

Countering Bullying Policy

Bredon School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education; the Proprietary Body also known as the Governing Body. Any reference to Governor's means any Director of Cavendish Education.

This Policy document is one of a series of Bredon Policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive, formal Statement of Bredon's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each and every one of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this Policy needs to be read alongside all of these Policies in order to get the full picture; in particular it should be read in conjunction with the ***Equality Policy, The Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding Policy.***

All of these Policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to evidence the work that the whole School is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

'To be a small, family school that genuinely focuses on the individual; ensuring each pupil reaches his or her personal potential and destination by way of a rich and diverse journey based on breadth of opportunity, support and continuously striving towards excellence.'

In all Bredon Policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" imports the meaning parent, guardian, carer or any person in whom is vested the legal duties and responsibilities of a child's primary caregiver.

Bredon employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure compliance is met and the best practice is implemented:

**Peninsula HR Online
Peninsula Business Safe (Health and Safety)
Atlantic Data (DBS)
Educare (online CPD)**

With reference to the following:
ISI Regulatory Requirement Part 3 Paragraph 10 (September 2017)
Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2016)
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)
Prevent Duty Guidance (March 2016)

Date: August 2019
Review Cycle: Annually
Next Review Date: August 2020

Aim:

At Bredon School we aim to provide a caring, safe and friendly environment, where our pupils can learn and develop in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is anti-social behaviour and will not be tolerated. Thankfully, bullying at Bredon School is a rare occurrence but it may surface occasionally and is always a concern when it arises. If bullying does occur all pupils and parents should be able to inform someone within the school and have confidence that the incident will be dealt with promptly, effectively and appropriately. We expect anyone who knows that bullying is happening to tell a member of staff or a person whom they trust.

The school takes a four pronged approach to bullying:

1. educating pupils formally and informally, emphasising care and tolerance towards individuals; raising awareness of signs of bullying via staff INSET.
2. encouraging pupils to watch for and recognise signs of unhappiness in other pupils and be confident to report it to a member of staff or someone who they trust.
3. providing and implementing a Countering Bullying policy and procedure and a Complaints policy and procedure.
4. treating bullying cases seriously and applying sanctions in line with the Bredon School Ladder of Consequence.

Definition

Bullying is the intentional, repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, often where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying may not necessarily include all individual examples of unpleasant, aggressive or anti-social behaviour. Bullying can be done face to face, through third parties or through sending messages or images by email, text or over the internet. It may be:-

- emotional: being deliberately unfriendly, excluding people from groups, tormenting (e.g. hiding books or possessions, making threatening gestures, damaging property or theft of property)
- physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, spitting or using any form of physical violence (e.g. goosing)
- racist: racial taunts, gestures or graffiti
- religious: anti-religious or sectarian taunts, gestures or graffiti
- sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments or rumours.
- homophobic: focussing on the issue of sexuality, including name calling.
- verbal: name calling, teasing, mocking, spreading rumours, making offensive comments.
- focussed on special needs or disability.



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- cyber: misuse of all areas of the internet, such as email and chat rooms, mobile phones, text messaging, camera or video technology deliberately used to cause offence, torment or spread rumours

Bullying hurts and can do lasting harm. Pupils who bully need to learn different ways of behaving.

Objectives

- to provide a caring environment in which pupils develop respect for themselves and for others
- to encourage pupils to be kind, fair and honest and so to develop within themselves a total rejection of bullying in any form
- to ensure that everyone in the school community is aware that bullying will not be tolerated
- to create an open and supportive climate for all pupils, so that bullying is reported and dealt with swiftly
- to ensure that pupils and parents know about the school policy on bullying and know what they should do if bullying arises
- to ensure that staff are familiar with the school policy on bullying and know what they should do if bullying is reported to them, dealing with it in a way that takes account of the needs of both the victim and the bully

