

BHS Anti Bullying Policy

1. Document control

Applies to: all pupils, staff, agency staff, volunteers, contractors, proprietors, and parents / carers where their conduct affects implementation of this policy

Proprietor / Headteacher: Luke Steele

DSL: Role 2: Lead Guide & DSL

Deputy DSL: Role 3: Assistant Guide & Deputy DSL

Policy owner: Proprietor / Headteacher

Linked documents: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Behaviour Policy; Online Safety Policy; SEND Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; Complaints Policy; PSHE / Relationships Education Policy; Equality / Accessibility / Inclusion policy set; searching / confiscation procedure where relevant

Review cycle: annual, and sooner following any serious incident, complaint trend, safeguarding review, inspection finding, or material change in school operation

2. Purpose

This policy sets out how Beaufort House School will:

- prevent bullying;
- identify it early;
- respond to it effectively;
- protect children who are harmed;
- address the conduct of those responsible;
- maintain a culture in which cruelty, intimidation and humiliation are not normalised.

3. Core principles

BHS will operate on the following principles:

1. bullying is unacceptable and will be acted on;

2. prevention matters as much as response;
3. children must be able to report concerns safely and be taken seriously;
4. the child who has been harmed must be protected first;
5. the child displaying bullying behaviour must be held accountable and, where needed, supported to change;
6. repeated low level cruelty is still serious;
7. Prejudice based bullying and sexualised bullying require particular seriousness;
8. online bullying is real bullying and will not be downgraded because it happened through a device.

4. Scope

This policy applies:

- on the school site;
- during arrival, dismissal, lunch and transitions;
- during educational visits, PE, exhibitions and all school led offsite activity;
- to online conduct and offsite behaviour where there is a sufficient connection to the School, the welfare of a BHS child is affected, or school life is materially disrupted.

5. Definition of bullying

For the purposes of BHS, bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. That remains the core DfE definition.

Bullying may include:

- Name calling, mocking, taunting or threatening;
- hitting, pushing, tripping, damaging belongings or physical intimidation;
- deliberate exclusion, isolation or humiliation;

- spreading rumours or false allegations;
- coercion, blackmail or manipulation;
- online abuse, including repeated hostile messages, group chat intimidation or fake accounts;
- Prejudice based bullying connected to race, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics;
- bullying based on SEND, appearance, family circumstances, social background, attainment or perceived difference.

Bullying is not the same as every one off disagreement, accidental upset or ordinary peer conflict. However, repeated cruelty, power imbalance, deliberate humiliation or targeted exclusion must not be dismissed as normal fall out.

6. Relationship to safeguarding

Some bullying incidents are behaviour matters. Some are safeguarding matters. Some are both.

At BHS:

- bullying linked to sexual harassment, sexual violence, coercive control, significant emotional harm, discriminatory abuse, serious online harm or threats of violence must be considered under safeguarding procedures immediately;
- child on child abuse will never be minimised as banter or part of growing up;
- staff must refer to the DSL or deputy DSL without delay where safeguarding may be engaged.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 Proprietor / Headteacher

The proprietor / headteacher is responsible for ensuring that:

- the School has a clear anti bullying policy;
- bullying is addressed through behaviour, safeguarding, curriculum and culture;

- staff are trained and supported to implement the policy consistently;
- serious incidents and patterns are reviewed;
- parents can see that the School takes bullying seriously and responds credibly.

7.2 DSL and Deputy DSL

The DSL and deputy DSL must be involved where:

- bullying may amount to child on child abuse;
- there is significant emotional harm;
- there is serious online abuse;
- discriminatory or sexualised bullying may indicate wider risk;
- the child harmed is particularly vulnerable;
- there is reason to suspect wider safeguarding concerns.

7.3 Staff

All staff must:

- model respectful conduct;
- challenge cruelty and unkindness early;
- report concerns promptly;
- record incidents accurately;
- support children to speak up;
- avoid minimising repeated unkindness, exclusion or intimidation;
- distinguish between ordinary conflict and actual bullying while still acting early when a pattern is emerging.

7.4 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- report concerns promptly and factually;
- avoid escalating incidents through gossip, parent WhatsApp groups or public accusations;
- work with the School's investigation and support process;
- support children in telling the truth and engaging in repair where required.

