

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Last reviewed: August 2025

Next review: August 2026

This policy will remain valid until the end of the academic year 2025-2026

This policy should be read in conjunction with the PGHS Behaviour Policy and the PGHS EYFS Behaviour Policy (incorporating Rewards & Sanctions, and Suspension & Expulsion)

Anti-Bullying Statement

I belong to a school where our aim is to treat everyone with respect as set out in the School motto
– *By Love Serve One Another*.

Everyone has the right to come to School and feel happy and comfortable. No one should ever feel threatened or made unhappy by the actions of anyone else. I will respect and support others at all times and tell a member of staff if someone is obviously being upset or hurt.

School Approach

Palmer's Green High School takes a very positive approach towards behaviour and expects everyone, pupils, staff and volunteers alike, to show courtesy, consideration and respect to others at all times. This fully accords with the School ethos of tolerance and understanding.

Pupils, staff and volunteers clearly understand the expectations of behaviour as set out in the Behaviour Policy and the policy is available on the School website. Pupils are reminded through assemblies, PSHEE, form time and lessons of these expectations and are taught how to recognise unhealthy relationships, bullying, and coercive or controlling behaviours.

We always treat bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with our ethos and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be challenged, and dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy. Downplaying such behaviours can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, and an unsafe environment for children, and a culture that might normalise such abuse leading to it being accepted as normal and left unreported.

The School recognises the seriousness of any type of bullying, both physical and emotional, and the fact that bullying can cause serious and lasting psychological damage and even suicide. Although not in itself a criminal offence, certain types of bullying can come under the umbrella of harassment, assault, and hate-based abuse which are illegal.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person or group physically or emotionally, which is repeated over time. It involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim and makes it difficult for the victim to defend themselves. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or protected characteristics. For example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, SEND. Bullying may be motivated by actual or perceived differences between children such as a child being adopted or a carer, physical attributes such hair colour or body shape.

It could occur directly; for example, involving physical (including sexual) intimidation, verbal, emotional and psychological means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours), or indirectly via cyber methods (including social websites, chat rooms, email, photographs, text messages and mobile phones).

Bullying can be overt and intimidatory or hidden and subtle such as low-level disruption or the use of offensive language. Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone or complicity that falls short of direct participation. If left unchallenged or dismissed as 'banter', bullying can lead to a victim being reluctant to report the behaviour. If child on child abuse as a result of bullying is suspected, the matter must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Staff, more guidance on this is contained in the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. Harassment and threatening behaviour are criminal offences. We always treat incidents of bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

Definition of Child-on-Child Abuse

Bullying can sometimes amount to child-on-child abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. The pupils will not necessarily be the same ages/year groups. Child on child abuse is a specific safeguarding concern and as such should be dealt with according to the procedures and protocols outlined in the PGHS Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All staff should be aware that children can abuse one another and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. If staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they should speak to either of the designated safeguarding leads, Mrs Nicola Tikare or Miss Rebecca Stewart (Deputy Head) or a deputy designated safeguarding lead, Ms Sarah Proudlove (Head) or Mr Steven Morris (Assistant Head Individual Needs).

Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate a child is being bullied may include:

- Unwillingness to return to School
- Displays of excessive anxiety
- Failure to produce work or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly going missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits, for example, giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the First Aiders with such symptoms as stomach pains and headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide

The Prevention of Bullying

The required behaviour of all pupils is explained clearly, in a way appropriate to all pupils in the School through the PSHEE programme, tutorial sessions/Form times, and assemblies. The programme/activities are structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other – 'By Love Serve One Another'. The programme/activities specifically tell pupils who to inform if they are being bullied, in or out of school, and to speak up if they know someone else is being bullied. Pupils know that they can talk to ANY member of staff if they are being bullied themselves or have concerns about a friend. 'Who do I Need to See' posters throughout the School remind pupils of key people they can talk to.

Other preventative measures are used as follows:

- Work in lessons such as RE, Computing and English highlight the issue of bullying.
- All reported incidents are investigated.
- We have a strong and supportive pastoral team. In the Senior School, each pupil will have a choice of 2/3 Form Tutors to whom they can talk. In the Lower School there is a very strong bond between the pupils and their Class Teacher who usually sees parents or other adult carers at the beginning and end of each school day.
- Staff are always on duty when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site. At break and lunch times, members of the Year 11 prefect team (as well as staff) patrol areas such as the washrooms where bullying might occur.
- Our First Aid staff monitor and record details of all pupils who visit them. If a child is exhibiting any symptoms of concern, the Deputy Heads are informed straight away.

