



## THE GODOLPHIN SCHOOL

### Living together at Godolphin

#### Anti-Bullying Policy

(Regulatory)

Reviewed by: Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Deputy Head  
(Communication)  
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Refer also to the following policies:

Behaviour and Discipline  
Boarding  
Disability and Accessibility  
Equality and Diversity  
Godolphin E-Safety Acceptable Use Policies  
Living Together at Godolphin (Prep)  
Safeguarding  
Search  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Student Code of Conduct  
Whistleblowing



## **Introduction**

At Godolphin staff, parents and pupils work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. The guiding principle for all aspects of school life is to treat others as we ourselves would wish to be treated.

At Godolphin, from Prep through to Sixth Form, we are committed to safeguarding the welfare of all pupils in all respects to the best of our ability and to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all staff and pupils.

Any form of bullying, whether verbal, physical or psychological, is completely unacceptable at Godolphin. This includes bullying of students and staff.

We wish to involve the appropriate use of the Internet and Social Media in learning and actively invite the participation of parents to help us to do this (see below for details)

## **Aims**

The purpose of this policy is to give a clear statement to pupils, staff and parents about Godolphin's attitude to bullying, about the action which will be taken to prevent bullying and the School's response if it should occur. It aims to ensure that:

- each individual is treated with consideration and respect at all times
- all students learn within an environment that is as safe as possible
- all individuals and groups are aware that they must not exploit others or cause unhappiness to them
- staff are aware of the ways in which bullying can happen, and of the strategies for preventing it, and dealing with it should it arise
- that opportunities exist for pupils to express their worries, and for them to be aware of the support available
- that although each situation is unique and should be dealt with appropriately, staff, pupils and parents feel confident that a consistent approach will be taken, and that concerns will always be treated seriously and sensitively

## **Definition of Bullying**

Adults' definitions of bullying usually have the following three things in common:

- it is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- it is often repeated over a period of time
- it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Children's definitions often place more emphasis on the effect than on the intention:

- the bullied pupil often feels isolated, lonely and powerless

Bullying can be described as being a deliberate act carried out to cause distress solely in order to hurt, intimidate, threaten, exercise power, gain status or other gratification, by taking advantage of the vulnerability of another person. Bullying can take many forms, including actions resulting from prejudiced views on a person's:

- ability or disability
- cultural background
- gender (eg sexist or transgender abuse)
- racial background
- religion
- sexuality (eg homophobic, biphobic abuse)

It also includes bullying a fellow student because they may have special educational needs, a disability or because they have been adopted or act as a carer. We are aware that vulnerable students can be more prone to being bullied and none of the above types of bullying is ever acceptable. Initiation ceremonies intended to cause pain, humiliation or anxiety are not permissible.

Bullying, whether this is by an older person or a peer, could – especially if persistent – constitute child abuse; this would be the case if it causes, or is likely to cause, significant harm to a student's wellbeing, progress and development, in which case the abuse would trigger a referral to local agencies. Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy. All the students involved, whether perpetrator or victim, are to be treated as a 'child at risk'.

Bullying is not confined to obvious physical or verbal attack, but can include, for example, deliberate silence, exclusion from group activities, interfering with other pupils' possessions or spreading rumours. It can take the form of cyberbullying, such as sending threatening texts, pictures or e-mails, or making unpleasant comments on social networking sites.

We recognise the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide, and that although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **What is cyberbullying?**

Cyberbullying can be defined as the deliberate use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly the internet, messaging and the use of digital devices such as cameras, mobile phones, tablets, iPads and laptops, to upset someone else. It may take the form of abuse of an individual due, for example,

to their status, physical qualities, gender, characteristics, race, religion, sexual orientation, class or the activities with which they have been involved.

Cyberbullying, like all bullying, is taken very seriously. It is never acceptable.

Cyberbullying involves the use of a mobile device or the Internet to harass, threaten, taunt or ridicule a victim, for example. A bully can use text messaging, voice, images, video images, instant messenger, social networking sites, video hosting sites, chat rooms, email. It may involve contacting the victim directly or sending or posting messages or images about the victim without their explicit consent. If a pupil sends material of an abusive nature to someone else via email, mobile phone or other digital device, this will be regarded as bullying of a serious nature.

