



# Preventing and Responding to Bullying Policy

## September 2023

Reviewed Annually

Co-Headteachers	<i>Dielden</i> <i>ESmith</i>
Chair of Governors	<i>ECPhaw</i>
Date of Next Review	September 2024

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and the 'GCA Way' guidance. This policy follows the guidance and legislation set out in: DfE guidance (July 2017) 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders and Governors'. Available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

### 1. Principles:

Godmanchester Community Academy is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe establishment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a positive and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in the school.

If bullying does occur, all pupils are able to inform staff and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

### 2. Aims:

The school's overall aim is to prevent incidents of bullying occurring; however, should instances occur, this policy will support staff in dealing with it effectively.

In this respect the school seeks:

- To ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied;
- To encourage a positive and caring ethos between all adults and children where all feel safe to report any incident of bullying, knowing they will be taken seriously and issues dealt with appropriately.
- To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of the nature and types of bullying that may occur and their causes and effects;
- To ensure high expectations of pupils' behaviour, as detailed in the 'GCA Way';
- To ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware that bullying is totally unacceptable;
- To ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities in addressing bullying issues;
- To develop effective strategies to prevent bullying;
- To provide a consistent school response to any bullying and have clear procedures for dealing with incidents;
- To use all pupils, staff and parents as a positive resource in the elimination of any form of bullying, drawing on positive shared values as a means of preventing bullying;
- To provide support for all parties involved.

### **3. Definition:**

By definition, bullying is behaviour that intentionally and persistently causes distress to others.

The Department of Education defines bullying as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally." (DfE, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2014)

Bullying can have a negative life-long impact. It can make it difficult for children to learn and can have a lasting detrimental effect on their lives. Young people who have been bullied can become anxious and withdrawn, depressed or aggressive.

### **4. Bullying will not be tolerated at Godmanchester Community Academy:**

Bullying can take various forms, including:

- **Racial/Religious/Cultural** – where someone is made to feel inferior because of their background, race, culture or religion;
  - **Sexist** - bullying based on something specifically linked to gender;
  - **Homophobic/ Transphobic** - bullying based on sexual orientation or identity
  - **Disability** - any exploitation of a particular aspect of a child's disability and/or special educational needs;
  - **Cyber**-bullying via technology. For example, internet/mobile phones, email, social networks, text messages, photographs;
- Bullying can include: name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, inappropriate touching, producing offensive graffiti, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours or regularly excluding someone from groups or games;

- It is also bullying when a young person is pressured to act against their will by others or is harassed by unwanted conduct, which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment.

#### **5. Cyber bullying:**

Cyber bullying can take place at any time that someone logs on or picks up a phone, tablet or device and often invades people's personal time and space. Cyber bullying can involve many people e.g. social networking sites. Images or text messages can be passed quickly from one person to another or via shared websites. This makes it hard to control.

**Godmanchester Community Academy encourages pupils to not use any social media.** The school expects parents to monitor their child's use of both social media and devices at home and limit it where necessary. Godmanchester Community Academy has a no mobile phones in school rule to prevent cyber bullying whilst at school (although phones are permitted for children walking to and from school alone.)

#### **6. Signs and symptoms of bullying:**

A child may indicate through signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is unwilling to go to school;
- Is frequently absent from school;
- Changes his or her usual routine;
- Becomes anxious, withdrawn or is lacking in confidence;
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- Frequently feels ill in the morning;
- Demonstrates changes in work patterns;
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing';
- Asks for money or starts stealing money;
- Has unexplained injuries;
- Stops eating;
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Is bullying other children or siblings;
- Is frightened to say what's wrong;
- Is evasive or gives improbable excuses in relation to any of the above.

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

#### **7. Action to prevent bullying:**

Staff have a range of appropriate strategies and opportunities to call upon to educate children on bullying.

These may include:

- Skilled observation to recognise and respond to the symptoms noted above;
- Responding to reports of bullying behaviour in a prompt manner and providing appropriate information to other staff if necessary;

- The school curriculum, most specifically the PSHE curriculum covers the topic of bullying, including its dangers, how to prevent it and the steps to take when it occurs;
- Use of other elements of school life to educate our pupils, including assemblies, circle time and enrichment opportunities;
- Focussed teaching, for example in safe use of the internet;
- Availability of this policy on the school's website to enable parents to understand the school's approach and work together with staff;
- Close parent/teacher liaison to ensure that both home and school work together to help and support all parties involved;
- Where appropriate, and following discussion with the Co-Headteachers, engagement with outside assistance, such as an educational psychologist, social worker or the police;
- Ensuring that staff are fully aware of times and places when bullying is most likely to occur; organisation of the school day and supervision arrangements reduce the likely incidence of bullying. This includes supervision on corridors, monitoring the use of toilets and the regular coverage of secluded areas at break times by staff;
- All children given the opportunity to speak to a member of staff, usually their class teacher, although every member of staff will be approachable;
- Ensuring this policy is implemented alongside the Behaviour Policy and 'The GCA Way' so that all concerned are aware of the appropriate procedures and sanctions.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities:**

The whole community must understand bullying is not tolerated and the steps that will be taken to prevent and to respond.

### **The Co-Headteachers:**

The Co-Headteachers will be informed of any incidents of bullying and will ensure that all incidents are thoroughly investigated and properly logged by the most appropriate member of staff. The Co-Headteachers will then collaborate with the school staff in ensuring that an investigation takes place in every case and each situation is treated seriously. If bullying is found to have occurred, the parents of any children involved will be contacted and informed of what action the school will take.

### **The Senior Leadership Team (excluding Co-Headteachers):**

The main roles of the Senior Leadership Team in respect of bullying are:

- Manage and monitor practices to ensure alignment with the school policy and procedures;
- Maintaining a clear overview of the incidence of bullying and the school's anti-bullying prevention and response strategies;
- Liaison with the Co-Headteachers and between all parties involved, including parents;
- Ensuring that incidents are recorded by staff in all cases and that a copy is stored;
- On a regular basis, analysis of data so that patterns and trends can be identified and used to improve policy and practice;
- Governors are made aware of the number and nature of bullying incidents;
- Promotion and co-ordination of anti-bullying initiatives and projects both within the curriculum and in the wider aspects of school life.

### **All staff, including trust employees:**

All staff are expected to be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident must be treated with

the appropriate degree of urgency by the member of staff who has been approached. Any suspicion or reports of bullying should be recorded in detail, logged using the school's incident reporting system (Appendix One) and passed on to the Co-Headteachers. In their absence, report the matter to a member of SLT.

#### **9. In any case where bullying is reported or suspected, staff must follow this procedure:**

- In most cases the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who is approached/confided, although the class teacher may be included to fully investigate (if they are not the adult confided in);
- Listen carefully and intently;
- Reassure the child that you are sympathetic and that the problem will be resolved;
- Do not ask any leading questions;
- Do not promise to keep the issue confidential – it is important to maintain the pupil's trust by remaining honest;
- Make a clear account of the conversation (Appendix One) as soon as it has ended, but try to avoid taking notes during discussion;
- Report the matter as soon as is practical to the Co-Headteachers. In their absence, report the matter to a member of the SLT;
- Discuss with the Co-Headteachers how to proceed with, for example, further interviews, liaison with parents and what action is to be taken, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy;
- Continue to address the incident as agreed with the Co-Headteachers;
- Ensure that the incident continues to be fully recorded, together with details of what action has been taken;
- Liaise with the Co-Headteachers to ensure that all staff are kept informed of the incident and actions taken, as appropriate;
- Ensure that appropriate support is provided for all parties concerned.

#### **10. Investigating bullying incidents:**

The following points need to be considered:

- The alleged perpetrator(s) should be interviewed as soon as possible after a report is received, without undue reference to the source of information already held if possible;
- During any investigation involving pupils, there is a possibility that some pupils may be interviewed who have nothing to do with the situation;
- Where there is more than one alleged perpetrator, every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that they are interviewed separately without having the opportunity to confer first;
- When an investigation has reached a conclusion, all notes of meetings and communications must be recorded.

#### **11. Information and guidance for pupils:**

As a member of the school, you will not have to put up with any form of bullying behaviour. We can and will help to put a stop to it. You should feel free to speak out to your parents or any member of staff if you are being bullied. We can help you to cope with it straight away. When someone else is being bullied or is in distress, inform a member of staff immediately.

**12. Information and guidance for parents:**

Please encourage your child to talk to a member of staff if they have any concerns. Equally, please contact your child's class teacher to discuss any matters of concern.

**Helpful Organisations:**

Kidscape Parents Helpline 07496 682785; [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Childline 0800 1111; [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Family Lives 0808 800 2222; [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

**Allegation of Bullying/Prejudicial Incident Form**

	<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Class</b>
<b>Alleged Victim</b>		
<b>Alleged Perpetrator</b>		

Date of latest incident:
Location of latest incident:
Type of Incident (Please circle/tick appropriate types)
<p><b>Physical Bullying:</b></p> <p>stealing property, damaging property, punching, kicking, physical intimidation, any other physical contact which may include hair pulling, spitting, or use of a 'weapon', other: _____.</p>
<p><b>Verbal Bullying:</b></p> <p>name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading malicious rumours, ridicule of another's appearance/disability/mannerisms/ways of speaking, humiliating another publicly, mocking, sarcasm, intimidation, other: _____.</p>
<p><b>Emotional Bullying:</b></p> <p>isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/ play with/ help others, mobbing the individual, belittling another's abilities or achievements, menacing looks, stares or rude gestures, other: _____.</p>
<p><b>Cyber Bullying</b> (occurring within school):</p>

**Details of incidents** (bullying is repeated, if this is a one off concern, please discuss with class teacher/phase leader and log on Arbor accordingly)

**For Staff: Action/support for child(ren) who has/have been bullied i.e., on-going support, monitoring from staff** (please include time frame and follow up actions if required).

**For Staff: Parental Involvement** (please specify e.g., dates of contact/meetings, details of information received)