



**ALDENHAM**  
— SCHOOL —

# **Anti-Bullying Strategy**

**Reviewed September 2024**

**By Deputy Head Pastoral**

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Aldenham School (the School) expects all members of the School community to treat other people with courtesy and respect at all times. The School's approach to bullying is clear: it is always unacceptable. The School will therefore do all it can to prevent it.

1.2 This strategy should be read in conjunction with the following which are available on the School [website](#).

- Behaviour Policy
- Digital Safety Policy for Students
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Yondr Phone Policy

1.3 This strategy can also be found via the School website.

1.4 This strategy applies to the whole School from Year 7 to Year 13.

1.5 You may also email the School at [enquiries@aldenham.com](mailto:enquiries@aldenham.com) to request hard copies which can be made available in large print or another accessible format if required.

## **2. Aims and objectives**

2.1 The School aims and objectives are to:

- Raise awareness among staff and students of the vulnerable individual who has low self- esteem and who is excluded or humiliated by others
- Promote an ethos which deplores anyone being left out, being unsupported or being humiliated
- Inform parents to ensure they are clear that the School does not tolerate bullying
- Involve parents by making sure they are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe their child is being bullied
- Comply with the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010

## **3. This strategy complies with and/or has regard to the following:**

- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations \(2014\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September 2024\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Department for Education \(DfE\), Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff \(November 2014\)](#)
- [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(November 2014\)](#)
- [Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools \(March 2014\)](#)
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident \(March 2024\)](#)

#### **4. Scope and responsibilities**

- 4.1 This strategy applies to all students and staff at the School irrespective of their age and whether or not a student is in the care of the School if or when bullying behaviour occurs.
- 4.2 This strategy will apply to bullying behaviour outside of the School of which the School becomes aware.

#### **5. Bullying behaviour**

- 5.1 There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Whilst bullying is usually defined as behaviour repeated over time, the School will, if required, take action in response to a single incident and make an appropriate record.
- 5.2 Bullying may take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, special educational needs and disability, sexual orientation or because a child is adopted or is a carer. Bullying may occur directly or through cyber-technology, for example, social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs, and email.
- 5.3 Students, staff, and parents may be perpetrators or victims of bullying.
- 5.4 **What students, staff and parents should know:**
- No one must put up with bullying
  - Bullying can cause psychological damage to victims and even, in extreme cases, suicide
  - Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour
  - Every person has the right to tell an individual who is bullying that the behaviour is unacceptable
  - Bullying should be reported to a trusted adult / teacher
  - Be confident that the matter will be dealt with appropriately
- 5.5 **The following are examples of bullying behaviour:**
- Verbal: name calling, "put-downs", offensive language, "nuisance" phone calls, spreading malicious rumours, tone of voice
  - Visual: offensive notes, cyberbullying (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs, e-mail) and graffiti
  - Victimisation: damage or theft of others' possessions, threats to "get" people, repeated social exclusion, being ignored
  - Physical: fighting, pushing, shoving, gestures, invasion of personal space
- 5.6 Bullying may also be racial, regarding someone's religion, belief, or culture. This can include physical appearance. It can also be sexual, sexist, homophobic, related to pregnancy and maternity, related to a person's home circumstances, or related to a person's age, disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health, or appearance.

5.7 A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Where this is the case, staff should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact Children's Social Care at Hertfordshire County Council and/or the police. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the School may consider drawing on a range of external services to support the student who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

**6. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

6.1 The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Lisa Lobo, Deputy Head (Pastoral), who can be contacted on 01923 858122. The DSL is a member of Senior Team and takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety).

6.2 The DSL can be contacted during out of hours / out-of-term activities, by telephoning **0788 4585 324**.

## **7. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads**

7.1 If Mrs Lobo is unavailable contact the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) seen below:

Mrs L. Gall: [img@aldenham.com](mailto:img@aldenham.com)

Rev T. Richardson: [trichardson@aldenham.com](mailto:trichardson@aldenham.com)

Mr S. Pennycook: [pennycooks@aldenham.com](mailto:pennycooks@aldenham.com)

Mr N. Cumming: [ncumming@aldenham.com](mailto:ncumming@aldenham.com)

## **8. Legal aspects**

8.1 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 and a civil wrong known as a "tort" for which there can be legal consequences outside the School.