Using the Internet or a mobile phone to send or receive material of a pornographic, inappropriate or offensive nature is prohibited and may lead to suspension or permanent exclusion, and in certain circumstances is a criminal offence.

Those who pass on messages or images or include themselves in a group which harasses an individual, for example, through online polls, excluding a girl from a group or other method of humiliation or intimidation, are also involving themselves in bullying by becoming accessories to the bullying and will face the appropriate sanctions.

The sending of pornographic images of oneself – called sexting and any form of sextortion – is a criminal offence and is prohibited. Sending on such material is liable to lead to suspension or permanent exclusion.

Any participation in bullying will not be tolerated.

### Responsibility

It is the School's view that all members of the community have a responsibility to ensure that bullying does not happen; pupils who stand by and do not report this kind of behaviour are, in fact, complying with it. Students who witness bullying and feel they cannot intervene personally should turn to a member of staff or a prefect to seek assistance and report their concerns. We aim to create an atmosphere of openness and trust, where concerns can be raised at an early stage and dealt with swiftly.

Godolphin approaches the issue through:

- education
- the pastoral system
- action, including discipline where appropriate

### Education

In this area, as in others, pupils learn by example. They should experience the adults in the School behaving in a civilised, kindly way towards them and towards each other at all times.

The Personal, Social, Health, Cultural and Economic Education (PSHCEE) programme and tutorial time discussions include experiences of bullying, the reasons why it might happen, strategies for dealing with it and ways of finding support, both in and out of school. Discussions will also include raising self-esteem, the ability to debate, increasing resilience and recognising danger to avoid radicalisation. Other subjects may explore aspects of the topic through role play, literary and dramatic texts, project work, or consideration of language which is free from prejudice. Opportunities such as assemblies, Year Group and House Prayers are used to discuss and present ideas about relationships with others to particular groups and to the whole School.

When appropriate, Senior staff address the subject in School Prayers and on other occasions, and Housemistresses will discuss it formally and informally in the Houses.

In particular, Tutors/Form teachers explain this policy to pupils when they first arrive at School and Housemistresses remind the whole House at the beginning of each year. The policy is also made known to parents and they are urged to contact the School promptly about any concerns.

Pupils are regularly reminded of the sources of help and advice available to them both in and out of School, including the Chaplain and the Health Centre Service, and telephone numbers of organisations such as Childline are available to them, and for boarders, contact details of Godolphin's two independent listeners.

Cyberbullying is included in the School's PSHCEE programme and also in the instruction given to students each time they sign a new E- Safety Acceptable Use Agreement.

- Further guidelines are given in Appendix 1

Detection and prevention of bullying forms part of the induction of the new School Prefects.

Staff receive training using guidance such as "Don't Suffer in Silence" and "Girls on Board" and the school will often take part in the national Anti-Bullying week in November and Safer Internet Day in February, focussing on contemporary topics in lessons and assemblies.

The guidance from the DfE: "Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies" (July 2017) is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/623895/Preventing\\_and\\_tackling\\_bullying\\_advice.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf) and is incorporated into policies and practical action.

## The Pastoral System

### Prevention:

Staff make a point of building pupils' confidence and self-esteem by recognising the achievements and positive qualities of every individual, both in private and in public where appropriate. They adopt strategies to ensure that every individual is properly involved in lessons and group activities. They make a point of expressing disapproval of unkind remarks; they do not allow pupils to exclude others from groups in class and other formal occasions.

At times such as break, meals, and social activities or outings, when there is naturally less formal supervision, staff nevertheless keep a careful eye on behaviour and relationships within groups. Staff in the Houses make a point of visiting dormitories and study bedrooms regularly at bedtimes and checking them after lights out; they spend time with younger girls in the evenings and at weekends, encouraging co-operative behaviour, and monitoring relationships. Tutors and Housemistresses routinely see pupils on a one-to-one basis so that there are regular opportunities for any worries to be expressed.

Good behaviour and respect are promoted (see Behaviour and Discipline policy).

Staff help in the identification of potential indicators, which include pupils' lack of self-esteem; absenteeism; under-achievement; depression; differences in appearance and speech.

