



GENEVA ENGLISH
SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING AND PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE POLICY

Statement:

At Geneva English School bullying and peer-on-peer abuse, is considered to be an extremely serious offence.

INTRODUCTION

Geneva English School expects all members of the school community to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure, whether at school or elsewhere, and to be protected when vulnerable, so that all may flourish without fear or unfair treatment or harassment.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the victim and the bullies. It affects the children who may witness violence and aggression and the distress of the victim. It damages the atmosphere of the school. Less aggressive pupils may be drawn into the taunting and tormenting of a victim by group pressures.

The school's policy on bullying is unequivocal: it is always unacceptable. Bullying is hurtful behaviour that usually occurs over a period of time. It is behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was calculated or intended to hurt or to upset the victim. It is behaviour that harasses, humiliates or intimidates others. It may take the form of teasing, verbal criticism and harassment on the grounds, for example, that someone has different coloured skin, the way they talk, their size or their name. Many experts say that bullying is associated with an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and 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.

Bullying and peer-on-peer abuse can cause lasting psychological damage to a victim and, in extreme cases, lead to suicide. All complaints should be taken seriously and pursued. Acting against bullying is a part of every teacher's duty of care, and that of all members of the school community.

Bullying and peer-on-peer abuse can manifest itself in several forms:

Physical – hitting, kicking, "play-fighting" (which may not be "play" for one of those involved); and hiding, taking or damaging belongings.

Verbal – aggressive name calling, teasing, mockery, insults. It is important to consider the effects that the name calling has upon the victim, rather than simply the actual words used which may seem to others to be harmless.

Emotional – being deliberately unfriendly, excluding someone from a group, activity or place, tormenting, spreading rumours, inciting others to do the same.

Racist – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity

Religious / cultural – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of religious

belief or other cultural issues

Sexual or sexist bullying – making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery

Homophobic – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of actual or perceived sexual orientation

For reasons related to special educational needs or disability – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of learning difficulties or other disability

Cyber bullying – the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones, email, social websites, text messages, cameras and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. Cyber bullying can take place outside of the normal school day and be directed towards the victim while he or she is at home. Silent phone calls or abusive texts or emails can be just as distressing as being bullied face to face. Cyber bullying can have a profound effect on a child as the technology allows information (or misinformation) to be distributed widely, instantly and directly to the child's home or mobile device. The victim can feel that there is nowhere available for him to escape from the bullying. *The School will take action against any pupil responsible for using electronic devices to bully another pupil even if the bullying is taking place outside of the grounds of the school* (Refer to [Acceptable Use Policy](#) and [E-safety Policy](#)).

The following policy applies to the whole school, to conduct both in and out of school time and on or off the school's premises should the Headmaster deem that the behaviour is damaging to the school and/other pupils.

Expectations of staff, pupils, parents and governors

(Refer also to the [Staff Code of Conduct](#), [Social Media Policy](#), [Behaviour Policy](#) and [Supervision of Pupils Policy](#).)

All members of the school community have a responsibility to show that they believe that any form of bullying is unacceptable and to set an example of positive behaviour which reflects that view. All members of the School community should help to create an atmosphere in which bullying will be spoken of openly, taken seriously and responded to with appropriate action.

As a school, we believe that it is unacceptable for any pupil to watch bullying and peer-on-peer abuse taking place and to do nothing about it. We encourage all pupils to bring their concerns to the attention of a member of staff and / or their parents. We create an atmosphere in which pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that the action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. Pupils need to know that not reporting incidents of bullying has the effect of protecting the bullies, and gives them the message that they can continue to act in this way. If a child is being bullied, feels tempted to bully or sees someone else being bullied, he/she should tell someone he/she trusts. They could tell:

- another pupil (their best friend, or an older pupil, Year 6 peer mentors)
- their parents
- any member of staff
- their Class Teacher/Tutor
- a member of SLT
- the DSL or Deputy DSLs

A parent who is concerned that a pupil (their own child or another pupil) may be being bullied or be subject to peer-on-peer abuse should report concerns in the first instance to their child's class teacher, subject teacher or tutor. Most concerns will be sufficiently resolved at this stage. In some instances, the member of staff may seek the help and guidance of the Assistant Head (Secondary) or the Heads of Upper or Lower School (Primary). More serious incidents may need to be investigated by the Deputy Head or DSL. All incidents of bullying will be logged by the Head of Pastoral Care and Lower School and discussed at SLT level.