8.2 Bullying behaviour may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong.

8.3 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 email) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

## **9. Identifying bullying**

9.1 Victims may often:

- Be late
- Lose belongings
- Under-achieve
- Produce careless work
- Be isolated
- Change of behaviour e.g., outburst of temper, withdrawal, illness, general upset

## **10. What parents should do**

10.1 If you are aware your child is being bullied, you should:

- Listen and try to provide an open, non-judgmental environment for your child to talk about their problem
- Tell them you understand and provide support
- Remind your child they have the right to feel safe
- Suggest your child speak to a member of staff
- If the problem seems particularly serious, or ongoing, immediately contact the Form Tutor or relevant Housemaster or the Deputy Head (Pastoral)
- Try to avoid an angry or emotional response
- Parents should understand that actions such as phoning the parent of the bully and discussing the matter with other parents can inflame the situation
- Contact the School straight away if the issue continues to be unresolved
- Trust the School to carry through actions that will solve the problem including appropriate communications with parents of all parties concerned

## **11. What students should do if they witness or experience bullying**

- I 1.1 The School aims to make it easy for students to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Students are also encouraged through the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme and assemblies to feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside School including cyber-bullying.
- I 1.2 If a student is bullied or witnesses bullying, they should immediately speak to any member of staff. In addition to the teaching staff, the School Nurse, the School Counsellor, and Reverend Tony Richardson are all available to students.

## **12. Anti-bullying initiatives**

- I 2.1 Lessons on good relationships are included in the PSHE programme. The unacceptable nature of bullying is introduced into form discussion, assemblies and into lessons where appropriate, e.g., drama improvisation.
- I 2.2 Students work with their Form Tutors to agree a code of conduct which is displayed in each tutor room.
- I 2.3 In the Senior School, form time discussions cover different forms of peer on peer / child on child bullying, including that related to race and culture.
- I 2.4 Academic and extra-curricular success alike are praised and celebrated through feedback in lessons, awards in assemblies and commendation meetings with senior staff, which raises self-esteem and helps to create a positive atmosphere.
- I 2.5 Staff must not display overt disapproval or any exclusive or unfriendly behaviour and must never use sarcasm towards a student or humiliate a student as set out in the Code of Conduct for Staff.
- I 2.6 Staff must act on all reports of bullying, by speaking to the relevant Housemaster or the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- I 2.7 The School requires staff to use seating plans in lessons from Year 7 through to Year 11, they can also be used in Year 12 and Year 13, and free choice activities should be arbitrarily assigned by the member of staff.
- I 2.8 The importance of good relationships is emphasised throughout the community and guidance given to students about what to do if they are bullied or are aware of others being bullied. Students are encouraged to speak to any member of staff. In addition to the teaching staff, the School Nurse, the School Counsellor, and Reverend Tony Richardson are all available to students.
- I 2.9 Members of staff are vigilant at all times and bullying is regularly discussed in staff meetings to feedback information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any student who seems to be isolated, any growing "power base" or conflict between students so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying incidents.

### **13. Staff training**

13.1 All new staff take part in an induction programme which makes them aware of the principles and purpose of School policies including the Anti-bullying Strategy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying and emphasises the importance of identifying and reporting any bullying incident.

13.2 Appropriate training is arranged to ensure that staff have the necessary professional skills to deal with bullying incidents including actions to resolve and prevent bullying, and information on support available for students. All staff are trained to manage a report of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

### **14. Child on Child abuse**

14.1 Children are capable of abusing their peers i.e., child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously by the School. It can manifest itself in many ways, this is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim
- "Down-blousing" is the act of taking a photograph or image down somebody's shirt, blouse or top without their consent with intention of obtaining sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

14.2 Gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with this type of abuse i.e., that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, and that child-on-child abuse should not be tolerated or passed off as banter, part of growing up or "just having a laugh". The threshold for dealing with such abuse is when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Such abuse will be referred to local agencies.

14.3 The School's PSHE programme aims to enable students to lead responsible, healthy, and assertive lives and to develop skills and knowledge which will equip them with the ability to deal with a range of issues. A spiral theme of lessons on positive relationships, revisited in different year groups, is included in the PSHE programme. The unacceptable nature of all forms of bullying is introduced into form discussion, assemblies and into lessons where appropriate, e.g., drama improvisation.

14.4 Students who have been subject to child-on-child abuse are encouraged to immediately report any concerns to their form tutors or speak directly to their Housemaster. Alternatively, students may seek help from the School Counsellors and/or School Nurse.



