

Anti-Bullying Policy (Senior School)



CATERHAM
SCHOOL

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Next Review Due: September 2027

Policy Statement

The aim of the policy is to prevent bullying of any sort; to promote a culture of kindness and one in which bystanders are courageous and thus ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including Trustees, teaching and professional services staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the School policy on bullying. The aim of the policy is to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it. Bullying (which necessarily includes cyberbullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying) is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in our community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously. Staff are trained to recognise bullying and know which pastoral colleagues to inform verbally, via email or via CHIP in order to ensure that any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively.

This policy is available on the school website, the shared staff area on the school network and on request from the Senior Deputy Head in hard copy. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Exclusions, Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Wellbeing Policy and Scheme of Work

This policy should be read in conjunction with a range of public documents and statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies, July 2017
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022
- Equality Act, 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 2015: 0 to 25 years

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as any hurtful behaviour which intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally. It is usually repeated over a period of time but it can be a single incident. It is often difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, and it is often motivated by prejudice.

The School's Safeguarding Policy makes clear Caterham's zero tolerance stance regarding child-on-child abuse, with particular reference to sexual harassment, and that it will not be passed off as 'just banter' or 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Examples of unacceptable bullying behaviour include:

- Physical (including sexual) assault
- Verbal abuse, by name calling, teasing or making offensive remarks
- Online abuse, which is the use of digital technology by an individual or group to intentionally cause harm, distress or humiliation to another person. Examples include abuse through social media, messaging services, email, photographs, videos, online gaming and other online platforms. It also includes the making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, including images that are AI-generated or digitally manipulated, where relevant.
- Indirect emotional tormenting by excluding from social groups or spreading malicious rumours

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance, manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidating but is often hidden and subtle.

Protected Characteristics

Having a protected characteristic means you have a right not to be treated less favourably, or subjected to an unfair disadvantage, by reason of that characteristic.

Bullying necessarily includes any actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair, colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs and/or disability, or because a child is adopted or a carer. The School takes such actions or comments extremely seriously and will react at once to any such allegations.

The impact of bullying

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough and is among the highest concerns that parents have about their children's safety and wellbeing. Bullying is also a primary concern of children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of its victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on some young people's lives. It can be psychologically damaging and, at worst, it has been a factor in pupil suicide.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victims. All pupils deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is.

Pupils are educated through our Wellbeing programme, assemblies, and the wider curriculum and culture to raise awareness, the celebration of differences between people (with particular reference to Protected Characteristics in, for instance, the Wellbeing curriculum, to help prevent prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) the importance of avoiding prejudice, and understanding the criminal laws that apply to harassment, discrimination, assault and threatening behaviour. If staff feel that a criminal offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

We acknowledge that sometimes group dynamics can lead to negative behaviour and that assigning victim and aggressor labels can be counterproductive. In such situations we aim to educate the group around appropriate, healthy and positive behaviour through role play and other means.

Anti-Bullying Procedure

What to look for

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

Members of staff and all members of the community must be alert to the signs of bullying; legal responsibilities are known and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with the policy. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents, most people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes people, either through lethargy, peer group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on fail to take action.

What to do

The way to stamp out bullying is for people to be aware of the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise.

If you are the victim:

1. If you feel able to, make the bully aware that you think that what he/she is doing is wrong.
2. Share your feelings with someone else
3. If possible talk to a member of Staff, your Tutor, your Head of Year/Department or any of the Safeguarding and wellbeing team about the incident. Boarders may prefer to talk to their Housemaster or Housemistress or a Matron.
4. If you would rather not go straight to a member of staff, talk to your friends; talk to senior pupils in your House, a mentor or one of the prefects; talk to the School Counsellors or any trusted adult. They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action, or will be able to involve other people who can. There are also people outside the School who would be willing to help.

