



Kirkby High School

Anti-Bullying Policy

**ADOPTED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNING COMMITTEE
MARCH 2022**

Last reviewed on: March 2022

Next review due by: March 2025



Policy Aim

This Policy forms a part of the school overall Behaviour Policy. The aim of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

- All members of Kirkby High School have the right to work in a secure environment
- We want everyone to feel safe and be happy in school and have the right to support when feeling insecure. We want Kirkby High School to be a school where bullying is viewed as unacceptable, treated seriously and dealt with effectively
- Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. Kirkby High School will not accept Bullying of any kind.

Every child at Kirkby High School has the right to feel safe, happy and accepted at school. In *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)*, The Department for Education states that:

*'Bullying is behaviour by an **individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally**'.*

Bullying may occur because:

- A person or group of people are of a particular race, religion or have a particular culture
- A person or group of people has a special educational need, disability or health or mental health condition
- A person or group has a certain appearance
- A person or group has a particular sexual orientation or identity
- A person or group of people has a particular set of home circumstances (for example if they are Looked After or are from a more or less affluent background)
- **OR** simply because a person or group of people have taken a dislike to somebody for no particular reason at all and/or may be holding a grudge

Whatever the reason for bullying, it will not be tolerated at Kirkby High School.

The act of bullying may include but is not limited to:

- Emotional – being unkind, excluding, tormenting.
- Physical – hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, use of any violence
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory – taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic e.g.: gender, race or sexuality
- Sexual – explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
- Direct or indirect verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber-bullying – bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites

Repeatedly intentionally (but quietly) wearing somebody down on purpose. This could be done in a very subtle way so that others do not notice that it is happening. This type of bullying is often very hard to detect and therefore it is important that all members of the school community remain vigilant. In addition, some students may be unaware that they are being bullied but just because they do not realise, it does not mean that it should continue.

Some children may be extremely good at covering up that they are being bullied, but there are often some more noticeable signs such as:

- Changes in eating habits
- Disrupted sleeping pattern
- Performance at school dwindles
- Decreased self esteem
- Sudden loss of friends or changes in friendship group
- Being withdrawn or argumentative
- Unexplained injuries
- Someone saying that they feel 'ill' more often than usual – more headaches and stomach aches
- Self-destructive behaviours such as self-harm, talking about suicide or running away from home

Advice for students

What to do if you suspect that bullying is occurring or if you are being bullied:

- If in doubt, report it straight away.
- Don't suffer in silence if you feel that you are being bullied - please report the issue to an adult or friend. If staff are unaware of an issue, they will find it difficult to help.
- You may feel more comfortable speaking to another student such as a close friend.
- Tell someone, even if you don't think it will help. Just talking about a situation can help put it in perspective. You could talk to a friend; a parent; or a trusted teacher who you know will take what you're saying seriously.
- Keep a record of incidents
- Call the Childline (0800 1111).
- If the bullying is taking place online via a website, click the 'report abuse' option.
- Pretend to agree 'yep, that's what I'm like alright'.
- Look around for other friendship groups in or out of school
- Get involved in clubs or activities at school where you'll be safe.

If a friend is being bullied:

If a friend, or someone you know is being bullied you can do something about it. Even if you don't feel as though you can step in and stop the situation yourself, there are still things you can do, like:

- Don't stay and watch or encourage bullying. Walk away.

- Don't get involved in harassment, teasing or spreading gossip about others off or online.
- Don't forward or respond to offensive or upsetting messages or photos.
- Support the person who is being bullied to ask for help. For example, you could go with them to a place they can get help or provide them with information about where to go for help.
- Tell a trusted adult who might be able to help.
- Be friend and listen to the victim.

All staff in school will be happy to help any student who either reports bullying or who feels that they are being targeted by bullies. However, there are some key staff in school who are experienced in dealing with bullying.

In the first instance we would encourage students to report the bullying issue to pastoral team or their form tutor.

Alternatively

- Mrs Rigby (DSL -Designated Safeguarding Lead)
- Miss Unsworth (DDSL)
- Mrs Hughes (Head of Inclusion)
- Miss Bullock (Second in Inclusion)
- Mr Barton (Community and Youth Engagement Officer)

A child may feel more comfortable talking to their form tutor or other trusted adult.

