



The Grove

The Grove Anti-Bullying Policy

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Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Reading and further guidance | 2 |
| Introduction | 3 |
| What is bullying? | 4 |
| Why is bullying often not reported? | 5 |
| Cyber Bullying | 5 |
| Signs and Symptoms of bullying that autistic pupils may display. | 6 |
| Missunderstanding | 7 |
| Examples of misunderstandings verses bullying | 7 |
| Methods | 7 |
| Strategies for preventing and reducing bullying | 8 |
| Recording as a result of bullying | 9 |
| Pupils responsible for bullying will be required and supported to: | 9 |
| Pupils who are bullied | 9 |
| Procedures | 10 |
| Outcomes | 10 |
| Staff professional development | 11 |
| Support | 11 |
| Appendices | 11 |

Reading & Further Guidance

- DFE Preventing & Tackling Bullying – published August 2013 (updated July 2017)
- The Equality Act 2010
- NSPCC bullying & cyberbullying <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>
- Anti Bullying Alliance
- National autistic society – Bullying and autistic pupils
<https://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/teachers/bullying.aspx>
- OFSTED
- National Children’s Bureau – <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Although the control and reporting of bullying is everyone’s responsibility across The Grove School, there are some key individuals who can be contacted by pupils, families and other staff members; should they feel they need further advice or support.

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Introduction

At The Grove School we recognise that our pupils remain a vulnerable group in society and therefore are particularly susceptible to bullying.

Young people who attend The Grove may encounter or have encountered bullying in both the community and their personal lives. Nearly half of all families who have a child on the autism spectrum say their child has been bullied. Bullying is often under-reported. In addition, people on the autism spectrum can have difficulty communicating. Staff should therefore treat increased anxiety or not wanting to participate as potential indicators of bullying.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims which our School adheres to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

This Policy has also considered the DfE Guidance on *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*, July 2017 and DfE *Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school* November 2014

Objectives

- To create an environment in which bullying is considered unacceptable behaviour and where the whole community is willing to take positive action should it occur.
- To encourage all pupils to seek help and support when needed.
- To raise awareness of the problem and to encourage vigilance in all members of the community to detect bullying behaviour.
- To provide opportunities for the consideration of issues relating to bullying throughout the whole curriculum, and thereby addressing the problem through education.
- To provide help and guidance for both victims and bullies.
- To enable pupils to identify bullying, when they are being bullied or when they are behaving as the bully.

What is bullying?

Many people have written a definition of bullying and for the purposes of this document; we will use the following one:

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or through electronic means, and comes in many different forms:

Verbal

Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.

Physical

Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.

Emotional

Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.

Cyberbullying

The misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

A guide to what bullying can be:

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| Emotional | Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) |
| Physical | Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence |
| Racist | Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures |
| Sexual | Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments |
| Homophobic | Because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality |
| Verbal | Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing |

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| Cyber | <p>All areas of internet , such as email & internet social media misuse Mobile threats by text messaging & calls, social networking</p> <p>Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made using digital communications and/or technologies - this includes internet trolling. Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation.</p> <p>Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person. Creating dedicated websites that intend to harm, make fun of someone or spread malicious rumours.</p> <p>Pressuring someone to do something they do not want to such as sending a <i>sexually explicit image</i>.</p> |
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Bullying is usually distinguished from friendly teasing or conflict situations. The school differentiates between these two by;

Typical peer conflict

- Equal power between pupils
- Pupils involved may be friends
- Negative actions don't follow a pattern
- Conflict not premeditated and no real intention to cause harm
- Followed by sincere remorse
- Interest in repairing relationship
- Both pupils play an active role
- Pupils may be supported by other peers
- There is an intention to resolve a situation

Bullying behaviours:

- Imbalance of power between pupils
- No real friendship between pupils
- Negative actions are repeated
- Actions are purposeful and possibly premeditated
- Bully shifts blame, no sincere remorse
- No interest in repairing relationship
- Incident is one-sided
- Target is alone without peer support
- Intention is to gain power, control, or items

A pupil who bullies can have serious and wide-ranging impact on the pupil that they bully; pupils who observe bullying are also affected as is the whole school community. For these reasons, bullying is taken seriously at our school.

A bystander is someone who witnesses bullying, but does nothing to try and stop it. Most young bystanders do not act maliciously, but are simply unaware of their ability to help. On the other hand, some may purposefully aggravate the situation through provoking the bully into action by laughing, cheering or momentarily joining in.

Why is bullying often not reported?