You may also wish to contact any of the below:

Childline: 0800 1111

Children's Commissioner for England (Help at Hand): freephone 0800 528 0731

Email: help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

The School Counsellors may be contacted by e-mail: counsellor@caterhamschool.co.uk

Online counselling service: www.kooth.com

Independent Listener: **Rachel Hart**

Tel: 07532 232839

Email: Independentlistener1811@gmail.com

Procedure if a pupil should witness bullying behaviour:

1. Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that in your opinion what is happening to them is wrong.
2. Courageously report the bullying behaviour or accompany the victim to a trusted adult.
3. Use the **OurCaterham app** on your iPad to anonymously flag a concern to the Safeguarding Team or to call out any examples of negative culture.

Procedure for members of staff should you witness an incident of bullying or it is reported to you:

1. Reassure and support the pupils involved.
2. Advise them that you are required to pass details on to the relevant member of the pastoral team. (Tutor, Head of Year, boarding Housemaster or Housemistress, a member of the Safeguarding Team, a Deputy Head).
3. Inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible. In the case of incidents involving boarders, the Tutor, Head of Year, boarding Housemaster or Housemistress, Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding) should all be informed.
4. Record-keeping procedure: In the Senior School, these are recorded by the Assistant Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing). Both will keep a central log of all complaints or incidents of unkindness, necessarily including bullying, and record the way they were addressed. The logs also record whether such incidents were based on protected characteristics. Senior school bullying information is shared and monitored with the Senior Deputy Head and the Headmaster.

What will happen?

The victim will be interviewed by their Tutor or Head of Year or member of the pastoral team, on their own, and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss their own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim and the perpetrator are given support and advice, and counselling is suggested if deemed appropriate.

Once the Tutor and Head of Year are clear that a bullying offence has been committed, the bully and any others involved will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them.

In the first instance, and depending on the severity of the case, usually the Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing) or Assistant Head (Pastoral and Boarding) will interview the pupil or pupils whose behaviour has caused distress and give them a warning, making it clear that any further incident (or discussion about the current incident) would be considered to be further bullying. It will be made clear why the behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support and counselling may be offered. A commensurate sanction may be given.

If it is appropriate, or it is a pupil's second offence, the Senior Deputy Head will become involved. The following sanctions may be applied in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

- **Formal Warning:** the Senior Deputy Head will speak to the pupils involved and will contact the parents or guardians giving details of the offence and inviting them in to School to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given a Formal School Warning. Their support for the School's actions should be enlisted if possible.
- **Suspension** at the Headmaster's discretion (see the School's Exclusion, Suspension, Removal and Review Policy).
- **Exclusion** at the Headmaster's discretion (see the School's Exclusion, Suspension, Removal and Review Policy).

These are minimum sanctions. In very serious cases, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm, the incident is treated as a child protection (CP) concern and it will be necessary to make a report to Children's Services or the Police.

The School will raise awareness of pupils' needs through staff training, including the needs of SEND and LGBTQ+ pupils, and take action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur. The messages contained in this policy are explained to Senior pupils in person by the Assistant Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing) or the Senior Deputy Head at the start of each new academic year.

Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for pupil committees and groups, such as the school prefect body, and feedback will be taken to School Council. It will also be re-visited as necessary during Wellbeing sessions to all years and reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves, such as drama and physical education. Opportunities will also be sought to allow parents to contribute to the School's actions to prevent bullying.

Regular pupil surveys will be used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that pupils might have experienced.

Incidents of reported bullying will be followed up by tutors, including those in the EYFS setting and Heads of Year/Boarding Housemasters and Housemistress, to monitor that the problem has been resolved. The log of bullying offences will be reviewed by the Assistant Head (Pastoral and Wellbeing) and the pastoral team regularly at Heads of Year meetings to watch for patterns and check that the policy is effective.

We are fully confident that the vast majority of Caterhamians will agree with our sentiments on bullying. It is our intention to identify and take action against those who do not.

Further References

[Preventing and tackling bullying: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, DfE, July 2017](#)

The School is associated with the Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIREs)

Childline: 0800 1111: <http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>