

Anti-bullying Policy

George Romney Junior School



Approved by:

SMSC Committee

Date: 25th September 2023

Signed:

Next review due by:

25th September 2025

This policy is based on DfE guidance “*Preventing and Tackling Bullying*” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “*Keeping Children Safe in Education*” 2021 and “*Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges*” guidance. The setting has also read Child net’s “*Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools*”.

When we talk to our children in school, we know that having friends and feeling safe is very important to them. We know that they feel sad when they are bullied and that this has an impact on their learning. This policy is how we as a school aim to combat this and make all children feel safe and secure in their relationships with others and therefore have the best chance to succeed. We believe that every individual in our school has a duty to report an incident of bullying of any kind whether it happens to them or another member of our school community.

AIMS

- To promote the message that bullying is not tolerated in school and should not be accepted outside of school either
- To ensure children and their families feel the school is a safe, secure environment for them to learn in and be part of
- To provide a positive, supportive and empowering environment that puts the social and emotional needs of the children at the centre of the learning
- To promote the message that we are a ‘talking school’ where children feel confident and free to talk to friends or a trusted adult about a worry or issue
- To work positively towards children demonstrating our core values: respect, honesty, responsibility, acceptance, fairness, co-operation, integrity and determination

OBJECTIVES

- To keep all children, their families and staff safe and happy as they learn together here in school
- To educate children about the importance of happy, healthy relationships with friends and families
- To teach the children a range of strategies to help them deal positively with any problems they may have with relationships and bullying

PRINCIPLES

- George Romney will not tolerate bullying or intimidation and all staff share the responsibility to ensure our school is ‘a happy place to learn’
- All staff in school have a pro-active stance towards investigating bullying and the potential impacts on children’s behaviour
- School always works positively with the children and their families to address any concerns related to bullying in any form
- The needs of children and young people who bully or intimidate should be considered separately from the needs of their victim
- The school will contact other agencies such as the Police, social care or other agencies if they feel the bullying is of a severe nature that requires that response

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

DEFINITION AND TYPES OF BULLYING

'Bullying is 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, cyberbullying 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.'

(Preventing and tackling bullying', DfE, July 2017)

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying

Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:

- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
- Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act).

Children and young people can bully & abuse each other emotionally, physically or sexually. This can take place in a variety of settings like home, school, online, or in the community. Any such situations should be taken seriously and action taken straight away.

Bullying is recognised by George Romney Junior School as being a form of peer on peer abuse; children can abuse other children.

- Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

CYBERBULLYING

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied, and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.

Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:

- looking at use of the school systems
- identifying and interviewing possible witnesses
- Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:

- Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
- confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (*We will access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Child net cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully*).
- requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help or support they may need.
- inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.

Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:

- advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
- providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
- helping those involved to consider and manage any private information they may have in the public domain.

WHAT DO WE DO IN SCHOOL TO PREVENT BULLYING

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the safety and well-being of the children in our school (see Safeguarding Policy).

- All children sign a Home School Agreement every September which includes the school's Core Values and specifically behaviour expectations
- Class teachers support the children through PSHCE lessons and with other classroom activities such as Circle Time and School Council when children have the opportunity to discuss issues that might be a worry for them.
- Some children are taught additional strategies through 'SCARF' programmes or small group support work
- The school employs an STA with a specific focus on supporting children with friendship, bullying and other emotional issues
- We spend time teaching the children what bullying is (and what it is not;) as well as empowering the children to deal with bullying behaviour and what their role should be as a friend to someone who is being bullied.
- With older children we also address issues related to bullying such as the impact of peer pressure when growing up
- We talk about the importance of standing up to bullying on behalf of others – not just ignoring it or walking away
- Whole-school and phase team assemblies are used to highlight the issue of bullying and create a platform for the staff to promote the anti-bullying message across the school
- As a school we participate in local and national events such as Anti-bullying Week; we use resources such as posters, slogans and lesson plans from organisations such as NSPCC and Childline
- All children in school are made aware of the Worry boxes and reminded they all have access to them if required

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO BULLYING

It is essential that all staff follow the same procedure to ensure that children and families receive the same message about bullying and how it is dealt with.

1. Talk to all the children involved in the incident and try to get staff to corroborate the story
– **decide is it a bullying issue?**
2. Record the incident on a school incident form and record as a bullying issue
3. Refer incident to a member of SLT to decide on next steps
4. Resolve the issue in an appropriate manner involving the parents of all children
5. Follow-up the incident/situation and check the resolution worked

PROCEDURES

- The victim, the alleged bully and any witnesses are all interviewed by a member of SLT separately
- If any children are physically injured, this is dealt with in the usual manner and the nature of the injuries recorded
- If appropriate, all parties may be asked to write down an account of the incident and their role in it
- Staff listen carefully to all accounts and remain non-confrontational and non-judgmental until the investigation is completed
- Parents of the children involved in the incident are informed and invited into school to discuss the issue contribute to the possible resolution

CONSEQUENCES

- In the first instance, the headteacher will talk to the child who has bullied and ensure they understand the serious nature of their behaviour and it's potential impact to the other child. They will be warned that the behaviour must not occur again
- The headteacher will organise a reconciliation meeting between the bully and their victim; ensuring the victim feels safe and in control of the situation and that the conversation and apology is genuine
- Parents of the children involved will be kept informed/involved in the process through out and expected to support the school and its approaches
- The class teacher, with support other staff in school will monitor the situation for an appropriate period of time e.g. half-term
- Repeated incidences of bullying will trigger serious consequences such as learning in isolation, exclusion from parts of the school day or a fixed term exclusion

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY

This policy has been updated after discussion with staff, the SMSC committee of governors and the children in school via School Council. It was uploaded onto our website for parents to view and comment upon during the autumn term 2023.

Appendix One: Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

MindEd: www.minded.org.uk

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk

Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk

The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk

Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

Child net: www.childnet.com

Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk

Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com>

UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety

DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying