

# Laleham Gap School – LGS13 Anti Bullying Policy

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**Kent County Council**

**Education Learning and Skills Directorate**



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Owner: Deputy Head Teacher

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# Laleham Gap School – LGS13 Anti-Bullying Policy

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## 1. Security Protective Marking

Not protectively marked

## 2. Summary of Change

2.1 This policy is scheduled for review in May 2018

## 3. Introduction

3.1 The Governing Body of Laleham Gap School acknowledges both statutory provision and intentionality within Equality; Diversity and Direct Discrimination legislation\* culminating in the Equality Act 2010 (effective from 1 October 2010) in drafting and reviewing this school policy. The Governing Body actively seeks to promote policy measures to cease inequality, all forms of discrimination and enhance opportunity and well-being within every aspect of the school's business for pupils, staff, governors and community stakeholders.

\*Sex Discrimination Act 1976; Race Relations Acts 1976 & 2000; Childcare Act 2006; DDA 1995 & 2005; Civil Partnership Act 2004; Gender Recognition Act 2004; Equality Acts 2006 & 7 and Statutory Instruments

3.2 The issue of bullying is reflected in several of the documents, which make up the Staff Handbook, the School Development Plan, Staff Structures and Roles and in other policy documents. The principle underpinning the school's philosophy on bullying is found in the Aims of the School [School Handbook] this includes:

"To maintain an ethos and an atmosphere wherein each student can be happy, secure, valued and fulfilled and wherein the individuality of each student is recognised and nurtured."

- Bullying will not be tolerated at the school and it is everyone's responsibility to prevent it happening. The school will react firmly and promptly when bullying is identified.
- Bullying makes pupils unhappy
- Pupils who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work.
- Pupils who see unchallenged bullying behaviour are likely to copy it.
- Young people need to be protected from bullying and the school promotes an atmosphere where bullying is known to be unacceptable. Staff and students share a clear understanding of the definition of bullying and appropriate measures are in place to respond to it and prevent it.
- Due to the nature of the pupil's difficulties this is particularly pertinent as language difficulties, poor social skills and vulnerability may add to the complexity of the situation.
- Staff, students, parents and governors are encouraged to be involved in the bullying policy, which is regularly monitored to ensure that it remains effective. Measures are taken to revise the policy and practice where necessary.

- Good practice includes support for young people who are being bullied and guidance for those who may be bullying others. Information from incidents may then be used to reduce the number of future incidents and opportunities for bullying.

Ongoing work will include:

- Teacher Continuous Professional Development
- Training for non-teaching staff, including lunch time supervisors, volunteers
- The curriculum
- Assemblies
- Pastoral systems
- Peer support initiatives
- Peer counselling
- Restorative Justice
- Resilience training
- School Council work
- Circle of Friends
- Circle Time
- Befriending
- Peer mediation
- Prefect and monitor systems
- Buddying
- Mentoring
- Co-operative approaches to group work
- Improving mechanisms for reporting bullying
- Parent workshops

### 3.3 “NO BLAME APPROACH”

The school follows the ‘no blame approach’ to bullying and if a student feels they are being bullied staff need to complete a pastoral concern form, which is available in the staffroom and Assistant Head teachers Offices. The form should be returned to the relevant Assistant Head teacher, who will meet with all students involved in the incident and follow procedures set out in the policy taking into account the age of the students involved.

A prompt response is given with the student being bullied given support and time to talk about the incident, their views are respected at all times, but staff will encourage the student to follow the ‘no blame approach’.

If the ‘bullying’ was to continue parents/carers may be informed and further meetings called.

#### **The ‘No Blame Approach’ to Bullying.**

- If a pupil feels that they are being bullied they need to be encouraged to report this to an adult.
- Pupils need to know that nothing will be said or done unless they are agreeable to it, but if they want the problem to stop then they need to take part in the process.
- The bully must be named and when, where and what happened needs to be determined. A written record is made which will be later read out to the bully so that he/she can be made aware of the feelings of the child being bullied.

- A meeting will be organised and the bully will be confronted with the evidence. It may take some time for him/her to accept that their behaviour has had such an effect on the child being bullied. They need to show genuine understanding and remorse.
- When/if this has been achieved, the two should be encouraged to meet giving the bully the opportunity to engage in conversation and express regret.
- If the child being bullied does not want to attend the meeting the procedure may still be carried out.
- The situation will need to be monitored over a period of time.
- All incidents will be recorded and copies kept with the Assistant Head Teacher.
- If the bullying were to continue the incidents may be reported to parents/carers who would be invited to a meeting at the school.

## 4. The Nature of Bullying

- 4.1 There are many definitions of bullying; most consider it to be:
- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
  - Repeated, often over a long period of time
  - Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Not all incidents of deliberately hurtful behaviour can be defined as bullying. Incidents in which bullying behaviour are apparent should be investigated in line with guidance contained in both the Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies in order to establish whether a single incident is a bullying incident and if so, if it is isolated. DfE Guidance 10/99 Social Inclusion: Pupil Support advises "*Bullying is usually part of a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident*".

