




# Aldenham Prep School

## Anti Bullying Policy

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### INFORMATION

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Aldenham Prep School. Elstree, Hertfordshire.

## **ANTI BULLYING POLICY**

Aldenham Prep School encourages good relationships between pupils and will treat allegations of bullying seriously. All staff, children and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on children and the school in general, and should work towards ensuring that children can work and socialise in an environment without fear.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable; it will not be tolerated at Aldenham Prep School and the school's anti bullying policy will be rigorously enforced. The school will also take note of bullying perpetrated outside school, which spills over into school and will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate such bullying. The school will try to deal with cases of bullying through internal procedures which can involve significant disciplinary sanctions up to and including permanent exclusion. In the event of harassment and/or threatening behaviour which is persistent, the school may pass information on to outside agencies to investigate whether or not a criminal offence has taken place. However, the school also understands that while some unpleasantness is clearly deliberate and aggressive, other incidents are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. (ref DfE non-statutory advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017 and the Prevent Duty 2015). In such situations, it may be more appropriate to support both victim and perpetrator through education and increased awareness rather than punishment.

Bullying may be treated as a Child Protection concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. In these cases staff are requested to report promptly to the DSL or external agencies.

### **Definition of Bullying**

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>) applies the following three conditions to define incidences of harmful interpersonal behaviour as bullying behaviour.

Behaviour is bullying behaviour if:

- it is repetitive, wilful or persistent;
- it is intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or group; and,
- there is an imbalance of power leaving the person who is bullied feeling defenceless.

At Aldenham we understand that bullying may take many forms: It takes place through means which can be verbal (e.g. name-calling), indirect (e.g. exclusion), physical (e.g. hitting) and cyber (e.g. digital). We believe that every child has the right to live his/her (school) life, free from adverse interference from others. Bullying usually prevents another individual from living at ease with other members of the school.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils in the hope that each child can build self-esteem and be uniquely valued by others.

### **Aims and Objectives of our Anti-Bullying Policy**

Our aims and objectives are:

Aldenham Prep School. Elstree, Hertfordshire.

- to demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated
- to put in place measures to prevent all forms of bullying in school and during off-site activities;
- to encourage all staff and children to report incidents of bullying;
- to promote an environment where the school takes a collective responsibility to monitor and, as far as possible, eliminate bullying;
- to protect those who might be victims of bullying and to promote the safety and well-being of all children.

### **Examples of Bullying/ Signs of Bullying**

#### **Examples of bullying – peer on peer**

Bullying may take many forms, although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others. It takes place through means which can be:

- verbal (e.g. name-calling, teasing, mocking, belittling others' abilities and making offensive comments);
- indirect (e.g. taking/breaking belongings, producing offensive notes or graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups in the knowledge that it will cause distress, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours);
- physical (e.g. kicking, hitting, pushing, pinching, scratching or physically intimidating someone).

Other forms of bullying include

- racial, religious and cultural bullying;
- homophobic, sexist, sexual or gender related bullying;
- bullying related to special educational needs, disability;
- cyberbullying (including inappropriate text messaging and emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet, posting hurtful descriptions or comments on social networking sites such as 'Facebook' or 'MSN'). See appendix for the **Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy**.

#### **Signs of Bullying**

Children who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour; therefore staff and parents should be vigilant for this. Over a period of time pupils may become shy or nervous, suffer from enuresis (bed-wetting), feign illness, seek undue attention from adults, take unusual absences, truant, show a change in ability to focus and/or work patterns.

It is not bullying when two children have an occasional dispute.

## **ANTI BULLYING PROCEDURE**

### **How can the school deal with incidents peer on peer bullying?**

#### **Action by the School:**

Our initial concern is to prevent bullying rather than to punish the bullies. However bullying is a major offence and will be dealt with firmly.

In a case where bullying is alleged our action will be:

- to check records in pastoral files;
- to investigate the incident(s), which may include talking to parents;
- to feedback to those involved.

In a case where bullying has occurred our action will be:

- to support the victim in any appropriate way, which may include talking to the parents of the bully;
- to educate the bully, for the bully's own sake as well as for others;
- to deter the bully. Any bullying offence will be recorded in writing centrally by the Head of Prep.

Extreme or persistent bullying will be referred to the Headmistress, who, if necessary, may suspend or even permanently exclude the offender. Contact may be made with the DSL, Children's Services and/or the School Counsellor.

#### **Education**

It is not our intention to wait for bullying to happen before we act; we wish to pre-empt the problem. The following steps are taken:

- The skills required for building relationships and living in communities features as a central component of our PSHE Scheme of Work, Achievement Assemblies, the House system, Circle Time, the 5 Cs and our Christian foundation. Children learn how to recognise and manage their own emotions and respond to the emotional needs of others. They also learn how to build trust and resolve conflict.
- We reward positive behaviour through verbal praise, stickers and house points. These imbue a sense of belonging and a collective responsibility.
- Children learn about appreciating others, the importance of altruism, disability awareness and sexual and racial tolerance through PSHE, RE lessons and school assemblies, amongst others.
- As part of their leadership training (e.g. Prefects, Head Girl and Boy, House Captain and Vice Captains), senior children learn to appreciate that they have a vital role to play in looking after the younger girls and boys.
- Chance cards carried by every pupil from Year 3-6 monitor and document poor and/or anti-social behaviour. This reminds children to avoid repeating such behaviour.
- Pupil support posters are displayed in prominent places.
- In the children's Link books reference is made to who to turn to in confidence.
- Anti-Bullying Assemblies are held.

