



# Senior School Policy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

| Action      | Policy to be reviewed annually |               |           |
|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
|             | Committee                      | Date          | Completed |
| Reviewed    | Deputy Head (Pastoral)         | July 2025     | ✓         |
| Reported    | Safeguarding Steering          | November 2025 | ✓         |
| Approved    | Board of Governors             | November 2025 | ✓         |
| Next review | Deputy Head (Pastoral)         | July 2026     |           |

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Gresham's School is dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.

It is our wish at Gresham's to develop the full potential of each and every pupil. For this to be possible, everyone has to live in an environment where they can feel safe and happy. Clearly this places a responsibility on every member of the community.

All forms of bullying are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Bullying can be seen as child-on-child abuse. All staff and pupils recognize that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

### Aims and objectives

Gresham's is committed to creating an open and secure environment for all pupils where unkindness, bullying and child-on-child abuse has no place. We expect all members of our community to adhere to this policy and promote an anti-bullying culture throughout the School.

### Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all pupils (and staff) at Gresham's School, and their interactions with others in any form, whether during term time or the holidays, on or offline. This policy has regard for the Department for Education 'Preventing & Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2025) and should be read in conjunction with the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

### Definitions

Bullying is the victimization of one person by another or others. It includes deliberately hurtful or aggressive behaviour repeated over a period of time which is difficult for the victim to defend him/herself against. A single incident with the same intentions can also be considered as bullying and as such child-on-child abuse. Bullying can cause both physical and emotional harm (which may cause psychological damage). The School recognizes that it 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 a carer.

There are many types of bullying:

**Physical:** hitting, kicking, touching without consent

**Verbal:** name-calling, insulting, making offensive remarks, spreading rumours, teasing, 'banter'.

**Indirect:** being unfriendly, excluding, damaging property, online activities such as posting pictures without consent.

**Race, religion, gender and sexuality, SEND:** taunts, comments, gestures, unwanted touching

**Hazing (also known as initiation or rituals):** includes activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group. That group could be a boarding house or year group. The outcome can be that pupils feel unsafe or vulnerable at school and/or in their boarding house, particularly overnight. Although not always the case, younger pupils are often the target.

## Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying can be an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using any electronic form of contact against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves. However, pupils are aware that considerable emotional hurt can be caused to a victim through thoughtless and careless use of social media. The perpetrator may not have intended to cause hurt but will be held responsible for improper and inconsiderate use of social media. Cyber-bullying may occur in or out of school and at all times of the day. Pupils should see the School's separate Online Safety Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Agreement.

Cyber-bullying can take many forms including:

- Threats and intimidation
- Harassment or stalking
- Repeatedly sending unwanted messages or making phone calls
- Using public forums to harass or post derogatory or defamatory statements
- Posting personal information about someone online without their permission
- Exclusion such as setting up a closed group or blocking someone from joining
- Hacking

Cyber bullying can potentially have far greater impact because of a number of factors, including:

- Invasion of personal space and the sense that the victim cannot 'get away from it'.
- Initial anonymity of those taking part in the bullying behaviour
- The ability to broadcast rapidly to a potentially huge audience and to continue to do so repeatedly over a long period of time
- Other pupils who would not normally take part in bullying behaviour may be drawn in as accessories

### Procedure for dealing with reports of bullying

- Cases of bullying or suspected bullying that are observed or reported to any member of staff are communicated immediately via CPOMS using the 'unkindness/bullying' category which will immediately alert the house pastoral team, Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- The Housemaster/mistress will discuss the next steps with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or DSL.
- The protected characteristics of both the victim and perpetrator will be taken into account to ensure the support and response is appropriate.
- The DSL and Deputy Head (Pastoral) will monitor both victim and perpetrator(s) from a safeguarding point of view and keep the appropriate records. Bullying and cyberbullying can be seen as child-on-child abuse and therefore a safeguarding matter. Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, bullying should be treated as a child protection concern.
- The HSM will record the details of the incident, investigation and follow-up on CPOMS. If there is more than one perpetrator across multiple houses it may be agreed that the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will lead the investigation.
- The member of staff who reported the incident will be kept informed of progress.
- The School policy will then be followed.
- In all cases the parents of pupils involved will be informed of the incident by the relevant Housemaster/mistress and, if appropriate also by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the DSL will decide upon an appropriate course of action, which will include help, support and counselling to the victim(s) and the same for those responsible for the bullying behaviour. Disciplinary action may also be taken against the perpetrator(s).

We support the victim(s) by:

- Offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with someone they trust - a member of staff or a responsible senior pupil - and giving advice and support.
- Offering the support of our SANDI clinic or Mental Health Nursing team
- Informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- Monitoring the situation and offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- Taking one or more of the disciplinary actions described below to prevent more bullying.