- 14.5 The School has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and will deal with all cases in accordance with this strategy and the Behaviour Policy. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur online and face to face, both physically and verbally, on School premises or outside of School and are never acceptable. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. In response to reports of child sexual violence and sexual harassment the School will act in accordance with Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 14.6 The Acceptable Use of ICT and Mobile Phone Policy reminds students that the consensual and non- consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery), is strictly prohibited by the School and may constitute a criminal offence. The School will treat incidences of sexting, both sending and receiving, as a safeguarding matter, and mobile phones may be confiscated and searched in appropriate circumstances (see the School's Behaviour Policy on the searching of electronic devices). Students have been advised to speak to any member of staff for advice if they are concerned about images that they have received, sent, or forwarded.
- 14.7 A student against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from School during the investigation and the School's Behaviour Policy and Anti-bullying Strategy will apply.
- 14.8 The School will take advice from Children and Family Services on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all students involved including the student or students accused of abuse, who are all treated as being "at risk". If it is necessary for a student to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of Children and Family Services, parents are informed as soon as possible, and that the student is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.
- 15. Cyberbullying**
- 15.1 Cyberbullying is the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.
- 15.2 All reported incidents of cyberbullying will be treated seriously whether they occur in or out of school.
- 15.3 If there are reasonable grounds to believe that cyberbullying has occurred the School will require mobile electronic device/s to be produced for examination. 'Mobile electronic device' includes without limitation mobile phones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops etc. Students may expect to have their mobile electronic device/s confiscated as a disciplinary penalty.
- 15.4 Any incident of cyberbullying will be dealt with in accordance with this strategy.

## **16. Cyberbullying – preventative measures**

### **16.1 The School:**

- Expects all students to adhere to the code of conduct and Digital Safety Policy for Students relating to the use of the internet
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet
- Issues all students with their own personal School email address
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE and ICT lessons including blocking, removing contacts from friend lists, sharing of personal data, and saving evidence where bullying has taken place
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe
- Mobile phones are not permitted to be used by students in Year 7 to Year 11 and must be placed in a Yondr pouch
- Parental talks on promoting and monitoring safe use of social media and technology

## **17. Procedure to deal with bullying**

**17.1** All reported incidents will be treated seriously and fully investigated; all parties will be heard and given appropriate support. The School will not undertake its own investigation into alleged bullying without permission from appropriate external agencies should the alleged bullying incident be treated as a child protection concern.

**17.2** Where a student reports being bullied or having witnessed bullying, staff will listen carefully to what is said to ascertain the facts. Staff should only ask open questions and write down details using the student's words where possible. The note should be made within an hour of the disclosure and should be accurate and descriptive, including the date, time, and place of the conversation. Staff must not give undertakings of confidentiality to a student and should inform the student that they will notify the relevant Housemaster and Deputy Head (Pastoral).

**17.3** Staff should sign the note and provide a copy to the relevant Housemaster or Assistant Housemaster who will then investigate by interviewing all the parties concerned and document the incident. If the incident is of a serious nature or repeated, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be informed immediately. Any incidents involving members of staff should be reported directly to the Head of Foundation. Written records and notes must be recorded on CPOMS. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will use CPOMS to run reports to enable an overall picture to be created each term, an action plan will be devised to respond to current themes and trends. The Governors will receive a termly update on bullying incidents.

**17.4** If a member of staff suspects or witnesses bullying, the incident should immediately be reported to the relevant Housemaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) who will investigate as set out above.

**17.5** In the case of cyberbullying, the School keeps a log of the use of School computers and such evidence may be used as part of the investigation if misuse is suspected.

**17.6** When bullying is found to have occurred appropriate action will be taken to:

- Ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of those involved
- Provide on-going support and counselling for the individual being bullied, including support from external services where appropriate
- Inform the individual who has been responsible for the bullying that this behaviour is unacceptable
- Counsel the individual to understand the implications of bullying
- Consider the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and establish whether further support and/or counselling, including support from external services, are required to rectify behaviour and tackle any underlying issues which contributed to the behaviour. If these considerations lead to any concerns that the bully may be at risk of harm, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures will be followed
- Advise the individual of the consequences of further bullying
- Discipline the offender in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy
- Inform the parents
- Follow up with the individuals to provide any necessary support

## **18. Disciplinary measures**

18.1 Usually, parents will be invited in, and appropriate action will be taken which may include a disciplinary hearing. Disciplinary sanctions will reflect the seriousness of the incident and convey a deterrent effect in line with the Behaviour Policy. Disciplinary sanctions may include a formal warning and contract of good behaviour, a Friday or Saturday Detention or suspension, and there may also be a requirement that the bully has specialist counselling.