What will happen once bullying has been reported?

Allegations of bullying will be dealt with sensitively in the first instance so as to not inflame the situation. It is important however to bear in mind that:

- Bullying is difficult to tackle without approaching the alleged perpetrator
- Bullying is difficult to tackle if incidents are not reported straight away

The procedure that should be taken by staff in school is as follows:

- Ensure that the student(s) know that the allegation is being taken seriously. Find a place of refuge if a student is too scared to be in some lessons or out at breaks and lunches
- Take a detailed statement from the person reporting the bullying (times, dates, locations, number of times, people involved)
- Take detailed statements from other witnesses
- If the person being bullied agrees, approach the 'bully'/'bullies' (separately and sensitively so as to not inflame the situation)
- Inform the parent of the child being bullied to let them know that an investigation is taking place
- When the investigation is complete and if it has been established that bullying has taken place, the pastoral team or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will decide on an appropriate sanction. Sanctions will vary depending on the severity and nature of the bullying. Parents of the perpetrator will be informed

- In most cases an apology should be made and/or mediation can occur. Mediation should also occur if all parties feel comfortable in taking part in this.
- The person who has been bullied will be given the opportunity to have a named trusted adult or peer mentor who they feel confident to talk to going forwards. Work on confidence building and self-esteem could be offered.
- The perpetrator of the bullying may also require support. This could take place in the form of mentoring or counselling.

In extreme cases of bullying, it may be necessary for school to refer an incident to the police

When is bullying not bullying?

When a person perceives that they are being bullied, we must take their perception seriously. Even if a person on the outside looking in to a situation feels that bullying is not taking place, we must still take seriously how a particular person is feeling and consider why they may be feeling this way. In particular, for example, if a child has a special educational need, their perception of their surroundings and what is happening may be very different to that of somebody else. An investigation must still take place to rule bullying out.

There can be a fine line between 'friendship issues'/'falling out' and 'bullying.' We should ask ourselves:

*Is it repeated behaviour over time? **And** is it intentional?*

Bullying outside the school premises

Headteachers have a statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89 (5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on the school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying occurring off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school, it will be investigated and acted upon at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Cyber-bullying

At Kirkby High School, the use of mobile phones by students is prohibited during the school day. This is a necessary safeguarding measure and the only way school can attempt to control potential on-line abuse.

If a student is being cyberbullied, they can:

Block senders

Change passwords

Don't retaliate but keep the evidence to show to an adult.

Talk to a friend, parent or teacher.

If there are threats or calls encouraging a student to harm themselves, they should report abuse to the police or a trusted adult.

Outside of the school day, parents and carers have a duty to monitor the on-line activity that their child is engaging in. Some children lack the social maturity to communicate appropriately on-line and incidents of on-line abuse can quickly escalate as a result of 'throw-away' comments that are made. Parents should consider the extent to which they truly know what their child is engaging in when they are on electronic devices. They should

also be wary of the growing pressures put on young people by their peers and by strangers to send and receive indecent and pornographic images, or to engage in intentional on-line abuse.

If a parent or carer suspects that their child is being harassed or abused on-line then please report this to the police by ringing 101. As a school we will take very seriously any on-line bullying/abuse that is brought to our attention and will seek advice from the police as to the best course of action to take. In many circumstances, further referrals are made by school to other agencies including the Police.

Parents should be aware that it is a criminal offence for a child to distribute or 'share' an indecent image of another child (even if it is one of their friends) to others. If staff suspect that a child has been involved in such activity, they will report it to the police.

The DFE (2017) states that:

'when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone'.

Should parents and carers wish to access further advice on cyber-bullying and keeping their child safe online, they should navigate to further advice below from the DFE:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

As a school, through the curriculum and via opportunities outside of the classroom, we seek to prevent bullying before it happens. On-line safety is taught via the curriculum and anti-bullying messages are regularly delivered via Reflective Friday and Thoughtful Thursday, the Personal Development and PHSE curriculum and assemblies. As always however, parents and carers are invited to speak to the relevant staff members at school for further help and advice on 0151 477 8710.