7.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- treat others with respect;
- tell an adult if they are being bullied or see someone else being bullied;
- not join in exclusion, mockery, pile-ons or online cruelty;
- understand that standing by and encouraging bullying can also be serious misconduct.

8. Anti bullying culture at BHS

BHS is a learner driven school, but it is not a child governed moral vacuum. Adults remain responsible for safety, dignity, boundaries and intervention.

The School will therefore build an anti bullying culture through:

- calm adult authority;
- clear norms for speech and conduct;
- early correction of mockery, exclusion and unkindness;
- consistent use of behaviour and safeguarding systems;
- strong supervision in known pressure points;
- curriculum work on relationships, dignity, courage, conflict, truthfulness and repair;

- rapid follow up where patterns begin to emerge.

9. Forms of bullying BHS will address explicitly

BHS will address all forms of bullying, including:

- physical bullying;
- verbal bullying;
- social or relational bullying;
- cyberbullying;
- sexualised bullying;
- discriminatory and prejudice based bullying;
- bullying linked to SEND or disability;
- bullying based on appearance, background, faith or family circumstances.

10. Spark and Discovery context

Because BHS serves children aged 4 to 11, bullying prevention must be phase sensitive.

In Spark, bullying may present through repeated exclusion from play, controlling behaviour, deliberate intimidation, repeated unkind talk, targeting vulnerability, or copying cruel behaviour seen elsewhere. Staff must not over label every childish conflict as bullying, but they must not excuse repeated targeting because the children are young.

In Discovery, bullying may become more deliberate, social, sustained or covert, including online behaviour, reputational harm, group based exclusion, prejudice based comments or coordinated unkindness.

The School's response must therefore be developmentally aware without becoming permissive.

11. Reporting concerns

Children, staff and parents must have clear routes to report bullying concerns.

At BHS, concerns may be reported:

- directly to any trusted adult;
- to the relevant guide or teacher in the first instance;
- to the DSL or deputy DSL where safeguarding may be engaged;
- to the headteacher where seriousness, pattern or complaint level requires that.

Children will be taught that:

- reporting is not tattling;
- the School would rather know early than late;
- they will be taken seriously.

12. Immediate response to a report

When a bullying concern is raised, staff must:

- take it seriously;
- make the immediate situation safe;
- listen carefully and calmly;
- avoid promising secrecy;
- avoid instant conclusions without checking facts;
- report and record promptly.

If there is immediate risk, the child or children involved must be separated and supervised as needed. If there is possible safeguarding risk, the DSL or deputy DSL must be informed straight away.

13. Investigation and fact finding

BHS will investigate proportionately and promptly. The aim is to establish:

- what happened;
- who was involved;

- whether there is a pattern;
- what harm has occurred;
- what immediate and longer term action is needed.

Investigation may include:

- speaking to the child who reported harm;
- speaking to the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators;
- speaking to witnesses;
- reviewing relevant messages, screenshots or digital reports where appropriate;
- checking past concerns, behaviour logs and safeguarding records;
- considering whether the issue is one-off conflict, repeated bullying, group intimidation, discriminatory abuse or safeguarding-level harm.

The School will avoid two common errors:

- overreacting to a single disagreement as if it were proven bullying;
- underreacting to a repeated pattern simply because each incident looks small in isolation.

14. Protecting the child who has been harmed

The child who has been harmed must be protected and supported.

Depending on the case, BHS may:

- increase supervision;
- separate children;
- adjust seating, grouping or routines;
- put a safety plan in place;

- create a named adult check in arrangement;
- monitor online or relational risk more closely;
- support confidence, belonging and reintegration;
- coordinate with parents.

The School will not require a harmed child to “sort it out themselves” where adult intervention is required.

15. Responding to the child who has bullied

Children who bully must face clear consequences and, where appropriate, support to change behaviour.

Responses may include:

- a formal warning;
- structured apology or repair;
- loss of privilege or responsibility;
- closer supervision;
- separation from particular peers;
- behaviour support plan;
- parent meeting;
- safeguarding review;
- sanctions under the Behaviour Policy;
- same day collection, temporary suspension from attendance, or place review in serious or repeated cases.

BHS will not use restorative approaches as an excuse to avoid consequences where consequences are needed.

16. Restorative work and repair

Where appropriate and safe, BHS may use restorative work to:

- help the child understand the impact of their behaviour;
- require ownership and truthful acknowledgment;
- support repair of relationships;
- reduce repetition.

