**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**Rationale**

At Pewsey Vale School, our vision is to be an outstanding school of first choice at the heart of our local community; this requires all staff and students to pursue excellence in their work and their behaviour, and to exemplify ‘The Pewsey Vale Way.’ We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our academy. If bullying does occur all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING academy; this means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

* 1. **Aims**

 The aims of this policy are:

* to actively promote and safeguard the welfare of students at The Pewsey Vale School;
* to maintain and drive a positive and supportive culture among all students and staff throughout The Pewsey Vale School; and
* to prevent bullying, detect it when it occurs, and respond to it appropriately on a case-by case basis.
* to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

 Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available to them.

Throughout the policy the term ‘parent’ is used to mean a student’s parent, carer or guardian.

* 1. **Statutory duties at the academy**

The Headteacher has a legal duty under the School Standard and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside of the The Pewsey Vale School, where it is reasonable to do so. Academies have a duty to ‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of students’ (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are free from bullying and discrimination. (Children Act 2004) Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by students (‘Safe to Learn’ DCSF 2007).

* 1. **Scope of this policy and links to other policies**

This policy applies at all times when the student is:

* Present at Pewsey Vale School; representing Pewsey Vale School or wearing the Pewsey Vale School uniform;
* travelling to or from Pewsey Vale School;
* on any Pewsey Vale School organised trips;
* associated with Pewsey Vale School at any time;
* in the care of Pewsey Vale School or not and Pewsey Vale School becomes aware of an incident of bullying that affects a student’s ability to access education fully.

This policy shall also apply to students at all times and places in circumstances where failing to apply this policy may:

* affect the health, safety or well-being of a member of Pewsey Vale School community or a member of the public;
* have repercussions for the orderly running of Pewsey Vale School;
* bring Pewsey Vale School into disrepute

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

* Preventing and tackling bullying:
* Cyberbullying:
* Working together to safeguard children (DfE, March 2015);
* Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2021)

**2. Guidance and Procedures**

# 2.1 Definition of bullying

Bullying affects lots of people and can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in [sporting](https://www.bullying.co.uk/general-advice/advice-about-bullying-in-sports-clubs/) teams, in friendship or family groups or in the [workplace.](https://www.bullying.co.uk/bullying-at-work/workplace-bullying/)

Although there is no legal definition of bullying, we define it as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability. Bullying may be, but not limited to:

* **Physical**: hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting, or taking, damaging or hiding possessions
* **Verbal**: name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, making threats or demanding money
* **Exclusionary behaviour**: intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group
* **General unkindness**: spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, mobile phone texts or emails;
* **Low level disruptive behaviour**: wearing "banter" and "horseplay" over a pro-longed period of time;
* **Cyberbullying**: bullying that takes place using technology; this may include bullying through the use of mobile electronic devices, social media or gaming sites
* **Racist and Religious Bullying**: A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status;
* **Sexist and Transphobic Bullying**: includes any behaviour, whether physical or non- physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon by boys or girls;
* **Homophobic Bullying**: targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation);
* **Disablist Bullying**: targets a young person based on their disability, special needs, or health needs. This can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way or exploiting a certain aspect of the victim’s disability.
* **Sexual bullying**: sexual insults, sexual language/gestures, name calling, unwanted physical contact, sexual violence or harassment.

Bullying is always unacceptable and will not be dismissed as being normal or as "banter" or simply "part of growing up". Bullying will not be tolerated at Pewsey Vale School because:

* it is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage and even suicide;
* it interferes with a student's right to enjoy their learning and leisure time free from intimidation

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

* Is meant to hurt - the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it
* Happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a ‘one off’ incident
* Involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

**2.2 Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying**

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Students who are being bullied may not report it; however, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absence or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from the school. All staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

Students who are bullying others also need support to help them to understand and change their behaviour.

All students will be encouraged to report bullying by:

* Talking to a member of staff of their choice
* Writing a statement about the bullying concern and giving it to a member of staff
* Contacting local and national support agencies for advice/support
* Reporting to a member of their peer group such as the anti-bullying ambassadors
* Talking to parents

Parents are encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the academy in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with students or their families can lead to problems escalating and staff should put measures in place to combat this.

Not all individuals recognise their behaviour is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions.

If left unchallenged or dismissed low level disruption can have a wearing, and significant impact on targeted individuals exposed to such behaviour.

Bullying may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong. A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message/direct message or email) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

Bullying behaviour may be of such a nature that safeguarding concerns are raised. Such behaviour may include hazing behaviour, initiation rituals or any form of sexual harassment. See our Safeguarding and Child protection policy for our approach to peer-on-peer abuse. Concerns about a student's welfare because they are the perpetrator or victim of bullying behaviour must be reported in accordance with the safeguarding policy and procedures and appropriate action taken, considering Swindon Children and Families threshold framework.

Pewsey Vale School will always treat a bullying incident as giving rise to a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

**2.3 Responding to reports about bullying**

**Students:** can report it in one of two ways;

* tell their Tutor or any member of staff
* tell their parent/carers;
* tell an anti-bullying ambassador

**Parent/Carers:** Parents or Carers who are concerned that their child is being bullied should inform their child's Tutor or a member of the Pastoral team without delay.

