

Queen's College, London
Queen's College Preparatory School
(including Early Years Foundation Stage)

Anti-Bullying Policy



*Due for review during
Michaelmas Term 2024*

Policy Statement

Queen's College, London comprises of Queen's College ("the College"), operating at 43-49 Harley Street, [for pupils aged 11 to 18 years] and Queen's College Preparatory School ("the Preparatory School") operating at 59-61 Portland Place [for pupils aged 4-11], collectively referred to in this policy as the School unless otherwise stated.

This policy applies to all pupils and staff at the School irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the School when or if bullying behaviour occurs. This policy is provided to all parents, pupils and staff, is available on the School's website and is also available on request from the School Office. This policy provides guidance for all pupils, staff and parents about recognising bullying and what to do if bullying occurs.

The School is committed to opposing bullying in all its forms, and takes the harm done by this behaviour extremely seriously. The School will respond to all instances of bullying that are disclosed or reported.

It is important that all members of the School community recognise that bullying behaviour is not acceptable in any circumstances. All pupils and staff have the right to attend a school where they feel safe, free from harassment and where they know that any worries they have will be listened to and acted upon.

This policy has been drawn up with reference to non-statutory DfE advice [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(2017\)](#) and [Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff \(2014\)](#).

It also has regard to:

Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, 2017)

Working together to safeguard children (DfE, 2018)

Keeping children safe in education (DfE, 2023)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and Schools (DfE, 2021)

Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, 2022)

The Deputy Head Pastoral at the College and the Prep School will review and make revisions to this policy on an annual basis, or more regularly as required taking into account any guidance published by the DfE together with the record of any bullying incidents.

The Council will review this policy annually and approve any amendments to the policy.

Aims of the Policy

This policy is designed to be clear, practicable and sensible; hence, it is not exclusive, cannot cater for every eventuality and does not lay down rigid rules. It enshrines a central tenet of the philosophy of the School: that the spiritual and moral welfare of the pupil is crucial for the development of happy, confident and courteous individuals who integrate successfully with their peers and contribute thoughtfully to life in the community. In order to achieve this, the School aims to prevent bullying and to deal effectively with bullying if it does occur. The School will do this by:

- maintaining an environment characterised by warmth, positive regard and mutual respect, so that bullying will be less likely
- raising awareness of bullying and promoting good peer relationships through the curriculum and other activities including the annual Anti-Bullying/Kindness week
- having clear procedures and action plans to deal with instances of bullying
- developing effective strategies for recognising and supporting victims of bullying, including victims of homophobic bullying, cyberbullying and bullying related to race, religion, sex and culture
- ensuring that all staff know what to do if they come across bullying, that they treat incidents seriously and that they are consistent in their approach
- assuring parents and pupils that all reports of bullying will be treated seriously.

Definition

There is no legal definition of bullying, but the Department of Education (DfE) defines it as, 'Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.' Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the 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.

Although the definition of bullying includes a repetitive element, the School will be vigilant about seemingly isolated incidents that can form a pattern or the development of an asymmetrical power relationship.

The School recognises that pupils with protected characteristics, including those relating to gender, sexual orientation and disability, including SEN, may face an increased vulnerability to the impact of bullying, without outwardly showing any signs of this. While the School takes all cases of bullying seriously, it recognises the heightened vulnerability of pupils in these categories.

Some of the different types of bullying include:

- Emotional (being unfriendly, threatening looks/gestures, tormenting such as hiding belongings)
- Physical (pushing, hitting, shoving or any form of physical violence)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments) or sexist comments (related to a person's gender or gender reassignment)
- Exclusion (deliberately ignoring and refusing to allow someone to join in)
- Interference with possessions (hiding, stealing and destroying belongings)
- Bullying on the basis of perceived racial, religious or cultural differences
- Bullying on the basis of a person's special educational needs, learning difficulty, disability, health or appearance
- Homophobic bullying (related to a person's sexuality or perceived sexuality)
- Cyberbullying includes all forms of bullying involving the internet, social media, chat rooms, mobile phones, apps, email, text messages, photographs, etc. See the E Safety policies for the College and the Prep School.
- Relational aggression is described as behaviours that deliberately harm others through damage to relationships or feelings of acceptance, friendship or group inclusion. It refers to deliberate actions that intend to negatively affect an individual's friendships or reputation. Such actions, if ignored, can lead to social exclusion. Relational aggression can be covert or overt. Examples of this type of bullying include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours and gossip; imitating or mocking a pupil; teasing or embarrassing a pupil and coercive behaviour.