Whole School Strategy to Prevent Bullying

- The Bredon School ethos emphasises the need for mutual respect and care within the school community.
- The PSHCE Programme provides a range of opportunities for pupils to discuss issues to do with friendship, relationships, caring for each other in the community as well as discussing bullying as a specific topic.
- Posters and other display / information materials are deployed.
- Whole School Assemblies, Tutorials and House Meetings regularly focus on issues such as respect, friendship, community values and bullying itself.
- Regular Pastoral meetings with individual year groups occur.
- All staff are expected to treat all pupils with respect, fairness and justice.
- All staff have a pastoral duty within the school and most are assigned or affiliated to a house tutor team.
- Staff are asked to watch for early signs of distress in pupils (deterioration in work, spurious illness, isolation, avoidance of their own peer group) and report any concerns to the tutor.
- Pupils are made aware of who they can talk to in confidence, including any member of staff who they feel they can trust and the school counsellor. All cases are treated with discretion and sensitivity.

Procedure for Dealing with Bullying

All reports of bullying are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

Teachers listen carefully to accounts and try not to make premature assumptions. Most reports are dealt with by the Pastoral Support Officer/Deputy Head Pastoral. The first priority is to stop the bullying and support both the victim and the bully from future recurrence.

1. Alert

Cases of bullying or suspected incidents are immediately reported to the Deputy Head Pastoral.

2. Investigation

The Deputy Head Pastoral notifies the tutors of any other pupil concerned and then makes a preliminary investigation. If the allegations are concrete, the Pastoral Support Officer or Deputy Head Pastoral informs the parents of the pupil if deemed necessary. A copy of the notes taken are placed on the pupil's files and the incident is recorded on the central SIMS system for pupil records and the Countering Bullying log.

3. Reporting

At the earliest opportunity the Deputy Head Pastoral 'flags' the pupil concerned informing the staff and asking them to observe the pupil and to report any incidents which might be regarded as bullying.

4. Case Discussion

The Deputy Head Pastoral will meet twice weekly with pupils to discuss whether the problem is persisting. These meetings are noted to ensure the pupils' accounts match up. This approach continues for a minimum two weeks to ensure there is no recurrence.

If the cases are more persistent the Deputy Head Pastoral will devise an action plan, setting out objectives with regards supporting the victim and the bully and to restore normal relationships, monitoring procedures and a date for a review meeting will be set. A copy of this action plan goes to the Headmaster and if necessary to the parents concerned.

Serious Offences



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If a pupil does not respond positively to attempts to stop the bullying behaviour or the bullying behaviour is sufficiently serious, the pupil will be dealt with according to the Behaviour Management Policy and appropriate sanctions applied, which could lead to exclusion at the headmaster's discretion.

See: Appendix A: ADVICE FOR PUPILS: if you witness bullying behaviour:

Countering Cyber Bullying

Aim:

The School ensures that an effective countering bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented which applies to all pupils in the school including those in the EYFS.

The rise and popularity of social media platforms has made it necessary for the creation of a specific chapter dealing with cyber bullying.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Management Policy and all members of the school community are aware of the close relationship between the policies.

Bullying in any form is an issue that we all take very seriously at Bredon School. We are aware that victims can become depressed and suicidal, and even take their own lives.

What is Cyber- bullying?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. Although there may be some of which we are as yet unaware, the more common examples are as follows;

- **Text messages** —that are threatening or cause discomfort - also included here is "bluejacking" (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using "Bluetooth" wireless technology)
- **Picture/video-clips** via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed
- **Mobile phone calls** — silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible; this can also include giving the victim's phone number out to others indiscriminately



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- **Emails** — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name
- **Chatroom bullying** — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chat rooms
- **Instant messaging (IM)** — unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online for example using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Facebook Chat –there are many other IMs.
- **Bullying via websites** — use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and social networking such as Facebook; many young people sign up for social networking sites by not being truthful about their real age, in order to be able to use the system.

At Bredon School, we take technology-mediated bullying as seriously as the more conventional types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions.

