

Bedales Prep Anti-Bullying Policy

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Bedales Prep Anti-Bullying Policy

Bedales Prep School is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

We will continue to review the Anti-Bullying Policy regularly. Everybody endeavours to collectively establish a culture of mutual respect where bullying is not tolerated at any time in our school community.

All members of the school community must understand the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage to the victim. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. We investigate all accusations of bullying, whether on or off the school premises, including cyber-bullying.

Bedales Prep views bullying as being repeatedly unkind or 'mean on purpose'. Any child who is a victim of another member of the community being repeatedly unkind or 'mean on purpose' to them will require support and reassurance that the matter will be fully investigated and dealt with. There is also a recognition that the perpetrator will also require a level of support to ensure that they understand the impact of the choices they are making.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when a member of the Prep school community could be made to feel either:

- Unhappy
- Targeted
- Insecure
- Threatened
- Excluded

This may be due to the repeated actions of another member of the community. It is the perception of the student being bullied and other students' perceptions that are the important factors.

Examples of unkind behaviour (being mean on purpose) that, if repeated, could be classified as bullying behaviour can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, body shaming, "dirty" looks, inappropriate body language and invasion of space that intimidate or any use of violence
Racist	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making inappropriate or insulting comments about a person's looks, dress, race, religion, culture, gender disability, etc.
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic	because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality
Gender	because of an issue with gender
Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, malicious teasing, exclusion of other students by deliberately and frequently leaving them out of social interactions and activities.
SEND	because of or focusing on a special educational need or disability

Family background because a child is adopted or is a carer

Cyber all areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Social Networking Sites like Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc., mobile threats by text messaging calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Although bullying at Bedales Prep will not be tolerated, we recognise that students who bully do so for different reasons. We are, in this respect, also committed to providing support and guidance for the bully.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to positively change their behaviour and will require support in making better choices about their behaviour.

We are confident that when bullying occurs, it is dealt with in a firm, sensitive and caring way. Our prime concerns when dealing with bullying are firstly:

- To prevent any continuation of the bullying
- To provide support to the student being bullied
- To improve the behavioural choices of the bully
- To involve the victim in all actions taken and ensure they are happy with the outcome.
- Keep all parties, including parents, informed of next steps.

What are our aims with regards to challenging bullying at Bedales Prep?

We aim to:

- Encourage the whole community to be Ready, Respectful and Safe (as set out in the school's Behaviour Policy).
- Ensure that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, has positive feelings about Bedales Prep, is able to fully concentrate on their work and is free from intimidation.
- Accept and welcome new members of our community.
- Be committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.
- Develop a culture in which bullying is not tolerated and is challenged. We recognised that bullying can only thrive in a climate of silence. Our policy will encourage "speaking out": by those who are bullied, by those who witness bullying and by those who hear about incidents of bullying. Be an 'upstander' rather than a 'bystander'.
- Respond and tackle incidents of bullying robustly, fairly and sensitively.

How will these aims be achieved?

We will:

- Publicise our Anti-bullying Policy inside school and on the website.

- Recognise the need to have the co-operation of parents and families in eradicating the problem of bullying/resolving a bullying incident.
- Always address bullying issues. We understand that no two scenarios are the same and each incident will require intervention in a different way.
- Have a proactive commitment to anti-bullying education through a Wellbeing (PSHE & Life Skills) programme.
- Support the lives of all members of our community by use of counselling, family counselling and other external professional agencies.
- Staff training and communication.
- Encourage all students to be 'upstanders' and 'See it, Say it, Sort it'.

Staff were trained throughout the first Anti-Bullying Policy consultation on all issues with regard to bullying and in particular how to spot signs of bullying. Staff have since been trained (January 2022) on how to manage pastoral concerns and issues (including incidents of bullying).

Bullying issues will be raised and discussed in our community by:

1. Student Watch List agenda item in weekly staff meetings (minutes)
2. Weekly Pastoral Team meetings with the Deputy Head Pastoral (compiled in the Watch List)
3. Senior Management Team (SMT) meeting held weekly (minutes)
4. A written log will be made on CPOMS. This allows patterns to be identified.
5. In Wellbeing lessons, Assemblies, Year group meetings, drama, current affairs and across the curriculum.

How does Bedales Prep deal with Bullying?

The framework for dealing with incidents of bullying is based around five aspects:

1. Revealing/Reporting Incidents
2. Collecting Evidence and Recording of Incidents
3. Reviewing Evidence and Incidents
4. Actions
5. Support and Education

1. Revealing/Reporting Incident

We will encourage people to SPEAK OUT with confidence and to make the reporting of incidents as easy as possible. We want to provide as many initial contacts as possible for students to report incidents with confidence within the school. It has to be the student's choice as to whom they reveal the problem. Possibilities are as follows:

- Tutor
- Subject teacher
- SMT – Head, Deputy Head Pastoral or Deputy Head Academic
- SMT+ – Head, Deputy Head Pastoral, Deputy Head Academic, Head of Groups, Head of Blocks
- Senior Pastoral Team (SPT) – House Parents of Boarding, Head, Deputy Head Pastoral, Deputy Head Academic, Head of Groups, Head of Blocks, Head of Learning Support, Matrons and/or Counsellor, DDSL/DDDSL for Bedales Prep

- Counsellor
- Office staff
- Duty staff

Students can feel confident that any of the above will listen to their problem and pass the information on for actioning. To help students do this, they may wish to speak to a peer listener (RAKtivor), friend or parent.