No form of bullying will be tolerated by the School. Bullying is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and to those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage or self-harm.

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal and civil laws that apply to threatening behaviour and harassment for which there can be consequences outside the School. 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 or e-mail) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

Child on Child Abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms including bullying. Child on child abuse should be treated as a Child Protection and safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Abuse of this nature should **never** be tolerated or passed off as 'banter'; 'just having a laugh'; or 'part of growing up'. Full details of the measures the School will put in place to minimise the risk of child on child abuse, and how it will deal with allegations of this, including how victims will be supported, are contained in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to travel by public transport or begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) or begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged or has possessions which are damaged or 'gone missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully) or has other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen) or stops eating
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings

- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- spends time online in isolation

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Prevention

The School aims to prevent bullying by establishing a culture in which bullying is not tolerated and where it is seen as the responsibility of all members of the School community to report any instances of bullying. The School promotes this culture through varied means, some of which are outlined below:

- the School holds an Anti-Bullying themed week every Autumn term which encourages pupils to tackle bullying and discusses ways in which bullying can be prevented
- the curriculum is used as a vital means of teaching pupils how to manage feelings associated with bullying and specific Anti-Bullying issues are addressed in PSHE, Thrive lessons at the College, Circle time at the Prep School and Prayers (Assemblies) and by Form Tutors
- pupils are encouraged to develop a strong sense of self-belief
- raises awareness of bullying through publicly displayed Anti-Bullying material in areas such as classrooms, nurse's notice board, homework diaries
- develops pupils' awareness and understanding
- develops staff awareness and understanding through INSET
- ensures that all new staff and NQTs are aware of the School's policy and are given appropriate support and training
- communicates fully and regularly with parents
- develops parents' awareness and understanding, through parent workshops

Bullying is regularly discussed in staff meetings across the School. The result of these meetings is to feedback information to senior leaders about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who seems to be isolated, any growing "power base" and any known conflict between pupils so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying incidents.

The College

More specifically, the College and the Prep School also do the following to establish a culture where bullying is not tolerated.

The Prep School

The Prep School provides opportunities to explore bullying as a topic through the flexibility of the creative curriculum, but especially during PSHE lessons, Form/Circle Time and Assemblies. Topics covered include why bullying happens, alternative ways of behaving and strategies for dealing with difficulties. The use of role play is considered as an important way for pupils to explore and resolve potential issues. Weekly, age-appropriate assemblies are recognised as an important forum to raise awareness and restate expectations of behaviour.

The School Values of Courage; Compassion; Curiosity; Creativity and Collaboration promote positive behaviour and are regularly reinforced in each class and in assemblies. Positive behaviour is encouraged and expected at all times. Further information on this can be found in QCPS' Behaviour policy.

As detailed in QCPS' E-Safety policy, pupils are taught about the safe and appropriate use of the internet and this covers cyber-bullying.

The Prep School also links up with the College for various School events which promote Anti-Bullying and role model opportunities. This includes trained Anti-Bullying Ambassadors who will support a range of initiatives throughout the year.

The College

At the College, there are a number of ways in which pupils are encouraged to raise general issues of concern, including concerns about bullying. This includes the College's Parliament, which meets fortnightly and is representative of all year groups. There are trained Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in every year who meet fortnightly with the Director of Pastoral Education to discuss strategies and initiatives to combat bullying. The Ambassadors review the Anti-Bullying policy annually and analyse the results of the Anti-Bullying survey (which every pupil completes). Their feedback is used to devise and implement effective Anti-Bullying strategies. The Ambassadors also run informal drop-in sessions where pupils can raise concerns with a peer or older pupil.