All staff are vigilant for possible signs of bullying, which might include, for example:

- on the part of the victim: physical distress, tearfulness, withdrawal from group activities. Isolation in class, prep, dormitory, social activities.
- on the part of the perpetrator/s: exclusion of others in class, prep, dormitory, social activities. Passing comments - sometimes apparently mild or joking - obvious silence in the presence of the victim/s.

By being alert, staff may help to identify potential difficulties in relationships and prevent them from developing into more serious, long term problems. Any concerns, however trivial, are passed to the Tutor, Head of Year, Housemistress, Deputy Head or Head, where appropriate, at an early stage, so that an overall picture can be established and action taken, if necessary. Early intervention is important as patterns of behaviour can become entrenched and more difficult to change if they are left unchallenged. Concerns are recorded by staff in their Tutor files or in the girls' files.

Pastoral Matters constitute a regular staff meeting agenda item, for example in tutor or whole staff meetings, which provide opportunities for staff to raise awareness of any concerns about individual girls or friendship groups.

Senior pupils, especially Heads of Houses and School Prefects, are extremely influential in establishing the culture within the House and in the School and may often be aware of problems at an early stage. They are encouraged to adopt the approaches for staff outlined above.

#### Action to be taken when bullying has been alleged

i) Listening and discussion

The School will deal with individual cases sensitively and appropriately.

If a student complains of being bullied, she will be taken seriously. She will be listened to, and any specific incidents noted in writing, as well as her more general feelings.

Students can talk to any member of staff, such as her teacher, tutor, housemistress, the School chaplain or nurse.

Similarly, if a student has been a witness to bullying, it is her duty to report it, as in this way the bullying can usually be stopped. Not reporting it is likely to mean that the bullying will continue.

Where there is good reason to believe that a pupil has been bullied by another pupil or a member of staff, the matter will be investigated with a view to stopping the bullying quickly.

The victim will be interviewed by their Tutor, Head of Year and/or Housemistress and, if appropriate, by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Senior Deputy Head. The pupil may like to be accompanied by a friend; it may be appropriate for the parent or guardian to be present.

The pupil will be asked to present any evidence she has in the form of text messages or images; these will be viewed sensitively and only seen by those who need to know.

Different courses of action will be discussed. This will normally involve interviewing the alleged bully – who may also like to be accompanied by a friend; it may be appropriate for the parent or guardian to be present.

No student will be punished for making an allegation in good faith.

The Head of Year and Housemistress, as appropriate, will consider the best way to proceed. The Deputy Heads and the Head will be informed and consulted.

Often the initial concern will be raised by a parent; the same process will apply in this case. The member of staff contacted will arrange to report back on progress within a specified time.

The pupil concerned will always be informed about any action to be taken. Pupils may often be reluctant to support further action for fear of making the situation worse, and staff will take note of these fears. They will respect an individual's desire for confidentiality as far as possible; equally, they have a duty to the community as a

whole to take action on bullying and cannot stand by and allow it to continue once they are aware it is happening. They will make it clear to the pupil concerned that the School does not condone bullying and she will be reassured that she will be supported through any continuing difficulties.

ii) Investigation:

The staff concerned will investigate the situation carefully. On some occasions, there may be clear evidence in the form of written notes, emails or texts, for example, or staff and older pupils may have observed specific actions; on other occasions there may be only complaints from the victim and possibly a series of counter-accusations from other pupils. These should also be listened to, without condoning the bullying response.

Investigation may take a number of forms, depending, for example, on the apparent seriousness of the situation, the age of the pupils concerned and the level of distress involved. The 'bully' or 'bullies' will be talked to separately, initially, perhaps with other pupils who are not directly involved. It may be useful, if a group is involved, to ask them to write individual versions of events which can then be checked against each other; a meeting between 'bully' and 'victim' may be arranged, where a member of staff encourages an exchange of views, while making it clear that bullying behaviour is unacceptable.

Staff will consider carefully whether another member of staff should be present to take notes and whether individual pupils should be supported by a friend or another adult. This will normally be automatic in serious cases.

