



**Ghost Hill Infant and Nursery School**  
**Anti-Bullying Policy**

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## **Ethos**

1. The whole community of Ghost Hill Infant and Nursery School (GH) is committed to dealing with all incidents of bullying. We do not want any member of our community to suffer any form of bullying behaviour. Therefore, we endeavour to create an ethos that regards all kinds of hurtful behaviour as unacceptable. All members of the GH community need to feel secure within it and should never have to feel fear due to the actions of any other person within the school. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, we can help to create safe, disciplined environments where children are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

## **What is bullying?**

2. Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

3. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is our first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical and our teachers will make their own judgements about each specific case. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

## Forms of Bullying

4. Examples of forms of bullying could include:

### Physical

#### Direct

Hitting  
Kicking  
Spitting  
Throwing things

#### Indirect

Getting another person to assault someone.

### Non-physical

#### Verbal

Verbal insults  
Name-calling  
Spreading malicious rumours.

Getting someone else to insult the victim.

#### Non-verbal

Threatening and  
obscene gestures

Removing and hiding belongings.  
Deliberate exclusion from an activity.

5. All incidents of bullying should be defined from the victim's point of view. For example, a child may be prevented from joining in a group game at playtime because one child in the group initiates a collective barrier. This may not seem too serious to an onlooker but it can be devastating to the child if it continues on a daily basis. Bullying is not when children fall out or don't get on with one another.

## Cyber-bullying

6. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people 'forward on' content at a click.

7. The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide 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 child's mobile phone.

8. If an electronic device that is prohibited by our school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they will give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an

offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, will not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

9. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

10. For more information on how to respond to cyber-bullying and for further guidance on e-safety, please visit the school website where we will post links to organisations that can help.

## Prevention

11. We aim to prevent bullying from occurring by educating our children as follows:

- we talk to children.
- we have opportunities built into the curriculum to develop their understanding e.g. Anti-bullying week.
- we educate through circle-time, assemblies, PSHE lessons.
- we create an ethos of good behaviour where children treat one another with respect.
- we thread our school behaviour rules of **ready, respectful, safe** and our school values of **try hard, be brave, be you** throughout the curriculum.
- we ask children to walk around school sensibly, use their manners and show respect for adults and peers.

## If Bullying takes place

12. However, if bullying takes place, GH school staff:

- will involve parents and ensure there is a clear message that school does not tolerate bullying;
- will speak to the individual children to identify what has been happening;
- will ensure that the bully/bullies and any of their supporters are brought together and the issue discussed;
- will consider, at the discretion of the member of staff dealing with the incident, whether or not the victim will be present at any meetings with the bully/bullies;
- will ensure that the member of staff will explain to the other children why they have been summoned and exactly the effect that their behaviour has had and that, where appropriate, they must share the responsibility to put things right; and
- sanctions are put in place for the bully/bullies in line with the Behaviour Policy. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see bullying is unacceptable. This does not however mean a bully will be automatically permanently excluded from school.

### **Intervention - Support for children who are bullied**

13. The school will support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the child well, asking the SET team to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services, completing a Common Assessment Framework or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

### **Where bullying has a severe impact**

14. In some circumstances, the consequences of bullying may lead to a child experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. We will ensure that provision is available to meet a child's short-term needs, including setting out what actions they are taking when bullying has had a serious impact on a child's ability to learn. If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child or young person to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then school will consider whether the child will benefit from being assessed for SEN.

### **Intervention support for pupils who bully**

15. The child who bullies often has social and emotional needs themselves. To support them we:

- talk to the child;
- discuss issues with parents / carers;
- offer the family Early Help Support; and
- assign the child to group or individual support to address the issues identified.

### **Safeguarding children and young people**

16. When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, GH staff will discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and report their concerns to their local authority children's social care and work with them to take appropriate action.

### **Criminal law**

17. Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order 5 Act 1986.

18. If GH staff feel that an offence may have been committed they will seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known

or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

**Bullying which occurs outside school premises**

19. GH staff members have the power to discipline children for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address children's conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate children's behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

20. Where bullying outside school is reported to GH staff, it may be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

21. While school staff members have the power to discipline children for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the child is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.