2. Collecting Evidence and Recording Incidents

Where a student has revealed their problem or reported a problem with a fellow student to a member of staff, the staff member will immediately inform the tutor(s) of the students involved. The student should try and tell us:

- Who is involved
- The nature of the perceived bullying
- How often it has happened and for how long
- Where it takes place
- Specific examples, where possible
- Where a member of staff has concerns about student bullying, they should immediately inform the tutor(s) of students involved. The staff member will also complete a CPOMS entry for all parties involved.

Where applicable, necessary communication will be made to the relevant parties and parents of those involved and follow-up information will be recorded as an action on CPOMS. Subsequent actions may be recorded in the individual students' respective files.

In consultation with other suitably qualified colleagues, the Deputy Head Pastoral (DSL) will decide if a bullying incident should be treated as a safeguarding or child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The 3 Schools' Safeguarding procedures will be followed in these instances.

3. Actions

There is a recognition that incidents of bullying will vary and the response to the incidents may require a tailored approach to reach the desired outcome. However, to ensure consistency, actions to bullying should be read in line with the levels outlined in the Bedales Prep Behaviour Policy and the Bedales School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The Deputy Head Pastoral (DSL) or Head of Groups or Blocks will meet with relevant staff which may include tutor, Head of Learning Support, House Parent and Matrons to decide on appropriate next steps. Any specific needs of the student (for example SEND or medical) will be taken into consideration at this time.

Where intervention is early and no physical violence is involved, we recognise that the most important outcome is that the bullying should stop.

- In incidents where the intention is not there to hurt, the bullying can be diffused early on.
- In cases of more severe incidents, those where physical aggression is involved or repeated incidents of bullying behaviour by the same person, then consequences will be applied (in line with the Bedales Prep Behaviour Policy) by the school and parents will be informed. It is the expectation that the bullying will stop.

- If further bullying or retaliation occurs, then strategies adopted may range from a Wellbeing Action Plan (WAP), a Care Plan, access to in-house counselling services or use of external agencies, to suspension or permanent exclusion.
- In cases of a first 'offence', suspension (as outlined in the Bedales Prep Behaviour Policy) may be considered for severe bullying.

4. Support and Education

How will we look after the members of the community involved?

Support for the person being bullied:

- We will provide support for our students by taking their concerns seriously and by dealing with the problem as quickly as possible.
- We will try to gain support for the bullied person from friends and classmates.
- We will inform the bullied person and their parents about the actions taken.
- We will give advice as to what to do if there is a further incident.
- We offer counselling support if needed or requested.

Support for the bully:

- The school community abhors bullying, but we recognise that it can occur and that students who bully do so for different reasons. Bullies often have low self-esteem and are being, or have been, bullied themselves.
- It is vital that everyone recognises that it is **bullying behavioural choices and not the student** that the school will not tolerate. We are committed to providing the support that the student making poor choices requires in order to provide them with the skills needed to build lasting and meaningful friendships.
- It is important to ensure that the student making the poor choices realises the impact that they are having on the victim. As such, students who are making poor behavioural choices may be asked to reflect on their actions using a Reflect & Repair Reflection Sheet.
- In the same vein, it would be encouraged for there to be a managed restorative/mediative meeting between the bully and that victim so that both parties can air their views and then move forward positively.
- It is always important to revisit the issue following any intervention to ensure that the situation remains rectified and that there is no retribution.

Education

- The school has a developing coherent and coordinated Wellbeing (PSHE & Life Skills) programme as part of a wider pastoral curriculum.
- The topic of bullying will also be addressed in year group and whole school assemblies.

<h5>What can we, as members of staff, do?</h5>
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We ourselves should:

- Set a good example.
- Be an active listener.
- Be a watchful teacher/tutor.
- Make clear that bullying is unacceptable and intervene early.
- Be fair.
- Be on time for lessons, and activities so that no bullying takes place while the students are waiting.

- Demonstrate caring, empathetic and respectful behaviour.
- Be aware of, and support, vulnerable members of the community.
- If a student confides in you concerning a bullying incident, please be empathetic, listen carefully and make notes of the reported incident. Ensure that you pass these on to and discuss them with the student's tutor. Remember - the student will probably have chosen you because they trust you.
- While on break or lunch duty, or while moving between lessons, please be vigilant in relation to interaction between the students.
- Be urged to use the 'Student Watch List' item in the Monday weekly staff meeting.