Recording: the member of staff to whom the bullying is reported will complete the Bullying Record Form, which will be passed to the girl's Tutor, Head of Year and or Senior Deputy Head. The Senior Deputy Head will maintain a central log of allegations and actions taken in order to establish whether patterns of bullying emerge, thereby aiding them in resolving the situations.

iii) Responses:

There are a number of options, depending on the seriousness of the situation, and the certainty with which responsibility can be attributed.

At the lowest level the aim will be to resolve the situation and re-establish reasonable relationships and acceptable behaviour as quickly as possible.

Staff will explain firmly and clearly the ways in which behaviour has been unacceptable and leave the pupils concerned in no doubt as to what constitutes bullying. They will make it clear that any evidence of bullying in the future will result in disciplinary action.

Staff will then discuss the future with both sides and establish agreed ground rules about any specific issues which may have arisen. A number of follow-up meetings may be arranged, so that developments can be monitored. The relevant staff (tutors, subject teacher, lunchtime supervisors, housestaff) will be informed so that they can watch the situation closely at all times.

An attempt will be made to help the bully/bullies change their behaviour.

Possible actions include setting up a meeting between the bully and the victim so that the bully can see the damage they have caused and choose to stop acting the way they are; restricting the bully's access to computers and digital devices and to the internet; monitoring closely the bully's use of the internet and other means of sending messages and images; searching the relevant files in the electronic devices of the alleged bully to obtain evidence (see Appendix 2); confiscation for a time of the device; sanctions.

Note: The Education Act 2011 empowers the Head and staff to examine data or files on a student's electronic device where there is good reason to do so. There is no need to have parental consent to do so. (See also DfE Anti-bullying guidance, July 2017).

If this process is not successful, and there is no obvious responsibility for continuing problems, other options such as a change of House or tutor group or teaching group may be considered in order to encourage the pupils concerned to make a fresh start.

It is sometimes the case that the 'victim', while not responsible for her treatment by others, can be shown how to modify her behaviour in ways which may help to avoid further conflict.

Counselling and / or coaching may be helpful for some of the individuals concerned (both victim and bully) and may be suggested.

Any action taken will be recorded, and marked "confidential" on the file of the pupil concerned.

Staff will consider carefully at what stage parents should be informed, if they are not already aware of what is happening. Some complaints of 'bullying' are the result of normal (albeit distressing) changes in friendships, temporary exam stress, friction within a group about a particular issue and so on. These are best dealt with in a low-key way, as part of the everyday running of the House or class, and the aim will be a speedy resolution and reconciliation without undue disruption to normal routine. Parents will not automatically be informed in such cases.

Parents of all the pupils involved will always be informed if a situation continues or becomes serious, or if it is established that behaviour which constitutes bullying has taken place.

If there is reasonable cause to suspect that, as a result of bullying, a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, 'significant harm' then the member of staff must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection, Richard Dain or Jenny Price, who, if they still have concerns, will report these to the local authority social care department. Wiltshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) can be contacted on 0300 456 0108 in office hours or on 0300 456 0100 out of office hours.

The contact numbers for Hampshire Children's Services are 0300 555 1384 during office hours and 0300 555 1373 out of hours.

Details of the referral procedures can be found on the 'What to do' flowchart in the staff rooms and in the boarding house offices.

iv) Discipline:

Where students have been involved in acts of unkindness which have caused some distress to another student, this will be dealt with on a pastoral level. Where appropriate, the student(s) involved will be given a School or Saturday detention and the parents informed.

Downloading or accessing pornographic or otherwise inappropriate/offensive material will be treated very seriously.

On the occasions where it is clear that serious bullying has taken place, and there is evidence that a particular individual or group bears responsibility, the following disciplinary measures may be taken, as appropriate, in addition to, or instead of, some of the responses outlined above:

- the bullying will be recorded on the student's School file and the parents notified
- suspension
- permanent exclusion

Where criminal acts are thought to have taken place, these will be reported to the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

The School will not inform third parties what disciplinary or pastoral steps are being taken in each individual case, but will let the victim's parents know the different approaches which might be taken, as outlined above.



The Anti-Bullying policy is reviewed annually and new staff and supply teachers are briefed on this when joining the school.



