



Hopelands Preparatory School

38/40 Regent Street, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 2AD

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SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to the school including the EYFS.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Hopelands Preparatory School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence, and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop their full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Hopelands Preparatory School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents and guardians have an important role in supporting Hopelands Preparatory School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Hopelands Preparatory School believes in a community of families that respect the diversity of our school and enjoys equality and equity. Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination

which are based on any of the protective characteristics featured in the Equality Act 2010 will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and families fairly and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the school, and each other in return. All forms of bullying at our school are unacceptable and any instances will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action.

This policy applies to all pupils and staff in the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage/Nursery.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education). It can also be an individual act at a specific time.

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another person by physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including via email, social media and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours) means. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in, with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are sexual or sexist, homophobic, racist, which focus on religion or cultural or family background, special educational needs, disabilities or physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). It may also be unpleasant in other ways. Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Equality Act protects people against discrimination because of the protected characteristics. In the Equality Act, the nine protected characteristics are defined as:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

We recognise that people who have a protected characteristic may experience an additional vulnerability to being bullied. Throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum and, in particular, through the PSHE programme, staff work to develop a sense of tolerance and respect towards

people who have a protected characteristic, in line with the school's promotion of fundamental British values. Any bullying on the basis of a protected characteristic is taken very seriously. The school's log of bullying incidents enables any issues arising out of a protected characteristic to be identified and characterised to facilitate the monitoring of patterns or trends, the school's success in its anti-bullying strategies and its active promotion of the pupils' well-being.

DEFINITION OF CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying can be defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others" (Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act carried out repeatedly over time, often against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

At Hopelands Preparatory School, we always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities, and will not be tolerated.

Bullying can be so serious that it causes physical, emotional and psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. It can also become a safeguarding issue. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, it can become a criminal offence if it reaches a safeguarding threshold and there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are victims of bullying will be supported. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Bullying which occurs on school trips or outside of the school's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on school premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside school premises and outside school hours.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include any of the indicators below alone or together:

- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;

- Changes in academic achievements or failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/recorded as appropriate (see below). The school will initiate and share a concern with parents, but it also expects parents to share concern when witnessing changes in behaviour as noted above or bullying, in or outside of school setting. The school will take this concern seriously.

BULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We take the following preventative measures in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem which is associated with Hopelands Preparatory School:

Pupils

- All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported;
- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other;
- Other lessons, particularly RS, IL groups, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable;
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;
- All pupils have access to a telephone helpline (Childline), enabling them to call for support in private. Posters are displayed around the school with the telephone number.

Staff

- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to and record allegations of bullying at Hopelands

Preparatory School. All school staff understand the principles of the school policy, their legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent problems and sources of further support;

- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in the office in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of who can handle any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying;
- Our teaching team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. Inset sessions are held regularly, using outside experts;
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and circulate the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour; additionally to the staff on playground duty, members of our pastoral team have taken the role of 'listening ears'; all pupils know this is another way to voice their worries and concerns or ask for help for themselves or others.
- The school has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips, or that otherwise occur outside of school. The school has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such acts. It is important to recognise that there is culpability if you see or are aware of bullying but do nothing about it. Neglecting to act makes the bystander complicit in the bullying. If you are aware of bullying happening in the school, it should immediately be reported to a member of staff.

Parents

- We encourage close contact between the teaching staff and parents/guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's well-being; and
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and results of this anti-bullying policy.

CYBERBULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, Hopelands Preparatory School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its policy for the safe use of the internet (Acceptable Use Policy and Social Media Policy). Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use;
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet;
- Access to all social media sites and personal email sites such as "Hotmail" is not allowed from school computers/tablets inside school
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing personal data;

- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others; and
- Does not allow the use of cameras/mobile phone cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

Hopelands Preparatory School ensures that all instances of or concerns about bullying and cyberbullying, on and away from school premises, are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on the pupil's file, and files relating to safeguarding where appropriate, in order to enable the school to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved;
- They will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible;
- The victim will be interviewed on their own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write an account of events;
- The alleged perpetrator[s], and all others who were involved, will immediately be interviewed individually (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and will be asked to write an account of events;
- The incident should be recorded on a school incident form and signed and dated before it is given to the Head, who is responsible for keeping all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences, securely in a locked cabinet in their office. If it is not practicable to use the form, the incident must still be written down, signed and dated, and held securely by the Head;
- The Head will inform the tutors, of both the alleged perpetrator[s] and the victim[s] as soon as possible.
- The victim will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the teaching team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help themselves. It will be made clear to them why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate;
- The alleged perpetrator will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the teaching team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour. The school's Behaviour Policy may also be invoked. Sanctions under the Behaviour Policy might include, for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges, or suspension from school. The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe or persistent bullying, or if the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.

- The parents/ guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought;
- A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for pupils, for pupils who are being bullied and for those who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy if appropriate;
- As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode;
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record;
- In very serious cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the school's Behaviour Policy.

EYFS CHILDREN

Even the youngest children at Hopelands Preparatory School are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. The Early Years Foundation Stage Lead oversees the management of behaviour in the EYFS Department.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the EYFS Department; but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see The Head, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action and the effect on others; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed via a note in the home link book or any other school communication system when any sanction or reproof is needed, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's teacher and The Head, to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYES children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled (The Complaints Procedure explains how to complain to Ofsted).

GUIDANCE ON ANTI-BULLYING

A Legal Requirement, an ISI Reporting Standard and OFSTED Standards for Boarding Schools and EYFS providers

References and guidance:

- A. Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE, July 2017

- B. ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools: The Regulatory Requirements, September 2024
(https://www.isi.net/site/uploads/isi_inspection_handbook_sep24.pdf)
- C. Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, January 2024
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65aa5e42ed27ca001327b2c7/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf)
- D. The Anti-Bullying Alliance <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>
- E. Childline <https://www.childline.org.uk/>
- F. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- G. Ditch the Label <https://ditchthelabel.org/>
- H. "Bullying": An ISC Child Health and Wellbeing Working Party Guidance Update Five
- I. Childnet <https://www.childnet.com/>

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Hopelands Preparatory School

Held in **September 2024**

Date to be reviewed September 2026

Signed on behalf of senior management team



Name of signatory

Maria Boix

Role of signatory

Headteacher

Signed on behalf of Governing Body



Name of signatory

Richard James

Role of signatory

Chair of Governors