- Staff are encouraged to attend conferences and courses that include advice on the prevention of bullying. Elements of the annual, national Anti-Bullying Week are used throughout the school.

### **Recording incidences of bullying**

In the Prep School all incidents of bullying are initially investigated by Class Teachers/ Room Supervisors. Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Early Years Practitioners are encouraged to make notes in class pastoral files. Serious or persistent incidents of bullying will be reported by the Heads of Key Stage and Deputy Head of Prep for disciplinary action as appropriate. Any proven incidents of bullying are recorded centrally by the Headmistress who may also ultimately permanently exclude the pupil.

While the school will seek to resolve bullying incidents internally, in very severe cases the Headmistress may choose to make a report to the police or to Children's Services.

### **Advice to parents**

- Watch out for distress or a change of behaviour or attitude in your son or daughter. For example, there may be a reluctance to return to school and its cause may be bullying.

**Persistent bullying** can result in:

- Depression
  - Low self-esteem
  - Shyness
  - Poor academic achievements
  - Isolation
  - Threatened or attempted suicide
- Take an active interest in your son's or daughter's social life. Discuss friendships and how free time is spent. Listen to them when they tell you about what has happened at play-dates. Be aware of their use of social networking sites, age limits and give advice about the type of information it is appropriate to share.
  - Encourage your son or daughter to report bullying, either of themselves or others. If you think your son or daughter or any child is being bullied, contact your child's Class Teacher at once. Try to be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other pupils involved.
  - Prep school children should be encouraged to talk to their Class Teachers or any adult in school.

### **Advice to children**

*We acknowledge that many of our children are too young and therefore unable to read or process the information below, but for those who can, it is vital that they do.*

### **What should you do if you feel you are being bullied?**

If you are being bullied, you may feel scared, vulnerable and quite alone but you owe it to yourself to try and sort out the situation so that the bullying stops. **Remember, no-one deserves to be bullied.**

Bullying will exist as long as you remain silent. If you are being bullied, have been bullied or you observe someone else being bullied, there are various things you can do:

- try to stay calm and look as confident as you can;
- be firm and clear — look them in the eye and tell them to stop;
- get away from the situation as quickly as possible;
- tell an adult what has happened straight away or, if you do not feel comfortable telling an adult, tell another child;
- talk to someone you trust and get them to help you take the right steps to stop the bullying. This may be: a Prefect, another adult in the school e.g. your Class Teacher, Teaching Assistant, School Secretary, Key Stage Leader, the Chaplain, the Deputy Head, the Counsellor, a friend, your family. If it helps, write down the information, put it in an envelope and give it to an adult who you trust;
- you can also forward inappropriate or unpleasant e-mails that you have received to Mrs Gocher [vjgocher@aldenham.com](mailto:vjgocher@aldenham.com), or Mrs Galpin [smgalpin@aldenham.com](mailto:smgalpin@aldenham.com)
- if you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you;
- talk to a Childline counsellor online in a chatroom <https://www.childline.org.uk/Talk/Chat/Pages/OnlineChat.aspx>
- keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying;
- don't blame yourself for what has happened.

### **Remember:**

- Do not be intimidated by a bully saying it will be worse for you if you report bullying.
- When someone else is being bullied or is in distress, take action. Watching and doing nothing may suggest support for the bully. Don't be a bystander.
- Do not tolerate a bully in your circle of friends.
- Always treat others as you would like to be treated yourself. Remember that calling someone names or incessant teasing is in fact bullying. Do not become a bully yourself.

### **If you witness another pupil being bullied**

- If you feel confident enough, tell the children to stop what is going on and check how the bullied person is feeling.
- Try to remember the details of the event e.g. place, time, children involved, witnesses.
- Tell a Teacher immediately. If no Teacher is available, tell another adult.
- Write down what happened and what was said while it is fresh in your mind and give it to an adult.

### **When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:**

- what has happened to you
- how often it has happened
- who was involved
- who saw what was happening
- where it happened
- what you have done about it already.

### **What can you do if you think you are a bully?**

If you feel you are bullying other children you should try to do something about it. There are many reasons why an individual might bully others. You need to think before you act or speak and ask yourself if you would like to be treated in the way you are treating others. Apologise if you bully someone. If you can't bring yourself to say sorry at first, then write a note. Talk to an adult who will help you to change your behaviour.

**AMW 07/12/11**

**VJG 06.07.2016**

**To be reviewed annually**

#### **Related Policies**

Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Safeguarding Policy

EYFS Promoting Positive Behaviour

Staff Handbook

**SG/RL/CV/LB Oct 17**

**Review Oct 2018**

**SMG**

## Anti Bullying Policy

### Document History

Date:	Pages:	Amendments:	Reason:	Name:
07/12/11				AMW
16/07/16				VJG
17/07/17		Refer to Peer on Peer bullying		SG
		Remove reference to Kidscape		
		Remove Mrs Watt and update to Mrs Galpin		
06/10/18		Pg 3 check Pupil support posters are prominent		SMG