Young people with autism may not report bullying to an adult because they:

- are scared of confrontation;

- misunderstand the social context;
- do not think or recognise it as a problem;
- do not have the skills to communicate the problem;
- don't know how to report it;
- do not understand others can help;
- do not like or know the target;
- rely on someone else to intervene;
- are friends with the bully.

CYBER BULLYING

“Cyberbullying is any bullying behaviour by electronic means. It typically includes intentionally causing someone or a group of people harm by sharing/posting unkind or offensive comments, sharing private information to shame or ridicule, impersonating others and promoting rumours or fake news about others.” www.kidscape.org.uk

Cyber bullying differs from other forms of bullying in that it can take place at any time and can invade previously safe places such as the home. The audience can be very large and reached very quickly. The perpetrator may never be in the same physical space as their target and may attempt to remain anonymous. Many cyber bullying incidents can themselves act as evidence and it is important that in all settings staff and adults know how to deal with incidents. At the Grove, we treat all forms of cyber bullying seriously and effectively, including those that take place not on the school premises.

Due to the nature of the pupils that attend The Grove School we consider them vulnerable to the potential harm of cyber bullying. Social communication is an area that our autistic learners have difficulties in. This results in pupils having limited skills in understanding the wider implications of cyberbullying and often cannot see the “bigger picture” of its impact. Similarly, they may not have the theory of mind to interpret what they read other than literally.

There are limited opportunities within the school day for cyber bullying to occur as we have banned mobile phones or personal portable devices and have restrictions on social networking sites. We work with our families so that they understand the implications and seriousness of cyberbullying and how it may affect their child. For many of our pupils, their spare time is spent on-line, and we encourage families to be actively involved in monitoring this. We also encourage families to develop their child’s other interests so that they are less reliant on technology for their leisure time. We address these areas within our PSHE curriculum, including building leisure skills.

Cyber bullying may be defined as an individual or a group of people using mobile devices, the internet or other technologies to make recipients feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable. (See Safeguarding and E-Safety Policies).

Young people are particularly adept at using new technology, which can seem a closed world to adults.

The Kidscape and NSPCC websites provide useful guidance for young people and carers about how to use technology safely and what to do if they are on the receiving end of cyberbullying.

www.kidscape.org.uk and www.nspcc.org.uk

Signs and Symptoms of bullying that autistic pupils may

display

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child displays:

- Increased anxiety (displayed through increasingly obsessive behaviours, hand movements, repetitive questioning and statements, or short temper)
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Seeming overly-sensitive or overreacting to minor occurrences (being 'on edge')
- Seeking revenge or rigid sense of justice
- Repeatedly exposing him/herself to the same kind of bullying situation. Although the pupil may know it is a negative interaction, they may still consider this better than no interaction at all. It becomes a scenario they are familiar with and which follows a predictable sequence.
- Demonstrating bullying type behaviours themselves
- Mimicking behaviours of others

Misunderstanding

There are many reasons why pupils with autism may display behaviour that appears similar to bullying, such as poor understanding of interactions and a reaction to previous social experiences.

- It might be learned behaviour that they have witnessed or used previously to gain a desired response.
- 'Cause and effect' may be the only kind of interactions they know how to initiate – the motivation behind the behaviour is unlikely to be to cause intentional harm.
- They may lack the skills to maintain an interaction appropriately, and have difficulty 'reading' another person's responses, so they don't realise when the other pupil is no longer enjoying the interaction.
- They may be demonstrating behaviours perceived as manipulation but the function is often of a 'secondary gain' nature where the behaviour is not around causing intentional distress or harm but is more because of seeking a familiar response.
- They may seek out interactions in an 'in your face' way, lacking boundaries.
- They may be following a 'leader's' instructions or be seeking approval or acceptance into a gang by joining in with someone else's bullying.
- They may be mimicking incidents or behaviour that they have witnessed or been a part of.
- Their behaviour might be an attempt to retaliate, without any understanding of the consequences of their own behaviour.
- Displaying aggressive behaviour might be a strategy to avoid being bullied themselves.
- They might be feeling frustrated at being left out and want to force other pupils to be their friends.
- Difficulties with winning and losing.

Examples of misunderstandings verses bullying;

Here are some of the examples of the misconceptions that we encourage teachers to explore when

explaining and supporting pupils in their understanding of bullying:

| Bullying | Accident or misunderstanding |
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| Someone thinks it's fun to upset you. They say things again and again and laugh when you get cross or sad. | Someone says something that they didn't know would upset you and they say sorry. They are sad you are upset. |
| They carry on when you ask them to stop. | They stop if you ask them to. |
| They take your things in order to see you get upset. | They borrow something without asking but give it back when you ask. |
| They kick, push, punch, or hurt you on purpose. | They accidentally bump into you or push past and then say sorry. |
| They mock things you say or call you names if you make a mistake. | They don't agree with everything you say but respect your opinion. |

Methods

We have a named pastoral manager (Nadine Huseyin) who is responsible for supporting personal, social and emotional development, including issues concerning behaviour.

We require the named persons to:

- Keep her/himself up to date with legislation, research, thinking promoting positive behaviour and on handling children's behaviour where it may require additional support
- Access relevant sources of expertise on promoting positive behaviour within the program for supporting PHSE
- Check that all staff have relevant in-service training on promoting positive behaviour

We require all staff, volunteers and pupils to provide a positive model of behaviour by treating children, families and one another with respect, friendliness, care and courtesy. We familiarise new staff and volunteers with our behaviour policy and its guidelines for behaviour. We expect all members of our school community to keep to the guidelines, requiring these to be applied consistently.

We work in partnership with families and they are regularly informed about their child's behaviour, progress and attitudes. We work with families to address recurring inappropriate behaviour, using our tracking software to help us understand causes and to jointly decide how to respond.

Strategies for preventing and reducing bullying

We work actively on preventing bullying and ensuring that we are a safe and positive place for all of our pupils. Our strategies include:

- Planned transition times between different activities, lessons, around the school to minimise stress.
- School rules about bullying are very specific so there can be no misconceptions and pupils are aware of the consequences of this behaviour.
- Pupils are taught specifically what behaviours and actions constitute being a good friend, there are school guidelines.
- Identifying risk times and places e.g.: break times, lunch times and leisure times.

- Choosing groups and teams in lessons to prevent pupils being left out or bullied.
- Examining group dynamics and creating classes based on this.
- Providing positive role models and celebrating positive behaviour through awards such as merits, certificates, and awards.
- Tackling cyber bullying and E-Safety including that which may take place outside of school
- Creating structure at playtimes (designated areas for activities, lunchtime clubs) to support difficulties with leisure and play that our pupils typically have.
- Allowing pupils to use dedicated quiet areas during break time, especially if they need a break.
- Promoting tolerance, understanding, respecting and accommodating people's differences.
- Mental health therapists work with pupils throughout the week to support them.
- Work on emotions to help our autistic learners understand feelings.
- Extended PSHE/social skills curriculum e.g. pupils learn about their own strengths and areas where they need support, writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying, reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly, making up role-plays, having discussions about bullying and why it matters, discussing scenarios 'What if...',
- Explicit teaching of acceptable and unacceptable ways of expressing feelings, how their behaviour can affect others, calming down as an alternative to expressing their anger and frustration inappropriately.
- Recognising achievements in the area of social interaction and reinforce them through the use of praise and rewards (e.g. Assemblies)
- Behaviour contracts between pupils (where deemed appropriate)
- Using 'The Scales of Justice' activity to help pupils understand confrontation and social difficulties (Tony Attwood: The complete guide to Asperger's Syndrome®)
- Because of their difficulties with 'reading' social situations, pupils with autism need to be taught how to distinguish between bullying and accidents or misunderstandings e.g. using Social Stories
- Anti-bullying week and specific focus within the SMSC curriculum. This involves addressing bullying and the effects of bullying within PSHE lessons, assemblies and through the general curriculum.
- SMSC curriculum provides the framework for anti-bullying week and for assemblies where SMSC themes are addressed each and every week.
- A personal device ban in school, pupils are required to sign a safe use of computers agreement when they start school.

Recording as a result of bullying

- Strategies will be adjusted on a pupil's Support Plan this may be for the pupil who has demonstrated the bullying type behaviour or strategies to support the pupil who has experienced bullying and ways to support them.
- Any bullying behaviours which could be counted as incidents, will be recorded on the school's behaviour tracking system: **Sleuth** or on the safeguarding system **MyConcern**.
- Incidents recorder can include incidents in school and outside of school including cyber bullying or journeys to and from school, including school bus and public transport.