- 4.2 Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated, often over a period of time, making it difficult for the person to defend themselves.

The staff and pupils at Laleham Gap School consider a child to be being bullied when:

- Another child, adult or group of children say nasty things to him or her.
- He or she is kicked, hit, slapped, punched or pinched, threatened, sent
- Unpleasant notes or when no one talks to them.
- He or she is teased, mocked or mimicked repeatedly in an unkind way.
- His or her belongings are taken, damaged or hidden
- He or she is targeted by another child, using the Internet, interactive or digital technologies or mobile phones.

- 4.3 It is important to remember that bullying behaviour forms part of a continuum of normal human behaviours. Children's behaviour may move along the continuum depending on their own personal characteristics, the circumstances around them, the way that this behaviour is responded to by others and the behaviours they see successfully modelled by others.

Bullying can take a number of forms, but three main types are:

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, taking belongings, damaging personal property
- **Verbal** – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks, text messaging, emails or writing offensive graffiti
- **Indirect** – spreading nasty rumours, exclusion from social groups

Name calling is the most common direct form, and may be due to individual characteristics, such as wearing glasses, colour of hair, etc., or because of a pupil's ethnic origin, disability, sexuality, religion, nationality, colour or accent.

Behaviour such as the common use of discriminatory or pejorative language or the inappropriate spreading of jokes and rumours that derives from a lack of understanding of the implications of such behaviour can be seen as unwitting bullying behaviour. This behaviour is a common contributory factor in the embedding of racist, sexist and homophobic cultures, and the proliferation of this behaviour outside school can make it particularly difficult for schools to challenge. However, effective whole school approaches can reduce bullying and bullying behaviour within the community the school serves.

4.4 All children are potential victims of bullying. A victim of bullying is an individual or group who suffers in any way as a direct result of intentional and persistent harassment and/or victimisation by another individual or group where that harassment and/or victimisation is an abuse of power and is intended to frighten, intimidate or harm. Victims commonly find it difficult to counteract bullying behaviour, or to report their experiences to those who may be able to help them.

4.5 There are two main types of victims of bullying:

**Passive victims:** anxious, lacking in self-confidence, physically weak and unpopular. They do nothing to provoke attacks and do little, if anything to defend themselves.

**Provocative victims:** physically strong and active. They may have problems with concentration, which causes tension and irritation to those around them, provoking other children to turn on them. Adults, including the teacher may actively dislike them, and they may try to bully weaker students.

## 5. The Impact of Bullying on Children & Schools

### 5.1 BULLYING AND THE ROLE OF THE GROUP

The majority of children within a school are not involved in bullying themselves. However, they are likely to know that it is happening. Bullying is commonly a group activity, often with one perpetrator taking a leading role. Other children may be present and may play a number of subsequent roles. They may be broadly described as either colluders or bystanders. Colluders may assist the bully or may encourage the bullying by laughing, shouting and watching.

Bystanders may be present, but may remain uninvolved whilst some children may either intervene directly to stop the bullying or may go and tell an adult.

In developing effective strategies schools must recognise the importance of this group behaviour. Harnessing peers in a positive way is effective as part of a whole school approach to tackling bullying, through: Attaching high importance to challenging bullying as part of a strong school ethos.

### 5.2 BULLYING OF SPECIFIC GROUPS

Schools need to respond to the needs of Kent's diverse communities and make explicit reference within anti-bullying policies to bullying that arises as a reflection of negative attitudes towards particular groups, all of whom have a right to feel safe within their school environment.

Kent believes that diversity enables people to see things from different perspectives. Tackling bullying of this kind will need to include challenging the roots of the bullying, as well as dealing with individual incidents.

### 5.3 BULLYING, CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILDREN IN CARE

In some cases bullying behaviors' can be linked to complex abusive experiences the child him/herself may have had or are having, in the home environment. Increasingly agencies are concerned that violence between partners in the home, for example, can lead children who experience it to begin to see it both as normal and acceptable behaviour and begin to model it themselves.

A child who has been subject to abuse (sexual, physical, emotional or neglect) is likely to have low self-esteem and lack confidence. This may mean they are more prone to being bullied than a child who has not had these experiences. Such children are also less likely to trust adults and may well be reticent about 'telling'. (This group of children includes virtually all children who are 'Children in Care' in Kent)

It is vital that all staff within the school (including non-teaching staff, such as LSAs and volunteers) know who the named teacher with responsibility for Child Protection is, and how they implement Child Protection procedures, including those relating to reporting concerns about children involved in bullying. All 'Children in Care' should have a Personal Education Plan. This plan can have anti-bullying strategies with review/monitoring in place. Robust home/school liaison will also help support a 'Child in Care' who is experiencing bullying.

### 5.4 RACIST BULLYING

Racist bullying and individual incidents are unacceptable, and in some instances criminal. Schools are required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to have a Race Equality Policy, to actively promote race equality and to record and report racial incidents. Kent County Council has created guidance and a model procedure, "Managing Racial Incidents in Schools", to assist and advise schools on their obligations and best practice.

