

# Bullying, E-Safety & Social Policy

Updated February 2022

## **Bullying definition**

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying may be repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email);

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. The seriousness of bullying, both physical and emotional (which may cause psychological damage);

### **Physical bullying**

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property. Physical bullying causes both short term and long-term damage.

### **Verbal bullying**

Verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, sexual or racist remarks, or verbal abuse. Verbal bullying can escalate to levels which start affecting the individual target.

### **Social bullying**

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as covert bullying, is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Social bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking unkindly
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Role of UKG in e-policy: As UKG are acting in loco parentis, it is our duty to be aware and involved in all matters relating to a student's online-safety. Examples of online dangers that we would like to make students aware of are:

## **Cyber bullying**

While the emotional aspects of bullying continue to be devastating, the internet and social media have changed the way children experience bullying. Cyberbullying simply put is bullying that happens online through social, gaming or instant messaging platforms. Cyber bullying can be overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies, including hardware such as computers and smartphones, and software such as social media, instant messaging, texts, websites and other online platforms. Cyber bullying is a safeguarding issue which is recognised within the safeguarding policy which stipulates means of reporting and contacts required, policy available on the UK guardians website – [www.ukguardians.co.uk](http://www.ukguardians.co.uk) or as a hard copy upon request.

Cyber bullying can happen at any time. It can be in public or in private and sometimes only known to the target and the person bullying. Cyber bullying can include:

- Abusive or hurtful texts emails or posts, images or videos
- Deliberately excluding others online
- Nasty gossip or rumours
- Imitating others online or using their log-in

<https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-schools/>

## **Advice to staff**

All school staff are in a position of trust, and there are expectations that they will act in a professional manner at all times. Here is some key advice for staff which may help protect their online reputation:

- \* Do not leave a computer or any other device logged in when you are away from your desk.
- \* Enabling a PIN or passcode is an important step to protect you from losing personal data and images (or having them copied and shared) from your mobile phone or device if it is lost, stolen, or accessed by pupils.
- \* Familiarise yourself with the privacy and security settings of the social media and apps you use and ensure they are kept up to date. Advice can be found on the Safer internet advice and resources for parents and carers.
- \* It is a good idea to keep a check on your online presence – for example by typing your name into a search engine. If there is negative content online it is much easier to deal with this as soon as it appears. The UK Safer Internet Centres Reputation minister has more information on this.
- \* Be aware that your reputation could be harmed by what others share about you online, such as friends tagging you in inappropriate posts, photographs, or videos.
- \* Consider your own conduct online; certain behaviour could breach your employment code of conduct.
- \* Discuss these same issues with close family, friends and colleagues, as you could become a target if they do not have security and privacy settings in place.
- \* Do not accept friend requests from pupils past or present. If you feel this is necessary, you should first seek guidance from a senior manager. Be aware that your social media friends may also be friends with pupils and their family members and therefore could read your post if you do not have appropriate privacy settings.
- \* Do not give out personal contact details – if pupils need to contact you with regard to homework or exams, always use your school's contact details. On school trips, staff should have a school mobile phone rather than having to rely on their own.
- \* Use your school email address for school business and personal email address for your private life; do not mix the two. This includes file sharing sites; for example Dropbox and YouTube.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and research reveals it has increased to affect 12% of young people in this country.

Childnet's 2016 Cyberbullying Guidance, funded by the Government Equalities Office and European Union, shows schools how to embed cyberbullying in anti-bullying work. This Guidance is designed to support staff in preventing and responding to cyberbullying. The Guidance comprises of four main sections and although this was commission for schools, it is very much relevant to guardians in supporting students who may be suffering from cyberbullying.

1) Understanding Cyberbullying

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/1-understanding-cyberbullying1.pdf>

2) Preventing Cyberbullying

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/2-preventing-cyberbullying1.pdf>

3) Responding to Cyberbullying

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/3-responding-to-cyberbullying1.pdf>

4) Supporting Staff

<http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/4-cyberbullying-supporting-school-staff.pdf>

If a student approaches a UKG member of staff or we are notified by parents/agents that a student is a victim of cyberbullying. UKG will handle the concern sensitively and speak to the individual directly. The school will also be involved and if necessary, the Police and Social Service if a student is under 16 years old.