- Anti-bullying posters are clearly exhibited around the School.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside of school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the School, involving our pupils where this has a detrimental effect upon the pupils' behaviour or performance within School. A pupil who is bullied in School is more likely to be bullied out of school, for instance either on the way to or from School or through cyberbullying.
- There is a clear Rewards and Sanctions policy in place.
- All staff know the procedure to follow in cases of alleged bullying and updates are given as part of the annual policy review.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying that can happen at all times of the day, potentially with a large audience as people forward on content. Further information and advice can be found in the PGHS Online Safety policy.

Palmers Green High School

- Expects all staff and pupils from Year 3 to Year 11 to adhere to its ICT Acceptable Use Policy. Separate policies exist for staff and pupils and they are issued at the beginning of each academic year and signed by pupils, parents and staff.
- Expects all pupils below Year 3 to use the Internet safely as guided by the staff.
- Blocks dangerous and unsuitable sites via a filtering system (Senso) and the School reserves the right to monitor staff and pupils' use of the Internet.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse or attempted misuse of the Internet.
- Blocks access to some webmail sites, such as Hotmail.
- Offers safe remote access to pupils' work via Office 365.
- Offers guidance on the safe use of methods of digital communication including social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHEE and Computing lessons and through visits to the School from an external expert in the field. Guidance includes the use of mobile communication devices and also covers blocking, reporting and removing contacts from 'buddy' lists and keeping personal details safe.
- Does not allow pupils in the Lower School (R-Y6) to bring mobile phones to School unless approved by the Head or Deputy Heads because of exceptional circumstances.
- Does not allow mobile phones to be switched on in School, except where staff have sanctioned their usage as part of a lesson or project.
- Expects pupils in Years 7-11 to hand their mobile phones in at the School Office on arrival to School at the beginning of the school day.
- Does not allow the use of cameras on mobile phones except where staff have sanctioned their usage as part of a lesson, performance or project.
- Does not permit the usage of mobile phones in the washroom or PE changing areas.

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

Staff should make the alleged victim feel at ease by assuring them that they will:

- listen
- maintain confidence as appropriate
- try to protect them
- try to help them cope
- try to help them co-exist with the bully
- ask them if they wish to have a friend present
- make clear that other staff may need to be involved and that the problem will be treated seriously and looked into as a matter of urgency
- give them time to explain the situation and will listen carefully
- ask them to write down their version of events and to sign and date this as a record
- pass no immediate judgement
- notify the Deputy Heads who will continue to investigate.
- one of the Deputy Heads, who are the DSLs, will involve external agencies as required.

If the allegation is of a serious nature, refer the matter immediately to the Head.

All staff involved must reassure the pupil that the School is acting, even if those actions are not obvious at first, and will keep them informed of what has been done; however, specific details of conversations or sanctions will not normally be shared. Usually the staff involved will be the Class Teacher/Form Tutor and the Deputy Heads.

When speaking to the alleged perpetrator, staff

- Should not presume from the outset that the person being interviewed is guilty.
- Should listen to the alleged bully's version of events (and explain that bullying is wrong and unacceptable).
- Ask the alleged bully to write down their version of events and to sign and date this as a record or write this for the alleged bully if they are younger, or unable to do so themselves.
- Should explain calmly what allegations or suspicions exist as appropriate.

In some cases, the member of staff dealing with the bullying incident may request an additional adult to be with them. Reconciliation between victim and bully will be encouraged by the Class Teacher/Form Tutor, and the Deputy Heads. Support for the perpetrator will be made available when necessary to prevent such behaviour being repeated.

Depending on the individual incident, the Class Teacher/Form Tutor or Deputy Heads will phone the alleged bully's parents and ask them (where possible) to come in and discuss the allegations. They will be encouraged to avoid confrontation with other parents and to keep their daughter informed about what is happening. In more serious and persistent cases, the Head may

decide to suspend or exclude the bully. The Police will be involved where necessary and appropriate.

A bullying incident should be addressed as a Child Protection and Safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this is the case, the procedures set out in the PGHS Child Protection and Safeguarding policy are to be followed.

Record Keeping

- Records of interviews with the pupils, conversations with the parents, plus any action taken should be signed by the staff member and given to the Deputy Head overseeing the case.
- Staff must be able to justify their actions and any written comments.
- The Head and Deputy Heads should be kept informed of all bullying incidents.
- A Bullying Log will be maintained by SLT and used to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach and to identify patterns.

Related policies:

Behaviour
Online Safety

Additional resources:

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)
Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014)
Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (2014)
Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2024)
Equality Act (2010)
No Health Without Mental Health: Implementation Framework (2012)
Malicious Communications Act (1988)
Cyberbullying
Childnet
CEOP
Anti-bullying Alliance
Kidscape
Mencap