Racist bullying can be very complex, rooted in historic cultural problems or current events, and not apparent to outsiders. If the victim or anyone perceives an incident as racist, it must be investigated and reported as a potential racist incident.

KCC collects statistics from schools on the number of incidents. This shows that there is bullying of children from ethnic minorities and other minority groups such as asylum seekers and Gypsy/Travelers. Most incidents occur at Key Stages 2 and 3.

### 5.5 BULLYING OF CHILDREN FROM FAITH COMMUNITIES

Some individuals are targeted for bullying because they adhere or are perceived to adhere to a particular faith. Such bullying is sometimes connected to racist bullying.

### 5.6 HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

This involves the targeting of individuals on the basis of their perceived or actual sexuality or sexual orientation. Homophobic bullying can also include name-calling such as the use of the word "gay" as an insult. Individuals are commonly singled out

for abuse if they do not conform to a stereotypical masculine or feminine gender image. Information and advice on tackling homophobic bullying can be found at [http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/PDF/stand\\_up\\_for\\_us\\_04.pdf](http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/PDF/stand_up_for_us_04.pdf) .

#### 5.7 GENDER BULLYING (SEXUAL HARASSMENT)

Sexual harassment or bullying by gender is common. Gender stereotypes and the experiences some children have of adult relationships can contribute to gender bullying. Examples include name-calling such as 'slag', 'slapper', 'bitch', use of sexual innuendo and unwanted propositioning and commenting on appearance and attractiveness

#### 5.8 BULLYING DUE TO ABILITY, DISABILITY OR SEN

Pupils with SEN or disabilities may not be able to explain experiences as well as other children. However, they are at greater risk of being bullied. Children with behavioural problems may become 'provocative victims'. This behaviour may need to be addressed as a behaviour target on a child's Individual Education Plan. There is also increasing evidence that children of high academic ability and those who work hard at school may be targeted.

#### 5.9 SUPPORTING AND INVOLVING PARENTS AND CARERS

Supporting and involving parents is often key to successful anti-bullying initiatives. Steps that can be taken to ensure parental involvement include:

- Regular consultation and communication with parents about bullying, its causes and its effects
- Taking steps to overcome language barriers and to recognize cultural diversity when involving and consulting parents
- Awareness of the need to balance parental involvement with confidentiality.
- Students experiencing homophobic bullying are often particularly reluctant to involve their parents
- Ensuring all school staff are aware of the school's bullying policy so that they can respond appropriately and sensitively if approached by a parent
- Involving parents of bullies and victims at an early stage

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **IMPORTANT FACTORS ABOUT CHILDREN TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF**

### **Key Stages 1 and 2 (5 to 11 years)**

- Most children make an easy transition when they start school, but for some it can be a daunting experience. Children who have not had any pre-school education may find it especially hard. Some children just take a little longer to 'settle in' and to make new friends. They may need support in doing so. Bullying affects all age groups but it is especially hard for young children to ask for help or know how to deal with it.
- There are growing pressures for children to do well at school with the introduction of standard testing at ages seven and 11. Failure can lead to a sense of personal disappointment, especially if there are pressures from the family to achieve high standards.
- Family break-up is a reality for many children and may cause mental health problems, making them feel anxious, guilty or responsible for the situation.
- Children of this age may find it hard to express how they feel. Even very young children need the chance to talk about what is going on and to be reassured that they are not to blame.

### **Key Stage 3 and 4 (11 to 16 years)**

- Transition to secondary school and family break ups are factors which secondary schools need to take account of. Adolescence is associated with growing independence, mood swings, new anxieties, and the development of sexual and emotional life.
- Self-image is an important issue for all children and young people, but may have an especially important impact at this age. The way young people feel about their looks, body shape and size, and how they believe other people see them, is closely tied up with self-esteem.
- School forms a large part of a young person's experience, offering the opportunity to meet with friends and participate in a range of activities. However, many young people feel disaffected or frustrated with schoolwork and school life in general. Bullying continues to be an issue for many. Most young people face greater pressure to succeed now than they have ever felt before, and exams can be a significant source of stress.
- Growing sexual awareness may be a source of anxiety for some young people.
- Gay and lesbian teenagers may be particularly vulnerable to mental health problems with pressure from families, fellow students and the community. They may experience feelings of low self-esteem and helplessness because of difficulties in coming out, experiences of being bullied, or difficulties in acknowledging their feelings. Other young people who are, or have been, experiencing sexual or physical abuse or significant neglect may try to run away from home. Young people who are out of school for lengthy periods for this reason need special opportunities to talk.

## APPENDIX 2

### GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

#### Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” November 2014:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: “No health without mental health”:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)
- Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)
- The Diana Award: [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)
- Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
- Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Young Carers: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net) Cyberbullying
- Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)
- Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk) LGBT
- EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)
- Pace: [www.pacehealth.org.uk](http://www.pacehealth.org.uk)
- Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)
- Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk) SEND
- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)
- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25> Racism and Hate
- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)
- Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)
- Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)
- Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srrc.org/educational](http://www.srrc.org/educational)