GES expects staff, pupils, parents and governors to:

GES ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- treat other people with respect and sensitivity;
- think carefully before speaking or acting in a way which may cause another person to be upset;
- respect differences and variety;
- be sensitive to the fact that what may seem fun to some (especially when in a group) may seem much more threatening to others (especially an individual)
- show kindness and consideration to those who appear unhappy or vulnerable;
- make a stand against those who ignore or go against these aims.

INVOLVEMENT OF PUPILS AND STAFF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The Deputy Head and Assistant Head (Secondary) share the school's Anti-bullying policy and procedures with new staff as part of their induction, including reporting and recording (see below). All staff understand that confidentiality should never be promised to a child.

The School raises the awareness of staff to the issues described in this policy through training and discussion in staff meetings, and action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur. We ensure that children are supervised appropriately, especially at break times and in less formal learning situations, in order to avoid potential 'danger zones'. (Refer to [Supervision of Pupils Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct](#)).

PROMOTING A PRO-ACTIVE STANCE AGAINST BULLYING AND PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE AT GES

As a staff team, we promote, role model and reward positive relationships and kind behaviour on an ongoing basis (Refer to [Behaviour, Reward and Exclusion Policy](#)), as well as through one-off events (e.g.: Kindness Week, Anti-bullying Week).

During PSHCE sessions, other lessons and assemblies, children are taught the values and principles of:

- Kindness and thoughtfulness
- Rights of the individual
- Tolerance and respect of differences and diversity
- Social responsibility i.e., caring for and a duty towards all members of a community
- Appropriate reporting of rule-breaking, i.e. when telling is appropriate
- The difference between good and bad secrets
- Assertiveness
- Positive relationships (including through SRE)

In addition to this, we hold an Anti-Bullying Week on an annual basis, with children across the entire school focusing upon age-appropriate aspects of friendship and bullying in class, in assemblies and through whole-school activities (Refer to [PSHCE Scheme of Work](#)). As appropriate, children are introduced to ideas of stereotypes, discrimination, prejudice and the legal protection of characteristics such as gender, race, religion, faith, disability and sexuality.

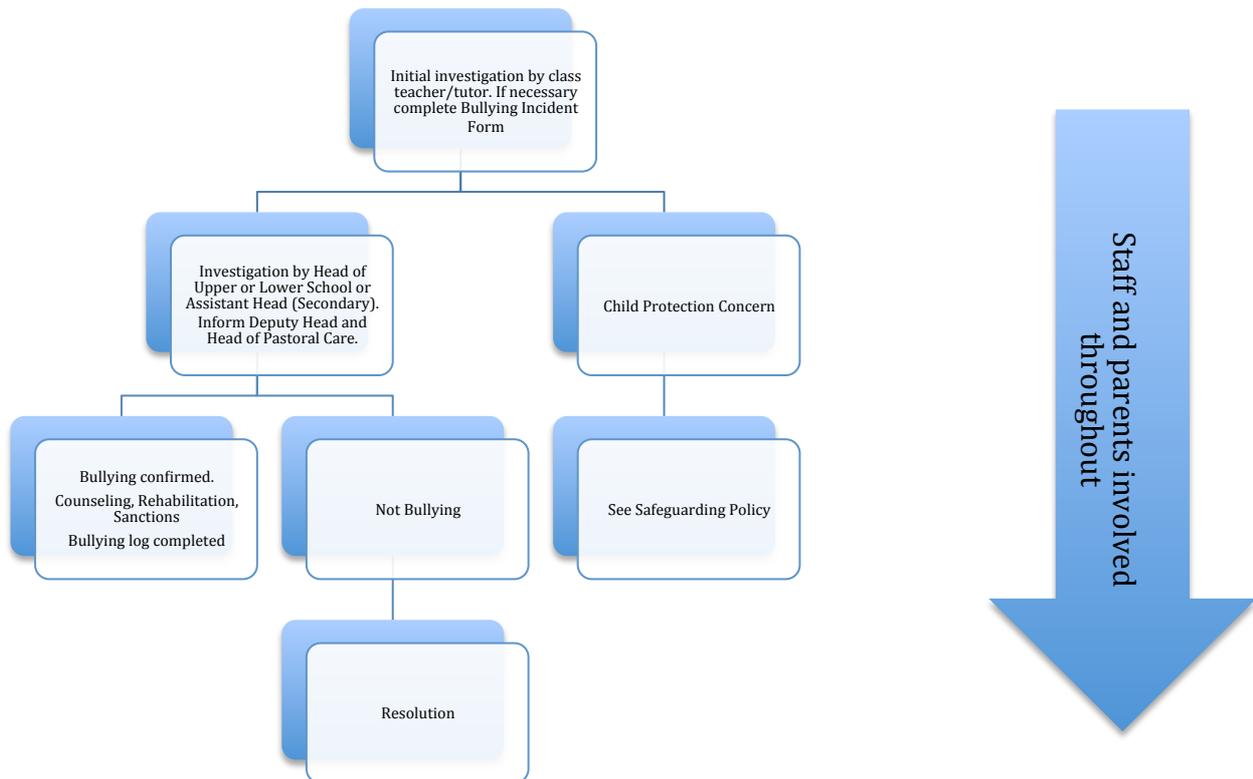
PROCEDURE IF A CHILD OR PARENT REPORTS ALLEGED BULLYING TO A MEMBER OF STAFF:

(see flowchart below)

As above, most concerns will be sufficiently resolved at class teacher/tutor stage. In some instances, the member of staff may seek the help and guidance of the Assistant Head (Secondary) or the Heads of Upper or Lower School (Primary). Once the incident has been established as bullying or peer-on-peer abuse the following protocol should be followed:

- During the initial report, while any child who is prepared to report bullying must be offered support and protection, staff must under no circumstances promise confidentiality – any action taken will necessarily involve others.
- The first member of staff involved should complete an incident form (see below) and copy it immediately to either the Deputy Head, Assistant Head (Secondary) or the DSL if appropriate, who will co-ordinate any investigation from then on. If the incident relates to safeguarding then the protocol set out in the Safeguarding Policy will be used. In the absence of the Deputy Head and Assistant Head (Secondary), incidents must be reported to the Head of Pastoral Care and/or Headmaster immediately. The incident form should be completed during or immediately after the meeting has taken place with the alleged victim of bullying/their parent, and include what was asked and what was said.
- A bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection 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 member of staff will report his/her concerns in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures to the DSL (Deputy Head) or Deputy DSLs as appropriate. ([Refer to Safeguarding Policy](#)),
- In all other cases, the Deputy Head or Assistant Head (Secondary) will be responsible in the first instance for the investigation of any incidents. The Deputy Head or Assistant Head (Secondary) will keep both the Headmaster, and the parents of all parties concerned informed of the situation. The investigation may include: talking to and/or written accounts from the children involved, their Class Teachers, subject teachers and/or tutors, parents and/or other staff who interact regularly with them. The investigation should be carried out in a sensitive and timely manner. Written records of all meetings with pupils should be kept by the Head of Pastoral Care at the Primary.
- Once the investigation is complete, a decision needs to be taken by the Deputy Head or Assistant Head (Secondary) as to whether bullying has taken place, or whether both parties were at fault or the incident was not as serious as initially described. The definition of bullying in the introduction to the policy should be used to make this judgement.
- If bullying is not judged to have taken place, then the Deputy Head or Assistant Head (Secondary) should take charge of the incident and support an amicable resolution with both parties.
- If bullying is judged to have taken place, then the perpetrator should be assured of counselling and rehabilitation, as well as appropriate sanctions. The school's [Behaviour, Reward and Exclusion Policy](#) and School Rules outline the expectations for children's behavior at GES, along with the rewards and sanctions that are used to help children achieve these under normal circumstances. Incidents of bullying may come to attention through the spots and stripes system (Primary) or the Flag to tutor system (Secondary), but the school regards bullying as serious enough to supersede this system and persistent inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. In addition to restorative approaches, such as counselling and rehabilitation, clearly established and persistent bullying may lead to suspension from the school, as laid out in [Behaviour, Reward and Exclusion Policy](#). The school places great emphasis on the intervention and support of parents in this process and they will have been involved at earlier stages. However, for particularly serious cases of bullying, or where a child continues to bully the victim after a previous incident has been addressed, if deemed necessary, the Headmaster will permanently exclude the individual from the School.
- Staff will be made aware of situations which require monitoring through staff briefings, meetings and the pastoral boards opposite the entrance to the staff room.

Procedure if a child or parent reports alleged bullying to a member of staff:



Nicky Fortune
Catherine Peart

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BULLYING INCIDENT FORM

Please give to the Deputy Head/Head of Pastoral Care as soon as possible.

Member of Staff.....

Date..... **Time**.....

Who was involved?

Who else was there?

What happened?

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What action did you take?

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Please write overleaf if you need to write further.