ADVICE TO STUDENTS

Bullying takes place at some point in all schools, but also in adult workplaces, and it can happen at home. It happens to children and adults.

Bullies only prosper where there is silence and fear.

We aim for Bedales Prep to be a “speaking out” school where bullies will not prosper. Their actions will not be tolerated, and they will be exposed because people will stand up and say something.

We want people to tell us if they are bullied and we want them to be an ‘upstander’ to tell us if they see bullying taking place. Also, we want everyone to make it known to bullies that they disapprove of their actions.

What can you do if you know someone is being bullied?

- If you see someone being bullied or in distress, please take action. Watching and doing nothing can suggest that you support the bully.
- Do not tolerate bullies in your circle of friends or social groups.
- You must tell a member of staff. Choose any member of staff that you trust; any teacher will listen.

If you do not, the bullying is bound to continue. Bullies thrive on the fear of others. We can’t do anything if we don’t know.

What can you do if you feel you are being bullied?

- Tell a member of staff and your parents. To help you do this, you may wish to speak to a RAKtivor (peer listener) or friend. The school can make it stop and support you in this.
- If you are nervous of telling a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend or a RAKtivor (peer listener) to go with you.
- Don’t fight back. It could make matters worse.
- Trust the help of friends and staff to help make the bullying stop.
- Bullying needs to be confronted for the benefit of the bully as well as to stop the bullying.

Everybody needs to remember:

- Any form of bullying is unacceptable.
- Bullies themselves often have problems and they may be doing the bullying because it makes them feel better about themselves.
- The bully may also be feeling unhappy.
- Some bullies do not realise that they are bullying. They may think that what they are saying is harmless, particularly if it is a joke or a comment that has been said to them at another time.
- However, one unpleasant comment does not necessarily stand in isolation. You may be the fourth person to have been called by ‘that name’ by someone in an hour. The accumulative effect of name-calling can be significant.
- People may appear to be fine on the surface, but they may be suffering. We do not have the right to put anyone in this situation.
- A sign of maturity is the ability to foresee the consequences of one’s words and actions.
- We respect and celebrate difference. If you have problems with this on any occasion, or about a particular person, speak to a teacher of your choice.
- Bullying needs to be stopped or confronted to help the bully as well as the person being bullied.
- If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring Childline on freephone 0800 1111. This is a confidential helpline.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Discovering that a child is, or has been, the victim of bullying is very upsetting. Please bear the following in mind if the school contacts you to make you aware of either situation:

- Trust the school to support your child, to deal with any bullying situation and to make the bullying stop.
- Tell the school at the earliest opportunity if you suspect that your child is being bullied or if you suspect that your child is being mean on purpose to others. Contact your child's Tutor immediately.
- If your child tells you they have been bullied, they need to be reassured that they have done the right thing in telling you or the school.
- Bullying is unlikely to stop without intervention from responsible adults.
- Sometimes a child will go to extreme lengths to avoid telling anyone that they are being bullied, but there may be other signs, as listed under 'Some Possible Signs and Symptoms' below.
- Encourage your child to feel comfortable talking to you about the issue. Assess the seriousness of the situation. Sometimes a tiff between friends or exclusion from a group will blow over as quickly as it started. Regular monitoring of the situation is essential to ensure there is no repetition or continuation of the bullying from another person.
- It is natural for a parent to be angry in these circumstances, but it is inadvisable to confront the bully or the bully's parents yourself. This usually creates more complications and does not help your child. We ask you to trust the school to contact a bully's parents.
- Always include your child in decisions about the course of action you wish to take. For example, it may be that they would prefer to tell their Tutor themselves. Children who are being bullied are extremely sensitive about the way in which the situation is handled.

There are many reasons why someone is bullied. The school will work with parents and the child to support them and to improve the situation for the child. The following is important when considering events that can be classified as bullying incidents:

- Some bullying incidents are more complicated than one child's version may indicate. Bullying situations are best resolved by taking a calm, measured approach that ensures a positive outcome rather than acting in the heat of the moment to lesser effect.
- The internet and Cyberspace are great ways to connect with people and with the world. They are technologies to enjoy and explore and are going to play an ever-increasing part in our lives. However, as we all know, this will involve risks and dangers: we need to be aware of these and to acquire and develop the knowledge and skills to reduce and avoid them. At Bedales Prep we will continue to educate the students, parents and staff in the safe use of mobile phones and the internet.
 - As such, please consider whether your child has healthy sleeping habits. It would be our advice that any mobile phones or other devices should be kept outside their bedrooms at night.

Some Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Show any obvious change of demeanour or personality
- Is frightened of walking into school or does not want to go on the school bus or train

- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (emotional-based school avoidance - EBSA)
- 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
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is being unkind towards other children or siblings
- Changes or stops normal eating patterns
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Spends long amounts of time in their bedroom with a device and quickly turns it off when someone enters
- Shows physical symptoms that could be stress related