Well over half of pupils in the Senior College are fully trained Peer Mentors who are 'listening ears' and who are trained to report any incidents of bullying. Pupils in the

Junior College Peer Mentor pupils from the Prep School and are also trained to report any incidents of bullying. The Prefects meet with the Principal and the Senior Tutor weekly to raise any concerns that they have, including any they may have about bullying. The College also has a designated worry email address where pupils who don't have the confidence to raise concerns about bullying in person can do so via email. Anti-Bullying presentations are delivered annually during Anti-Bullying week and the Pastoral Deputy Head delivers an Anti-Bullying presentation to new C3 pupils as part of the Thrive programme.

Procedures

Incidents of bullying may be identified in several ways. These include:

- disclosure to a member of staff by the individual being bullied or by the parents of the individual or other parents
- disclosure to another pupil by the individual being bullied
- witnesses to specific bullying events and
- suspicion of bullying based upon the indicating factors.

In all cases an allegation of bullying will be treated in a serious, open-minded and fair way, and will be investigated thoroughly.

On hearing or suspecting bullying behaviour, a member of staff should first respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim. They should then make a written record of what has happened and pass on the information immediately to the pupil's form tutor, Year Tutor, or, in the College the Year Tutor or Head of Section.

An appropriate member of staff will be appointed to speak to the alleged victim(s), aggressor(s) and witness(es). All pupils will be permitted to tell their version of events. Written records will be kept of all discussions.

If it is clear that there has been a misunderstanding that does not require further investigation or disciplinary action to be taken, this will be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim(s) and the alleged bully(ies) will be guided on how to modify their behaviour so that the misunderstanding does not occur again. If appropriate for an incident in the College, a Resolve session may be arranged using trained Resolve Peer Mentors; the Councillor or a member of the pastoral staff team. The situation will be monitored.

If it is believed that bullying has taken place, the appropriate Deputy Head Pastoral should be informed, and they will decide on the appropriate course of action. This

may include additional investigation taking place and pupils may be interviewed. Again, all pupils will be permitted to tell their version of events. Written records of interviews will be made and agreed by the individuals involved.

The parents of the pupils involved will be informed by the Year Tutor, Head of Section or Deputy Head Pastoral, if it is established that bullying has taken place and further action is required. Parents will also be informed of the outcome whilst respecting the privacy of the other pupils involved.

In serious cases, the action required may include further investigation in accordance with the School's Behaviour, Management and Discipline policy and Expulsion, Removal and Review policy.

If at any stage there is a concern that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm, including the risk of self-harm, a report must be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and the procedures in that policy will be followed.

Action by the School

Where bullying behaviour has taken place, the range of actions to be taken by the School will include one or more of the following:

- Providing support and advice for the victim, including support from external services where appropriate. The victim will be closely monitored by a nominated adult who will work in partnership with the victim's parents
- Providing support to the bully to help them understand the effect of their action upon the victim and to modify their behaviour. This may also include clear instructions on expectation of behaviour going forward
- Consideration given to 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. Any concerns about risk of harm will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Disciplinary action against the bully in accordance with the School's Behaviour Management and Discipline policy. In cases of very serious bullying or persistent bullying, a pupil may be required to leave the School permanently in accordance with the School's Expulsion, Removal and Review policy
- Informing other staff of the matter on a need-to-know basis and monitoring the position for as long as necessary, working with parents as necessary

- Such other action as may appear to the Deputy Head Pastoral or Headmistress of the Prep School/ Principal of the College as appropriate

Records

Staff maintain records of the welfare and development of individual pupils. In addition, every complaint or report of bullying must be recorded. All records are logged in a central file that is kept in the appropriate Pastoral Deputy Head's office. The Pastoral Deputy Head monitors these records in order to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the School as a whole, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's approach.

The School will distinguish from these records any incidents of bullying which are based on protected characteristics. This will help the School to monitor their success in meeting other standards such as instilling values of tolerance and respect and actively promoting the well-being of pupils.

Appendix 1. Guidance for Pupils

If you think that you are being bullied - never be afraid to ask for help from any member of staff, a friend, a prefect or, in the College, a Peer Mentor, or Anti-Bullying ambassador.

Pupil's guide to how to respond if you are being bullied

If you are being bullied the following responses should help:

1. Explain to the bully that their words/actions are upsetting; he/she may not be aware of this. However, if the bullying continues try not to show your feelings.
2. Walk away quickly and confidently, even if you don't feel that way inside.
3. If you are different in any way, be proud of it – it's good to be an individual.
4. The bully will not stop if they think that they can get away with such behaviour. Discuss the problem with your friends, tell a member of staff, or ask your friends to tell a member of staff on your behalf or speak to a Prefect. In the College you can also speak to an Anti-Bullying ambassador, a Peer Mentor, or use the Worry email address.

Pupil's guide to how to respond if you think someone is being bullied and how to prevent bullying

You can help to stop bullying:

1. If the pupil being bullied is in any danger, fetch help. If they are not being bullied, your presence may ease the situation so remain together.
2. Show that you and your friends disapprove.
3. Give sympathy and support to others who may be bullied.
4. Be careful about teasing or making personal remarks. If you think they might not find your comments funny don't say them.
5. If you know of serious bullying tell someone. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell.

Appendix 2. Guidance for Parents

Whenever a serious case of bullying is uncovered the parents or guardian of both the victim and the bully would normally be informed either in writing or by personal contact.

If your daughter is being bullied

Parents along with peers will probably be the first to hear of a bullying incident. Parents should contact their daughter's Form Tutor, Year Tutor, Head of Section, Deputy Head Pastoral, Head of Prep, Head of Pre-Prep, Prep School Headmistress or the Principal if they are worried.

It is essential to stay calm, supportive and find out the facts of the situation; a situation of alleged bullying can be complex to understand as it is possible that the parties involved with have varying perceptions of the events under investigation. Reassurance will be needed to persuade your daughter that she has done the right thing by telling you. You may find it helpful to have the following checklist at your side to ensure that correct information is passed to the school:

- Who was involved?
- Where did it take place, when and how often?
- Why did it take place?
- What form did the bullying take?

When you inform the School of these details, you will be told how the School will proceed. The procedures set out in this policy will be followed and we will work with you as required. Be reassured that this will be managed sensitively with the needs of all the pupils involved carefully considered.

If your daughter is involved in the bullying

It is important to work with the School to modify the patterns of behaviour which are causing your daughter to bully. Do not panic and blame yourself. Acknowledge that these things do happen and the School has mechanisms in place to deal with this issue. It is helpful to recognise some of the reasons why pupils behave in this way from time to time.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They are not aware of how hurtful it is
- They are copying the behaviour of older siblings or people they admire
- They have a temporary difficulty integrating in their peer group
- They are bullying others because of encouragement from friends

- They are going through a difficult time personally and need help
- They have not yet learnt satisfactory ways for making firm relationships.

To stop your daughter from bullying others:

- Talk with your daughter and help them to understand that what they are doing is unacceptable as it makes other pupils unhappy
- Discourage other members of the family from using aggressive behaviour in order to get what they want
- Suggest ways of joining in activities with other pupils without bullying
- Liaise with the school: Form Tutor, Year Tutor, Head of Section, Pastoral Deputy Head, the Prep School Headmistress or the Principal.
- Make time to have regular chats about how things are going at school
- Check that your daughter has identified an adult at school to whom they can go to if they have a problem or are worried about anything,

Please note that the School will want and will need to take action if bullying occurs. The matter will be sensitively handled but it needs to be effective. Action will be taken in accordance with this policy, together with the procedures in the School's Behaviour policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures, as necessary.

Guidance

The DfE has published the following guidance document for parents: [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying](#).

Other useful organisations providing support for parents dealing with specific bullying issues

include: www.kidscape.org.uk www.nspcc.org.uk www.youngminds.org.uk www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk www.familylives.org.uk www.childline.org.uk