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages (POS - Parents Over Shoulder, TUL - Tell You Later) make it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

At Bredon School, pupils are taught how to

- understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them
- know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied
- report any problems with cyberbullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it

Bredon School has:

- regular briefing for parents on e-communication standards and practices in schools, what to do if problems arise, what's being taught in the curriculum.
- support for parents and pupils if cyberbullying occurs by: assessing the harm caused, identifying those involved, taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence.

Appendix A

ADVICE FOR PUPILS: if you witness bullying behaviour

Do something.

Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.

Encourage them to speak out on their own behalf by confronting the bully or, with their permission, confront the bully yourself.

Take the victim to a trusted adult as describes above and reassure them that doing something will make a positive difference, or suggest that you see someone on their behalf.

There are also people outside the school who would be willing to help. Details of organisations who may be able to help include:

- Independent Listener Sheila Denman 01793 750913
- Childline: 08001111 or www.childline.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- Anti-bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Samaritans: www.samaritans.org.uk
- Children's Commissioner www.childrenscommissioner.co.uk

APPENDIX B

ADVICE FOR PUPILS: if you're being bullied

Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.

Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line. It is good to tell an adult as soon as it starts happening, so that it can be dealt with quickly.

Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.

Don't give out your personal details online - if you're in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.

Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.

If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying. For example, www.kidscape.org and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips:

Text/video messaging

You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number. To find out how to do this, visit www.wiredsafety.org.

If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider.

Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

Don't delete messages from cyberbullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

Text harassment is a crime. If the calls are simply annoying, tell a teacher, parent, carer or anyone you feel you can trust. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

Phone calls

If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off. Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you.

Always tell someone else: a teacher, houseparent, parent, or carer. Get them to support you and monitor what's going on.

Don't give out personal details such as your phone number to just anyone. And never leave your phone lying around. When you answer your phone, just say 'hello', not your name. If they ask you to confirm your phone number, ask what number they want and then tell them if they've got the right number or not.

You can use your voicemail to vet your calls. A lot of mobiles display the caller's number. See if you recognise it. If you don't, let it divert to voicemail instead of answering it. And don't leave your name on your voicemail greeting. You could get an adult to record your greeting. Their voice might stop the caller ringing again.

Almost all calls nowadays can be traced.

If the problem continues, think about changing your phone number.

If you receive calls that scare or trouble you, make a note of the times and dates and report them to the police. If your mobile can record calls, take the recording too.

Emails

Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails ('flames') — the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction. Usually these are sent out automatically by computers, but they can also be sent by individuals. In most email systems, you can mark the emails as SPAM and this usually solves the problem. If the emails return from another source, ask your parent or teacher for advice.

Keep any worrying emails as evidence and tell an adult about them.

Ask an adult to contact the sender's Internet Service Provider (ISP) by writing abuse@ and then the host, e.g. abuse@hotmail.com

Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'. Replying simply confirms your email address as a real one.

Web bullying

If the bullying is on a website (e.g. Facebook) tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying were face-to-face – even if you don't actually know the bully's identity. Bullying often occurs on social networking websites, like Facebook. It can take many forms, such as: A "friend" posts a status about you on their page which is unpleasant or embarrassing, a stranger or unwanted individual keeps trying to add you as a contact or a "friend" posts inappropriate things on your own page.

Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature. Your parent or teacher will help you do this.

Often you can select inappropriate or intimidating comments on many social networking websites (such as Facebook) and report them to Facebook. This will sometimes result in the comments being removed and it is a good first step to take, along with telling your parent or teacher about the comments.

Chat rooms and instant messaging

Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. And don't give out photos of yourself.

Don't accept emails or open files from people you don't know.

Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.

Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.

Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.

Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying.

Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile, email or any other accounts.

Three steps to stay out of harm's way

1. Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
2. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.
3. 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

The law is on your side

The **Protection from Harassment Act**, the **Malicious Communications Act 1988** and Section 43 of the **Telecommunications Act** may be used to combat cyberbullying. People may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months.