## **Sexting**

UKG strongly advises that students take caution when taking photos and posting them online. Once posted, you lose control over how they are shared. UKG endorses and advises all staff to read The UK Council for Child Internet Safety publication on Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/609874/6\\_2939\\_SP\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_In\\_Schools\\_FINAL\\_Update\\_Jan17.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609874/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf)

Remember, it is illegal to take or share photos of anyone under the age of 18 that is deemed to be explicit. For students, we recommend watching the interactive videos, 'Think you know?':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqLFAYeYVbQ>

## **Signs and Symptoms**

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school bus/in the taxi
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- 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 underperform in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money e.g. (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

## **Procedures**

The following steps will be taken by staff in all cases of bullying, cyber bullying, and bullying outside of school:

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on school buses and in school taxis
- Talk to the Head Teachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- Talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises
- All incidents of bullying will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, all incidents will be logged and recorded as such in the student folder and also a copy kept separately in the safeguarding folder within the locked cabinet.
- Records will be kept and actioned upon and to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified.
- In some cases, external agencies may need to be contacted such as local police or children's services.

Dorset Police: Use 101 the Non-Emergency Number  
 Childrens service advice line: 03444 111 444

Implementing Disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent is essential to our role in taking care of all children and in some cases sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases such as severe and persistent bullying.

## **Anti Bullying Procedures**

It is made clear that bullying in any form is unacceptable. It will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- To implement procedures to confront bullying in any form
- To listen to all parties involved in incidents
- To investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible
- To take appropriate action or to refer to school as appropriate
- To share with parents of the victim and bully, incidents of persistent and/or serious bullying
- To promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation within the school and relevant outside agencies when appropriate
- To promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive and most effective.

## **Anti-bullying advice to Parents / Carers**

- A great deal of bullying is CYBER-BULLYING. Please regularly monitor your child's use of texting, Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites. Access to these is out of our control when your child is not in our care
- TALK to your child on a regular basis, so any problem is easier to share
- LISTEN to what they say
- ENCOURAGE your child to feel good about themselves, realising that we are all different and equally important
- If you believe your child is being bullied, or is a bully, talk to other adults at home or at school and explore the options. DON'T STAY SILENT
- If your child is a victim assure them that it is not their fault and that you are going to do something to help
- Be realistic in your expectations, sometimes on-going problems can take time to resolve
- TRY to be co-operative with us and not be aggressive. Without a good working relationship between parents and the school and us the situation could deteriorate, which won't help you or them
- ALWAYS remember that children can't solve bullying on their own. They NEED the support of parents/carers and our school
- Remember you might just be a witness to a bullying incident as an innocent bystander, it is important that if it feels wrong what you have witnessed it probably is so please share with us and DON'T STAY SILENT.

ALWAYS remember that children can't solve bullying on their own. They NEED the support of parents/carers and our school

## Training

All staff members at UK Guardians will receive regular updated training to raise awareness so that the principles of the policy are understood and legal responsibilities are known, from reading and understanding the policy all be aware of the sources of support that are available actions to be taken that can prevent and resolve any problems – to meet the needs of the students some specialised training may be provided if the need arises, ie students with special needs or disabilities, or LGBT pupils.

## Reporting

The whole school, host family and all UK Guardians community should understand reporting routes and responsibilities. UK Guardians has a designated person to deal with bullying concerns.

### **If you have any concerns, please contact our dedicated Designated Safeguarding Leads:**

- Helen Herridge – [helen@ukguardians.co.uk](mailto:helen@ukguardians.co.uk)
- April Miller– *Designated safeguarding lead* – [april@ukguardians.co.uk](mailto:april@ukguardians.co.uk)
- Office: 01425 529118 (24/7)

Emergency number: 07833115915 available (24/7)