The primary aim will be for the bullying to stop, not the punishment of those involved in the bullying behaviour unless necessary. We will try to help those involved in bullying behaviour but may also discipline them. Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Whilst it is still unacceptable, those involved in bullying behaviour in this instance may be dealt with through advice rather than punishment, unless they do not respond appropriately. We will:

- Talk about what happened to discover why they became involved.
- Inform the parents/guardians of those responsible for the bullying behaviour.
- Continue to work with those responsible for the bullying behaviour in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- Where appropriate, with careful consideration of each case, with the relevant staff present and with the consent of both parties, it can be a positive outcome for the victim(s) and the party responsible for the bullying behaviour to meet, to allow the victim(s) to explain the impact of the bullying behaviour on them.
- Take disciplinary action to prevent more bullying.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

One or more of these actions will be taken as appropriate to the case. The Head reserves the right to go to permanent exclusion straight away.

- Those responsible for bullying behaviour will be warned officially to stop offending.
- The parents/guardians of those responsible for bullying behaviour will be informed.
- Those responsible for bullying behaviour may be Gated or put in Deputy Heads' detention with Reflective Work to do.
- If they do not stop bullying, or if a single incident is sufficiently serious, they will be suspended for a fixed period.
- If they carry on, or if a single incident is sufficiently serious, they will be recommended for suspension for a longer fixed period.
- If they will not end such behaviour, or if it involves serious violence, they will, after a fair hearing, face permanent exclusion (expulsion).

NB: Misconduct of the cyber bullying kind, which happens outside of the School, will be subject to School discipline if the welfare of other pupils or the culture or reputation of the school are placed at risk. Disciplinary actions "may, to some extent as is reasonable, include measures to be taken with a view to regulating the conduct of pupils at a time when they are not on the premises of the School and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff at school" [Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 89(5))]



## **Strategy to prevent bullying**

### **Prevention**

The School's response to bullying starts before any incident has occurred. By using CPOMS to gather information about issues between pupils, weekly Housemaster/mistress meetings and twice weekly staff briefings we can proactively put strategies in place to try to prevent bullying occurring.

Where staff feel that conflict or lack of understanding may occur pupils and staff are educated via Chapel talks, assemblies of tutor sessions to help create a culture of understanding and acceptance. Assemblies and tutor sessions are very flexible and can be adapted at no notice to respond to any issue. Staff and senior pupils are expected to treat each other with respect and therefore this culture extends to the classroom, the dining room, the grounds and the boarding houses.

Parents are reminded of the School's policy in annual letters from the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

### **Reporting bullying**

The School aims to make it easy and safe for any pupil or member of staff to report bullying.

On every pupil's intranet dashboard is a "[Help](#)" button which automatically sends an email to The DSL (copied to all Deputy DSLs) who will get back to them discreetly as soon as possible.

Pupils are regularly reminded of all the other staff and senior pupils whom they can turn to for help.

Parents who are concerned about their child or any child should inform the School immediately.

### **The training of staff**

Staff are trained in anti-bullying procedures in various ways:

- New members of staff are fully briefed in the induction process by the Director of Pastoral Care and/or the Deputy Head (Pastoral)
- Tutors and matrons are fully briefed by Housemaster/mistresses about any social issues amongst pupils and how to deal with them in their House in Tutor Meetings, and at duty handovers where appropriate. Close liaison with their Housemaster/mistress on pupil welfare is regular.
- Staff briefings on Mondays sometimes feature updates about the behaviour or vulnerability of certain pupils or groups of pupils, and how staff should respond to them.
- INSET sessions in School and CPD (through BSA or NOS, for example) out of School
- Trained to be alert to the particular vulnerability of SEND and LGBT+ pupils to bullying
- National Anti-Bullying Week provokes dialogue amongst staff and pupils
- Talks in Chapel given by staff, pupils and visiting speakers
- Annual bullying survey results are analysed and shared with staff by the Deputy Head (Pastoral)

## **The training of pupils**

From November 2022 the School has introduced anti-bullying pupil ambassadors. The group is led by the Head of PHSE and Wellbeing who regularly reports to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) with any concerns or ideas raised by the pupils. The group aim to have a profile which promotes inclusivity, kindness and being upstanders in the community. They promote anti-bullying in the school through Chapel talks, events and house-based activities, working alongside the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee.

## **Record keeping and monitoring**

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and DSL monitors all reports of bullying and on a termly basis shares this information with the DSL and Deputy DSLs and Housemasters/mistresses so that patterns across houses, year groups, boarders or protected characteristics can be identified. Housemaster/mistresses will also review specific incidents with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or DSL.

All staff are expected to log concerns about pupils on CPOMS.

Through the audit of the termly bullying logs, the annual bullying survey and regular reporting on CPOMS, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the wider pastoral team are able to monitor the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy. The Anti-bullying ambassadors assist in the review of this policy.