Pupils responsible for bullying will be required and supported to:

- Accept the undesirability of their behaviour and undertake that there should be no

- repetition of such behaviour
- Find solutions to the problem, target setting, agreements with families, counselling.
- Accept any consequences agreed
- Understand that, should such repetition occur, it will result in far more serious consequences agreed with all parties concerned.
- Acknowledge that they are personally responsible for their choice of future behaviour
- Accept a period of reflection where the incident is considered and a means of reparation is decided upon
- Be prepared to discuss strategies with staff and families to help them to understand & refrain from bullying behaviour in the future.
- Accept a course of counselling sessions to focus on the causes of the behaviour and ways to improve

Pupils who are bullied

- Will receive help and support
- Will receive guidance and support to deal with bullying behaviour and how to manage any further incidents in the future.
- Will be given the opportunity to nominate a member of staff to whom they can report further incidents and from whom they can seek help and advice.
- Will be offered in school counselling or mentoring sessions

These outcomes will need to be supported due to the specific difficulties our autistic learners encounter. These are addressed in our autism statement and flexibility of thought statement. As much as we are aware that for many of our youngsters they often find it hard to recognise their behaviour as bullying, it is our responsibility to help and facilitate their learning and understanding of what is and what is not acceptable.

Procedures

- All pupils are encouraged to adopt the school policy of 'telling'. They are encouraged to report all bullying incidents to staff.
- In all cases bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff.
- If it is a misunderstanding, an explanation and solution will be given to the pupil/s.
- School wide interventions will be implemented to help the person being bullied and the bully to understand how they feel and the impact of what has happened (See strategies above).
- In all cases families should be informed and may be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- All strategies will be put in place to support the bully (bullies) to change their behaviour.
- Families have the right to make a formal complaint if they feel that the school has not dealt with any incidents sufficiently.
- The school will offer various strategies to report bullying including an anonymous box checked daily at both entrances to the school site and information of the named officer for anti-bullying displayed.

Outcomes

- The person/s displaying bullying behaviour may be asked to apologise or attempt to rebuild the relationship.
- Different strategies and consequences are employed to highlight the serious nature of treating others in a negative, harmful or offensive way. Consequences may be implemented for the benefit of others to see there are repercussions. It may not have an impact on the bully who is autistic.
- Mediation may take place.
- Our mental health therapists will support pupils.
- Other consequences may take place as outlined in the school's behaviour chart. Consequences are to be fair, consistent and appropriate to pupils' understanding.
- In serious cases, change of classes, internal exclusions, fixed term exclusions or managed moves may be considered. This may also give the person who has suffered bullying a break from being in close proximity to the person who has been the bully.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled, and a positive relationship encouraged.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Staff Professional Development

- Our pastoral manager meets regularly with staff members, families and the school's multidisciplinary team to consider all pupils and their well-being.
- Training on recording and interventions to support our autistic pupils are delivered regularly as part of our staff meetings and training sessions.

Support

At The Grove School we understand the importance of robust and rigorous investigations when it comes to issues concerning bullying. We believe that the ongoing interventions and training are key to success, but that the aftercare and support of both victims and perpetrator is paramount to helping resolve issues long term.

The Grove School will ensure appropriate information from this policy is offered in both a simplified version and offered in Communicate & Print.

Summary

We believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met. We aim to teach pupils to behave in socially acceptable ways and to understand the needs and rights of others so that all have opportunities to develop as successful, confident and caring individuals.

Appendix

- Useful Information as outlined in the DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017
- **Cyber-bullying and online safety**
- **ChildNet International:** Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. Website specifically includes new cyber bullying guidance and a practical PSHE toolkit for schools.
- **Digizen:** provides online safety information for educators, families, carers and young people.
- **Internet Matters:** provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.

- **Think U Know:** resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, families, and teachers.
- **The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)** has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges and families about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting.'

LGBT

- **Barnardos:** through its LGBTQ Hub, offers guidance to young people, families and teachers on how to support LGBT pupils and tackle LGBT prejudice-based bullying
- **Schools Out:** Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.
- **Stonewall:** An LGBT equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGBT bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers. **Just Like Us:** are building a national network of university student volunteers, giving them the skills they need to communicate with impact, and sending them into secondary schools to share their stories, bust stereotypes, and explain why LGBT+ equality is everyone's issue.
- **Mermaids:** aim to reduce isolation and loneliness for gender variant and transgender children, young people and their families.

SEND

- **Mencap:** Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.
- **Cyber bullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities:** Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) on developing effective anti-bullying practice.
- **Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources:** Advice provided for school staff and families on issues related to SEND and bullying.

Mental health

- **MindEd:** Provides a free online training tool for adults that is also available to schools. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.
- **PSHE Association** – guidance and lesson plans on improving the teaching of mental health issues Race, religion and nationality

Race, religion and nationality

- **Educate Against Hate:** provides teachers, families and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.
- **Show Racism the Red Card:** Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.
- **Kick It Out:** Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- **Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW):** A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.
- **Disrespect No Body:** a Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This website includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.
- **Anti-bullying Alliance:** advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying.