behaviour
 - g) Whether there are any other relevant circumstances
 - h) How the incident has been investigated
 - i) Conclusions and any interventions or sanctions
6. Enlist the support of parents in alerting the School to any further allegations / concerns / suspicions of bullying and seeking advice as to how to develop support for the victim, calling upon some (or all of the following): Matrons, Form Teacher, teachers for further support. (Ongoing discussion to support and monitor the victim will be essential)
7. Ask for written confirmation of the letter
8. Record parental responses on CPOMS, copying in the Head, Head of Pre-Prep, Middle or Upper School / Senior Deputy Head and Form Teacher
9. Review the pupil's pastoral progress within one month of the incident

Where there is no evidence of Bullying

Where there is no evidence of bullying or where the incident does not meet the threshold for a definition of bullying, The Senior Deputy Head or Form Teacher will record all of their findings on CPOMS, copying in the Head of Pre-Prep, Middle or Upper School and reminding relevant staff to be alert to any persisting or developing concerns.

The Head of Pre-Prep, Middle or Upper School will raise this matter at their weekly departmental meeting, reminding relevant staff to be alert to any persisting or developing concerns.

Senior Deputy Head or Form Teacher will write to the parents of the alleged perpetrator(s) and the alleged victim(s), explaining:

- What happened
- How many other pupils were involved
- Where it took place
- Whether there were any past incidents of the same behaviour
- Whether there are any other relevant circumstances
- How the incident has been investigated
- Any findings and interventions and reminding parents to alert him to any further allegations / concerns / suspicions of bullying

Witnessing an incident that prima facie involves bullying

A teacher who witnesses an incident that prima facie involves bullying should deal with the incident immediately and directly.

A teacher should:

- NEVER IGNORE any behaviour that is prima facie (i.e. on the face of it) bullying
- Challenge behaviour that is prima facie bullying
- If satisfied that the behaviour is not intended to cause physical or mental injury, explain how the behaviour might cause such injury, and ensure that the pupil is clear that such behaviour is not to be repeated
- If inclined to believe that the behaviour is intended to cause physical or mental injury, challenge it and apply an appropriate sanction
- Report the incident to the Form Teacher of those involved noting any sanctions or debits given. If satisfied that the incident involved bullying, report it to the Form Teacher and record it on CPOMS

Contacting other Agencies

Pupils may wish to seek advice from someone independent of the School.

The Senior Deputy Head publishes contact details, as follows, in the Main Entrance of the School, the Boarding House and Form Rooms, and reminds pupils of the leaflet at least at the start of every term.

If you are being bullied in or out of school, it is important to get as much support and help as you can. Please don't try and deal with this on your own - tell a parent, your Form Teacher, any teacher or supervisor, an Anti-Bullying Ambassador. You can also get support and advice from an independent agency, such as those listed here.		
Childline	24/7, 365 days per year	0800 1111 You can also email and log in for a 1-2-1 chat: details on the Get Support tab of www.childline.org.uk
National Bullying Helpline	Mon – Fri, 0900 - 1700 Sat, 1000 - 1600	0845 22 55 787
Bullying UK	Mon – Fri 0900 – 2100 Weekend 1000 - 1500	0808 800 2222
Samaritans	24/7, 365 days per year	116 123
The Diana Award Crisis Messenger	24/7, 365 days per year	text DA to 85258

Responsibilities

The Governors

The Governors recognise their legal duty to oversee the safeguarding of all Beechwood Park pupils, to promote the welfare of all pupils, and to ensure that procedures exist to prevent bullying arising among pupils. They review the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy annually through the Governors Education Committee and audit and report on bullying statistics termly.

The Head

The Head recognises the School's legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, and to ensure that procedures exist to prevent bullying arising among pupils. He attends all Governors Education Committee meetings.

The Head issues a parental survey every two years with questions specifically aimed at bullying and uses the feedback data further to refine the School's Anti-Bullying Strategy.

The Head delegates the management of the School's Anti-Bullying Strategy within carefully delineated responsibilities to the Senior Deputy Head, meeting weekly to discuss all pastoral matters with a particular emphasis on the management of anti-bullying at the School.

The Senior Deputy Head

The Senior Deputy Head meets with the Head termly to discuss all School pastoral matters arising in the term. They termly audit all pastoral data on CPOMS, paying particular attention to reports of bullying. They discuss these with relevant pastoral staff and write a termly report advising the Governors Education Committee on patterns and trends of bullying, identifying further developments to the School's Anti-Bullying Strategy.

The Senior Deputy Head is mindful of the duty placed upon them to:

- Protect children from maltreatment
- Prevent impairment of children's health or development
- Ensure that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Enable children to have optimum, life chances and to enter adulthood successfully
- Ensure that the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy represents good standards of practice

To this effect they:

- Discuss development of the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy with the Senior Leadership Team
- Review the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy with the boarding team
- Ensure that all staff, parents, pupils and governors are fully aware of this policy
- Manage all anti-bullying processes and procedures
- Support staff in discussing bullying and anti-bullying with both bullies and victims
- Help staff to formulate solutions to incidents of bullying
- Raise staff awareness of the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy by arranging staff training
- Act to reduce the risk of bullying at times and places where it is most likely
- Increase awareness of the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy through PSHE, assemblies and

registration

- Encourage pupils to tell someone if they are being bullied or have witnessed bullying
- Ensure that all staff record all incidents of bullying on CPOMS and that Form Teachers review the entries
- Review the data on CPOMS to identify patterns of bullying behaviour to locations in School, times of the School day and other pupils involved, perhaps as bystanders
- Report termly to the Governors on the incidence of and response to bullying in the School through the Governors Education Committee
- Dovetail the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy with the BWPS Pupil Conduct Policy
- Make explicit the sanction for bullying at Beechwood Park

Head of Boarding

The Head of Boarding:

- Discusses the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy with members of the boarding team (including housekeepers) and boarders
- Ensures that all boarding staff follow the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy
- Records incidents of bullying in boarding in accordance with the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supports and counsels those who bully, are bullied and those who fail to intervene when witnessing bullying
- Involves the Nurses and Form Teacher in the care and supervision of both bullies and victims
- Alerts Form Teacher to bullying problems in the boarding house
- Puts into practice methods that ensure the thoughtful allocation of dormitories and the effective supervision of all areas of the houses in which pupils live
- Reports any incidents of bullying to the Senior Deputy Head and records it in CPOMS
- Puts into practice methods for encouraging pupils to tell someone if they are being bullied
- Gives priority to the care of pupils, which must always be placed above the efficient discharge of administrative tasks

Heads of Department

All Heads of Department:

- Ensure that all members of their department understand their responsibilities to support and uphold the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy
- To establish a classroom environment which is fair and equitable and which allows all pupils to have an equal voice

All Staff (Teaching and Non-Teaching)

All staff:

- Know the definition of bullying
- Know, understand and agree to abide by the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy
- Deal with incidents according to its procedures
- Participate in the care and supervision of pupil behaviour, especially between lessons, at break and lunchtimes, at the beginning and ends of the days and in the Dining Rooms

- Supervise pupil behaviour in their classrooms, being alert to pupil behaviour as they move around the School
- Begin and end classes punctually and not leave pupils unsupervised
- Supervise pupils in their co-curricular activities
- Begin and end their co-curricular activities punctually
- Supervise pupils on buses/minibuses when travelling to and from home and on matches/trips
- Implement this policy on off-site activities when they are in a supervisory role
- Never let any incident of bullying pass unreported (whether on site, or during an off-site activity).

Pupils

All pupils:

- Know the definition of bullying
- Inform a trusted person (e.g. teacher, Form Teacher, Nurses, House Parent) if they are being bullied or if they are aware of bullying
- Reject the idea that disclosing bullying is “snitching” or “grassing”

Parents (and Guardians)

All parents/guardians:

- Know the definition of bullying
- Are aware of the BWPS Anti-Bullying Policy
- Are mindful of the signs and symptoms of bullying
- Contact their son/daughter’s Form Teacher or the Head of Boarding **without delay** if they suspect that he/she is being bullied

APPENDIX A: Types of Bullying

Physical Bullying

This may involve:

- Hitting or kicking someone
- Jostling, bumping, or pushing someone
- Spitting at someone
- Invading someone's body space
- Physically humiliating someone
- Taking or damaging or hiding someone's property
- Invading someone's living space or intruding on their space

If physical bullying involves assault, actual bodily harm or wounding it is a criminal offence.

Verbal Bullying

This may involve:

- Spoken comments
- Written notes
- Emails or text messages
- Improper use of social networking websites
- Phone calls
- The defacing of notices
- Name-calling, spreading rumours, publicly blaming someone for something they haven't done
- Circulating unflattering drawings or photographic images of someone

Indirect or Manipulative Bullying

This may involve:

- Ostracising a fellow-pupil by refusing to sit alongside him/her in class, in the Dining Room, etc. or by moving away when he/she comes and sits down; by excluding them in activities and conversations
- Spreading rumours
- The manipulation of social networks to ostracise, marginalize or intimidate individuals
- Encouraging others to become the agents of physical or verbal bullying against one's intended victim

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying online through email, websites and social networking sites.

Racist, Sexist or Homophobic Bullying

Racism, sexism, homophobia and the exploitation of disability are palpably in conflict with the BWPS Equal Opportunities Policies and contrary to the School's Mission. Bullying that focuses on an individual's body shape, appearance and hair colour or alleged sexual attractiveness (or lack of it) similarly are contrary to BWPS Equal Opportunities (Pupils) Policy. Bullying of this sort may include:

- Spoken comments about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of pupils
- Written notes about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of pupils
- Emails, web postings or text messages about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of pupils

- Phone calls about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of pupils
- The defacing of notices with snide remarks about someone (their friends or a member of their family), or about some group of pupils

APPENDIX B: Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied or being abused. Parents and staff should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- Is unwilling to return to School from home
- Becomes withdrawn or anxious as a period at home draws to a close
- Expresses anxiety about his/her appearance (hair colour, body shape, clothing)
- Changes established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons or support of a local football team, changing their accent or vocabulary)
- Has possessions which go “missing” or returns home with clothes or books damaged
- Has few friends
- Is little liked or neglected in social contacts in the class
- Begins to do poorly in School work
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Becomes excessively eager to please
- Is bullying siblings or other children
- Exhibits diminishing levels of self-confidence
- Chooses the company of adults in preference to that of peers
- Demonstrates emotional problems
- Has problems with siblings at home
- Displays repressed body language and poor eye-contact
- Begins stammering
- Shows reduced interest in personal hygiene or grooming
- Complains of headaches or stomach cramps
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Has difficulty sleeping or experiences nightmares