## Appendix 1

### What can you do to protect yourself online?

- Do not be under pressure by anyone to reveal personal information.
- Do not put information such as your full name, birthdays, addresses, mobile numbers etc on the internet
- Keep your password safe – treat it like your toothbrush – don't let anyone else use it, and change it, where possible, on a regular basis. 18% of victims whose identity details are stolen know the thief. Using hard-to-guess passwords with symbols or numbers will help to stop people hacking into your account and pretending to be you. Think about it – you wouldn't give someone you don't know on the street your personal information, so why do it online?
- Paedophiles use the Internet to reach their victims, very subtly, very cunningly using personal details. Identity thieves will use personal details to try to access a bank account, or to buy goods in someone else's name (a staggering 34% of victims of identity theft are teenagers). Cyberbullies could use these sorts of details to harass their victims.
- Always respect others. Remember that when you send a message to someone you cannot see the impact that your words or images may have on the other person. Show respect; be careful what you say online and what images you send. What you think is a joke may hurt someone else.
- If you receive a rude or nasty message or image about someone else, do not forward it – you could be accused of cyberbullying yourself. You could also be breaking the law.
- Do not retaliate or reply
- Print out any malicious messages or images and show them to a member of staff you trust, such as your tutor or housemistress, a teacher or the school chaplain
- Block the sender
- Remove the sender from your list of 'friends'
- Check your privacy settings and information sharing settings – you may wish to tighten these and restrict access to fewer people. If you do not know how to do this, ask
- It is illegal under the Protection of Children Act 1978 to create, possess, copy or distribute images or videos of young people under the age of 18 which are of an indecent or sexual nature – even if these are taken in 'fun' or involving 'willing' parties.
- Think before you engage in live-streaming or send any images, videos or text about yourself or someone else by email or mobile phone, or before you post information on a website.
- Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online for ever (some images and text have been online now for nearly 20 years). Even after pages or comments have been removed, copies may still be available. For example, Google creates a copy of the pages in its index which are stored as a cached version.

- Rightly or wrongly, some university admissions departments and employers are increasingly using the internet to do research on job applicants – if there are embarrassing images of you published there, imagine how they are going to treat your application.

**What should you do to prevent cyberbullying?**

- Always respect others – be careful what you do online, what you say and what images you send. Do not forward offensive material.
- Think before you send. What you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online for years.
- Block the bully. Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- Don't retaliate or reply! Replying to bullying messages is just what the bully wants.
- Make sure you tell. You have the right not to be harassed and bullied online.
- Tell an adult you trust – your parents, your Housemistress, your tutor, the School Chaplain or Nurse, any member of staff, the School Independent Listeners or a helpline like Childline on 0800 11 11.
- Save the evidence. Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. These will help you to demonstrate to others what is happening, and can be used by the School, Internet provider, mobile phone company or even the police, to investigate the cyberbully.
- Tell the provider of the service that you have been bullied (e.g. your mobile phone operator or social network provider). Check their websites to see where to report.
- Don't just stand there – if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.

## Appendix 2

### Searching electronic devices

The school expressly reserves the right to search files on personal electronic devices brought into the school, as advised by the Department for Education.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Searches may be carried out where the pupil is reasonably suspected of being involved in cyberbullying or where the pupil is reasonably believed to be storing pornography on her device.

Searches will be undertaken in the following way:

- the device will be searched in the presence of the pupil, who can assist in identifying the offensive files, and another member of staff;
- the search will be conducted in a proper manner – where possible avoiding accessing areas which are clearly not relevant to the specific information the School has a legitimate interest in finding, thereby respecting the privacy of the individual as far as possible;
- the parents will be informed that a search of a pupil's device has taken place;
- a record will be kept of the incident – including the reasons why the search took place and the outcome

## Appendix 3

### USEFUL WEBSITES:

<http://www.beatbullying.org/> Anti-bullying resources

<http://childnet.com> : resources for young people to learn how to protect themselves

<http://www.digizen.org> which provides online safety information

<http://www.kidscape.org.uk> advice about dealing with bullying

<http://www.safekids.com/> to help children and families stay safe

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk> Resources from CEOP

<http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> to report abuse