Restorative work will only be used where it is suitable to the age, seriousness and safety context. It will not be forced on a harmed child where that would be unsafe, coercive or premature.

17. Cyberbullying and online bullying

Cyberbullying will be treated with the same seriousness as face to face bullying.

This includes:

- hostile or threatening messages;
- repeated group chat targeting;
- social exclusion through digital platforms;
- sharing humiliating images, memes or voice notes;
- anonymous accounts or impersonation;
- persistent mockery through gaming or messaging platforms.

Where relevant, the School may:

- require preservation of evidence;
- involve the DSL;
- involve parents quickly;
- use behaviour sanctions;
- make referrals to police or other agencies where threshold is met.

18. Prejudice based bullying

Bullying related to race, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics is especially serious because it combines bullying harm with discrimination risk and wider cultural harm.

At BHS:

- Prejudice based language will be challenged directly;
- incidents will be recorded clearly;
- patterns will be reviewed;
- safeguarding, behaviour and equality implications will all be considered.

19. Sexualised bullying and harmful sexual behaviour

Bullying involving sexual comments, sexual rumours, image based abuse, unwanted sexualised conduct, coercion or humiliation may amount to child on child abuse and must be handled accordingly.

At BHS:

- such incidents must be referred to the DSL or deputy DSL immediately;
- they will not be dealt with as ordinary teasing;
- sanctions and protective action may both be required.

20. SEND, disability and vulnerability

Some children are more vulnerable to bullying, including children with SEND, disabled children, children who communicate differently, children who struggle socially, and children who are anxious or isolated.

BHS will therefore:

- monitor vulnerability and pattern risk;
- make reasonable adjustments to reporting and support;
- ensure staff do not mistake bullying impact for mere oversensitivity;

- ensure children with additional needs are not set up to fail socially through poor adult structuring.

21. Supervision, hotspots and pattern analysis

BHS will identify and monitor places, times and contexts where bullying risk may be higher, such as:

- arrival and dismissal;
- lunch and transitions;
- toilets or circulation areas;
- less structured moments;
- off-site travel or Rec-day movement if relevant later;
- digital spaces where children interact outside direct view.

Where patterns emerge, the School will act on them operationally, not merely note them.

22. Curriculum and prevention work

BHS will address bullying prevention through curriculum and formation work, including:

- respectful relationships;
- empathy and perspective taking;
- speaking up and seeking help;
- conflict versus bullying;
- online conduct;
- prejudice and respect for difference;
- courage in bystanders;
- repair after wrongdoing.

This work will sit across PSHE / Relationships Education, SMSC, behaviour systems, online safety and the daily culture of the School.

23. Parents and communication

Where bullying is substantiated or there is a serious concern, BHS will usually communicate with parents of the children directly involved.

Communication will normally cover:

- the nature of the concern;
- immediate action taken;
- whether there is a safeguarding element;
- support and monitoring arrangements;
- sanctions or consequences where appropriate;
- next steps and review points.

The School will not normally disclose confidential detail about another child beyond what is necessary and fair.

24. Record keeping

BHS will maintain accurate records of serious, repeated or substantiated bullying concerns.

These may include:

- initial concern record;
- investigation notes;
- parent-contact record;
- anti-bullying incident log entry;
- behaviour-log entry;
- safeguarding cross-reference where relevant;

- review and follow-up note;
- safety or support plan where used.

Records must be factual, timely and capable of leadership review.

25. Complaints

If parents remain dissatisfied after the School has responded, they may use the Complaints Policy.

A complaint does not prevent the School from taking immediate action needed to protect children, preserve order or fulfil safeguarding duties.

Where the issue involves potential discrimination, safeguarding failure or serious staff misconduct, it must also be considered under the appropriate linked policy and not forced into a narrow anti bullying lens.

26. Monitoring and review

The proprietor / headteacher will review:

- patterns of bullying and repeated unkindness;
- whether incidents are increasing in particular places, times or groups;
- whether online and prejudice-based incidents are being recognised properly;
- whether harmed children are being protected effectively;
- whether sanctions and support are working;
- whether staff need further training;
- whether linked policies remain aligned.

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if:

- incident patterns suggest weakness;
- inspection or safeguarding review identifies concern;
- guidance changes materially;

- the school's digital or pastoral model changes.