The Staff member will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

* If bullying is suspected or reported, staff will respond quickly by offering, advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim.
* Take a clear account of what has happened.
* Pass the information on to relevant Pastoral Team member.

The pastoral team will agree on the best strategy for dealing with the matter.

If the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the matter should be reported in line with our Safeguarding and Child protection policy and procedures before further investigation is carried out.

Students and staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

* Offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of the Pastoral Team
* Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed
* An offer of continuous support through the tutor and Pastoral Team
* The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. Educational Psychology, academy counsellor and Pastoral support officers, where appropriate

**2.4 Managing the allegation:**

The relevant member of the pastoral team will normally see the victim and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses as soon as possible and form an initial view of the allegation. They will consider:

* the nature of the incident(s): physical? verbal? exclusionary? etc.
* is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group? Is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?
* has physical injury been caused?
* who should be informed: Headteacher? Parents/Carers? the Designated Safeguarding Lead?
* children's social care? the police?
* can the alleged bully be questioned without disclosing the victim's identity?

**What is the likely outcome if the allegation proves to be correct?**

 At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:

* there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully;
* or the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed.

In cases where the pastoral team believes that serious bullying behaviour has occurred involving a student or has recurred after warnings have been given to the "bully" they will refer the matter to the Senior Leader for Pastoral Care.

**The Senior Leader for Pastoral Care will**:

* interview the alleged victim, alleged bully and any witnesses separately, in order to establish the facts of the case. The Senior Leader for Pastoral Care will review the case with the Head of House to decide on further actions.
* In some cases, the Senior Leader for Pastoral Care will discuss it with the Headteacher, and decide on the action to be taken in accordance with this policy.
* The Senior Leader for Pastoral Care will ensure the parents/carers of the victim and bully are notified giving them details of the case and the action being taken. Such action may include further investigation in accordance with the Academy's behaviour policy.

**When a complaint of bullying behaviour is upheld, the range of responses may include one or more of the following:**

* consideration as to whether the bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern and if so, the academy’s safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed;
* advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim, including support from external services where appropriate;
* advice and support to the bully in trying to change his / her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning;
* consideration of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour.
* a supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict (only with the victim's express agreement); we call this restorative justice and restorative conversation;
* a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with The Pewsey Vale School’s behaviour policy. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a student may be moved to another school in accordance with The Pewsey Vale School behaviour policy. Any disciplinary action will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, considering any special educational needs or disabilities and the needs of vulnerable students;
* action to break up a "gang/group";
* confiscation of mobile electronic devices,
* increased monitoring procedures or limiting access to the internet and email facilities if cyberbullying;
* moving either the bully or victim to another Tutor group or classes after consultation with the student, his / her parents/carers and the relevant staff;
* involving children's social care or the police;
* notifying the parents/carers of one or both students about the case and the action which has been taken;
* such other action as may appear to the Headteacher to be appropriate.

**Staff:**

This policy focuses mainly on the bullying of students by students although it is recognised that a staff member could be a victim and on occasion may be perceived to be guilty of bullying. The Pewsey Vale School has a zero tolerance of the bullying of staff, whether by students, parents/carers or other colleagues. Staff members who are concerned about being bullied or harassed should refer the matter to their line manager, a senior member of staff or the Headteacher. Students and parents/carers who feel that a member of staff is bullying should report this in accordance with the procedures set out above.

**Parental support**

Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and the academy. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the Complaints Procedure.

Where a student is involved in bullying outside of the academy e.g. in the street or through the use of the internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the academy in addressing their child’s behaviour, for example: restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone. A referral of the family to external support agencies will be made where appropriate.

**2.5 Preventative Measures**

 The academy will:

* Raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PHSRE lessons. Tutor time, assemblies, subject areas and informal discussion, as appropriate, in attempt to eradicate such behaviour.
* Participate in national and local initiatives such as Anti-Bullying week.
* Seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive anti-bullying education.
* Consider the use of specific strategies, for example: peer mentoring on a regular basis and implement them as appropriate, subject to available resources.

* 1. **Promotion of this policy**

The policy and methods for reporting bullying concerns will be promoted throughout the academy; for example, information packs for new students and staff and through regular awareness raising activities with students and their families.

* 1. **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The Senior Leader for Pastoral Care and Behaviour for Learning will lead on the implementation of the policy and act as the link person with the Local Authority.

They will regularly monitor any bullying incidents and monitor the results of all incidents, the actions taken and the associated outcomes.

**HELP ORGANISATIONS:**

ACE Education Advice and Training 0300 011 5142

Child Law Advice 0300 330 5485

Family Lives 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying UK [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

LGBT Foundation 0345 330 3030

Childnet International [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

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| **Headteacher:** |  | **Date:** |  |
| **Chair of Governing Body:** |  | **Date:** |  |

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| **Date** | **Review Date** | **Member of Staff with Responsibility** | **Nominated Governor** |

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