18.2 Disciplinary action will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the student and the needs of vulnerable students.

18.3 In serious or repeated incidents, the outcome of the disciplinary hearing may be required removal or expulsion.

## **19. Recording incidents**

19.1 Each incident of bullying will be recorded on the student's file within CPOMS. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) meets with the Safeguarding Governor every term to review the Reports.

## **20. Monitoring and review**

20.1 The Head and Senior Leadership Team will monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy and associated procedures at least annually (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so require).

- 20.2 This strategy will be reviewed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) at least annually (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so required).
- 20.3 This strategy will be subject to critical review by the relevant committee of the Governing Body every year. Part of the critical review of safeguarding will include a review of the CPOMS reports of bullying incidents and analysis of incidents and trends.
- 20.4 The operation of this strategy will be reviewed by the full Governing Body every year alongside their annual safeguarding review.
- 20.5 The date of the next review is shown on the front page.

## **Annex A: Specialist organisations**

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including the social, mental, or emotional affects caused by bullying.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA):

Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues. The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed [here](#).

Kidscape:

Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

The BIG Award:

The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.

Restorative Justice Council:

Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

### **Cyber-bullying and online safety**

ChildNet International:

Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. The website specifically includes new cyberbullying guidance and a practical PSHE toolkit for schools.

Digizen:

Provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers, and young people.

Internet Matters:

Provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.

Think U Know:

Resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers, and teachers.

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges, and parents about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting.'

[Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/harmful-online-challenges-and-online-hoaxes)

Advice for schools and colleges to support their approach to harmful online challenges and online hoaxes.

## **LGBTQ+**

Barnardos:

Through its LGBTQ+ Hub, offers guidance to young people, parents, and teachers on how to support LGBTQ+ students and tackle LGBTQ+ prejudice-based bullying.

EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia):

Provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.

Metro Charity:

An equality and diversity charity, providing health, community and youth services across London, the South East, national and international projects. Metro works with anyone experiencing issues related to gender, sexuality, diversity, or identity.

Proud Trust:

Helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.

Schools Out:

Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBTQ+ equality in education.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Mencap:

Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

Changing Faces:

Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities:

Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.

Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources:

Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.

Information, Advice and Support Service Network:

Every Local area has an information, advice, and support service, providing information, advice, and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

## **Mental Health**

MindEd:

Provides a free online training tool for adults that is also available to schools. It can be used to help school staff learn more about children and young people's mental health problems. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding, and supporting children who are bullied.

PSHE Association – guidance and lesson plans on improving the teaching of mental health issues.

## **Race, Religion and Nationality**

Anne Frank Trust:

Runs a schools' project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.

Educate Against Hate:

Provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

Show Racism the Red Card:

Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.

Kick It Out:

Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.

Tell MAMA:

Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA) allows people from across England to report any form of Anti-Muslim abuse, MAMA can also refer victims for support through partner agencies.

Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group:

Independent members of this group are representatives from the Muslim community and will assist and advice on all relevant issues.

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust:

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) encourages remembrance in a world scarred by genocide. We promote and support Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) – the international day on 27



January to remember the 6 million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, alongside the millions of people murdered under Nazi persecution of other groups and during more recent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

Community Security Trust:

The Community Security Trust (CST) is a charity that protects British Jews from antisemitism and related threats. CST provides security advice and training for Jewish communal organizations, schools, and synagogues. National Emergency Number (24-hr) 0800 032 3263.

## **Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying**

NSPCC:

The NSPCC provides resources on peer-on-peer abuse and healthy relationships for schools and anyone who works or volunteers with children and young people. The Department for Education commissioned the NSPCC to launch a new helpline called Report Abuse in Education (Tel: 0800 136 663 and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)). The helpline comes after numerous anonymised testimonials of sexual harassment and abuse in schools and colleges were shared to the Everyone's Invited website.

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW):

A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.

Disrespect No Body:

A Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This website includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.

Anti-bullying Alliance:

Advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying.