



KINGSTONE ACADEMY TRUST APPROVED POLICY DOCUMENT

Anti-Bullying Policy	
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1. Statement of Principles

At Kingstone High School, we are committed to creating a calm, safe and respectful environment where every student feels valued, included and able to learn. Bullying is incompatible with our vision of *Achieving Success Together* because it undermines relationships, damages wellbeing and interferes with every student's right to feel safe within our school community.

We believe that positive relationships are built through high expectations, kindness, mutual respect and personal responsibility. Preventing bullying is therefore not simply about responding when incidents occur; it is about creating a culture in which bullying is less likely to happen in the first place. Through our behaviour curriculum, clear expectations and consistent routines, we explicitly teach students how to build positive relationships, resolve conflict appropriately and treat others with dignity and respect.

We recognise that students are still developing socially and emotionally and may sometimes make poor choices. Where bullying is identified, our response will be timely, fair and proportionate. We will work to stop the behaviour, safeguard those affected, hold students accountable for their actions, and provide appropriate support to help prevent further incidents.

Everyone within our school community has a role to play in preventing bullying. Staff, students, parents and carers all share responsibility for creating an environment where concerns are reported, taken seriously and addressed consistently.

1.1 Statement of Principles

It is the expectation within Kingstone Academy Trust that:

- every student has the right to feel safe, respected and included;
- every member of the school community will be treated with dignity and respect;
- all reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated fairly;
- students will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying, whether they involve themselves or others;
- bullying will be addressed promptly through appropriate support, education and, where necessary, consequences in line with the school's Behaviour Policy;
- prejudice-related bullying and discriminatory behaviour will always be treated seriously;
- safeguarding considerations will be central to the school's response to bullying;
- parents and carers will be expected to work in partnership with the school to promote positive relationships and address concerns; and
- this policy will be implemented consistently by all members of staff.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out Kingstone High School's approach to preventing, identifying and responding to bullying. It provides a clear framework for promoting positive relationships, encouraging the reporting of concerns and ensuring that all allegations of bullying are managed consistently, fairly and proportionately.

This policy applies to all students whenever they are:

- on the school site;

- travelling to and from school;
- participating in educational visits or school activities;
- wearing school uniform; or
- otherwise identifiable as a student of Kingstone High School where their behaviour could reasonably affect the school community or its reputation.

Where bullying occurs outside school, including online, the school will respond where the behaviour could have an impact on a student's safety, wellbeing or education, or where it affects the orderly running of the school.

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Behaviour Policy;
- KAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- E-Safety Guidance;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality Information and Objectives; and
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy.

2.1 Aims

This policy aims to:

- create a school culture in which bullying is less likely to occur;
- ensure every student feels safe, respected and included;
- provide a clear definition of bullying and distinguish it from other forms of conflict or poor behaviour;
- encourage students, staff, parents and carers to report concerns at the earliest opportunity;
- ensure reports of bullying are investigated promptly, fairly and sensitively;
- provide appropriate support for students affected by bullying;
- ensure those responsible for bullying are held accountable and supported to make positive changes;
- promote positive relationships through education, restorative practice and high expectations; and
- fulfil the school's safeguarding and statutory responsibilities in relation to bullying.

2.2 Equality and Inclusion

The school will implement this policy fairly, consistently and without discrimination. In applying this policy, the school will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty and its statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

3. Our Anti-Bullying Culture

At Kingstone High School, we believe that positive relationships are fundamental to creating a calm, safe and purposeful learning environment. Our vision of *Achieving Success Together* is built upon the principle that every member of our school community should feel respected, valued and able to learn free from fear or intimidation.

Preventing bullying is not solely about responding to incidents when they occur. It is about establishing a culture where kindness, respect and personal responsibility are consistently promoted, positive relationships are actively developed, and students understand both the impact of their behaviour and their responsibility towards others.

Our approach to bullying is underpinned by high expectations alongside high levels of support. We believe that every student is capable of treating others with dignity and respect, and we explicitly teach the behaviours that help students develop positive relationships, resolve disagreements appropriately and contribute positively to the wider school community.

3.1 Everyone's Responsibility

Creating a school free from bullying is a shared responsibility.

Every member of the Kingstone High School community is expected to contribute to a culture in which bullying is challenged, concerns are reported promptly, and everyone feels confident that they will be listened to and supported.

Students are encouraged not to be passive bystanders. If they witness bullying, or believe that another student may be experiencing bullying, they are expected to report their concerns to a trusted member of staff. Reporting concerns is an important part of keeping our school community safe and should always be viewed as acting responsibly.

Students are also expected not to encourage, reinforce or participate in bullying behaviour, either in person or online. This includes laughing at, sharing, recording, forwarding or otherwise supporting behaviour that causes harm to another person.

3.2 Bullying and Safeguarding

The school recognises that bullying may also be an indicator of wider safeguarding concerns.

Where appropriate, reports of bullying will be considered alongside any relevant safeguarding, SEND, medical or pastoral information to ensure that students receive the support they need. Where concerns indicate that a student may be at risk of harm, the school will respond in accordance with its Safeguarding Policy and statutory guidance. Safeguarding considerations will not prevent appropriate consequences from being applied where bullying has occurred but may influence the wider support offered to those involved.

4. Defining Bullying

For the purposes of this policy, Kingstone High School adopts the Department for Education's definition of bullying as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.

For behaviour to be considered bullying under this policy, it will normally involve all of the following characteristics:

- **intentional** – the behaviour is intended to cause physical or emotional harm;
- **repeated** – the behaviour occurs more than once, or there is evidence that it forms part of an ongoing pattern; and
- **an imbalance of power** – the individual displaying the behaviour seeks to exploit a real or perceived imbalance of power, making it difficult for the other person to defend themselves.

Bullying can occur between individuals or groups and may take place in person or online. It can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, background or ability.

4.1 Bullying and Conflict

Not all incidents of poor behaviour or disagreement constitute bullying.

Children and young people will sometimes experience friendship difficulties, disagreements or conflict. These situations may involve unkind behaviour and should always be addressed by the school; however, where there is no ongoing pattern of behaviour or imbalance of power, they will not normally be classified as bullying.

Examples of behaviour that may not constitute bullying include:

- one-off disagreements or arguments;
- friendship fallouts;
- isolated acts of unkindness;
- occasional teasing where there is no intention to cause harm or ongoing pattern of behaviour; and
- conflict between students of equal power where both parties are able to resolve the disagreement appropriately.

These behaviours remain unacceptable and will be addressed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy where appropriate.

4.2 One-Off Serious Incidents

Whilst bullying is normally characterised by repeated behaviour, the school recognises that a single serious incident may have a significant impact on a student's safety or wellbeing.

Where this occurs, the behaviour will be investigated thoroughly and responded to appropriately. Depending upon the circumstances, the behaviour may be addressed as serious misconduct, a safeguarding concern, or another breach of the school's Behaviour Policy, even where it does not meet the definition of bullying.

4.3 Types of Bullying

Bullying may take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **physical** – hitting, pushing, kicking, damaging belongings or any unwanted physical contact;
- **verbal** – name-calling, insults, intimidation, threats or persistent offensive language;
- **social or relational** – deliberately excluding others, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships or encouraging others to isolate someone;
- **online (cyber)** – using technology to intimidate, threaten, humiliate or repeatedly target another person through messages, social media, gaming platforms or the sharing of images or videos; and
- **prejudice-related** – bullying motivated by prejudice or hostility towards a person's actual or perceived characteristics.

4.4 Prejudice-Related Bullying

The school takes all forms of prejudice-related bullying extremely seriously.

This includes bullying related to a person's actual or perceived:

- **race or ethnicity;**
- **religion or belief;**
- **disability or special educational needs;**
- **sex;**
- **sexual orientation;**
- **gender reassignment; or**
- **any other protected characteristic identified within the Equality Act 2010.**

Incidents of this nature may also constitute discriminatory behaviour or hate incidents and will be considered alongside the school's safeguarding responsibilities. In some circumstances, bullying may also constitute child-on-child abuse. Where this is the case, concerns will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and relevant statutory guidance.

4.5 Online Bullying

Online bullying can have the same serious impact as bullying that takes place face to face and will be treated with equal seriousness.

The school may respond to incidents occurring outside the school day or away from the school site where the behaviour:

- affects the safety or wellbeing of a student;
- has an impact on learning or relationships within school;
- constitutes child-on-child abuse or another safeguarding concern; or
- could reasonably affect the orderly running or reputation of the school.

Students are expected to use technology responsibly and in accordance with the school's e-safety guidance and mobile phone/smart technology policy.

5. Preventing Bullying

Kingstone High School is committed to creating a culture in which bullying is less likely to occur. We recognise that the most effective way to prevent bullying is through clear expectations, positive relationships and a consistent approach to behaviour, rather than relying solely on responding to incidents after they have happened.

Preventing bullying is an integral part of everyday school life and is embedded within our behaviour curriculum, pastoral support and wider personal development programme.

5.1 Promoting Positive Relationships

Students are explicitly taught the importance of treating others with kindness, dignity and respect. Through daily interactions, lessons and wider school experiences, we promote behaviours that encourage empathy, inclusion and responsible decision-making.

Staff are expected to model respectful relationships and create classrooms where students feel safe, valued and able to contribute without fear of intimidation or discrimination.

5.2 Behaviour Curriculum

Our behaviour curriculum teaches students the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours needed to contribute positively to the school community.

This includes learning about:

- respectful relationships;
- recognising the impact of bullying and discriminatory behaviour;
- managing disagreement and resolving conflict appropriately;
- responsible use of technology and social media;
- online safety and digital citizenship;
- celebrating diversity and challenging prejudice; and
- how and when to seek help for themselves or others.

These themes are delivered through the curriculum, assemblies, tutor time and other appropriate opportunities throughout the academic year.

5.3 Encouraging Students to Speak Up

Students are encouraged to report concerns about bullying as soon as possible, whether they involve themselves or another student.

We want every student to feel confident that:

- they will be listened to;
- their concerns will be taken seriously;
- appropriate action will be taken; and
- they will be supported throughout the process.

Students should never feel that reporting bullying is "telling tales". Speaking up helps to protect others and contributes to a safer school community.

5.4 Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

Positive relationships between school and home are an important part of preventing bullying.

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- discuss respectful behaviour and positive relationships with their child;
- report concerns promptly if they believe bullying may have occurred;
- work constructively with the school throughout any investigation; and
- reinforce the school's expectations and values at home.

By working together, we can identify concerns early and provide timely support for all students involved.

6. Reporting Concerns

Kingstone High School encourages students, parents, carers and staff to report concerns about bullying as early as possible. Early reporting enables concerns to be investigated promptly, appropriate support to be provided and, where necessary, action to be taken before behaviours escalate.

All reports will be treated seriously, handled sensitively and investigated fairly. Students will never be criticised for raising a genuine concern, even where an investigation concludes that the behaviour does not meet the definition of bullying.

6.1 Reporting by Students

Students are encouraged to speak to a trusted member of staff if they:

- believe they are being bullied;
- witness bullying involving another student; or
- have concerns about behaviour that may place another student at risk.

Students can report concerns to any member of staff, including:

- their Form Tutor;
- a class teacher;
- their Head of Year;
- the Pastoral Team;
- the SEND Team (where appropriate); or
- any other trusted adult within the school.

Students should report concerns as soon as possible so that appropriate support can be provided.

6.2 Reporting by Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in helping the school identify and address bullying.

If a parent or carer believes their child may be experiencing bullying, or has concerns about another student's behaviour, they should contact the school as soon as possible. Concerns should normally be raised through the student's Form Tutor or Head of Year, although they may be directed to any appropriate member of staff.

The school will acknowledge concerns, investigate the information available and maintain appropriate communication throughout the process. While confidentiality may limit the information that can be shared about other students, parents and carers will be informed of the outcome of the investigation where appropriate and reassured that suitable action has been taken.

6.3 Reporting by Staff

All members of staff have a responsibility to take reports of bullying seriously.

Where a concern is raised, staff will:

- listen carefully to those involved;
- record relevant information in line with school procedures;
- report concerns to the appropriate pastoral leader without delay; and
- escalate any safeguarding concerns immediately in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Staff should never dismiss concerns without appropriate consideration, even where it is not immediately clear whether the behaviour constitutes bullying.

6.4 Anonymous Reports

The school recognises that some students may feel reluctant to report bullying openly.

Anonymous information may help staff identify concerns or emerging patterns of behaviour. However, because anonymous reports cannot always be verified or explored fully, the school's ability to investigate may be limited.

Where anonymous information indicates that a student may be at risk of harm or raises safeguarding concerns, the school will take appropriate action to assess and respond to the information available.

The school recognises that, on rare occasions, concerns may be reported maliciously or with the intention of causing harm to another person. Where there is evidence that a deliberately false allegation has been made, this will be addressed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. However, students will never be discouraged from raising genuine concerns in good faith, even where an investigation concludes that bullying has not occurred.

7. Responding to Bullying

All reports of bullying will be responded to promptly, fairly and proportionately. The school's priority is to ensure the immediate safety and wellbeing of those involved, establish the facts of the incident and take appropriate action to stop bullying and prevent it from recurring.

Every report will be considered on its individual merits. The school's response will take account of the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the needs of those involved and any relevant safeguarding, SEND or medical considerations.

7.1 Investigation

When concerns about bullying are reported, the school will carry out an appropriate investigation to establish the facts. The school will begin investigating concerns as soon as reasonably practicable. While the length of an investigation will depend upon the complexity of the concerns and the availability of evidence, the school will seek to complete investigations promptly and keep parents and carers appropriately informed throughout the process.

This may include:

- speaking with the student making the report;
- speaking with the student(s) alleged to have displayed bullying behaviour;
- gathering information from witnesses where appropriate;
- reviewing available evidence, including written statements, online content or CCTV where available; and
- considering any relevant pastoral, safeguarding or behavioural information.

Decisions will be based on the information available and made on the balance of probabilities. Where appropriate, the school will keep parents and carers informed throughout the investigation, recognising that confidentiality may limit the information that can be shared about other students.

7.2 Supporting Students

Where concerns about bullying are raised, the school will consider what support is required for all students involved.

Support may include:

- pastoral support;
- regular check-ins with a trusted member of staff;
- restorative conversations, where appropriate;
- adjustments to reduce the likelihood of further incidents;
- referral to additional support services where required; and
- safeguarding intervention where appropriate.

Where restorative approaches are considered, these will only be used where they are safe, appropriate and in the best interests of those involved. No student will be required to participate in a

restorative meeting or conversation if doing so may cause further distress or place them at risk. Support will be tailored to the individual needs of each student and reviewed where necessary.

7.3 Responding to Bullying Behaviour

Where bullying is substantiated, the school will take appropriate action to stop the behaviour, safeguard those affected and reduce the likelihood of repetition. Depending upon the circumstances, this may include:

- restorative work;
- educational interventions;
- behaviour support;
- parental involvement;
- behaviour sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy; and
- safeguarding action where appropriate.

The school recognises that consequences alone are unlikely to change behaviour in the long term. Wherever appropriate, students will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour, take responsibility for their actions and develop more positive ways of interacting with others.

7.4 Recording and Monitoring

All substantiated incidents of bullying will be recorded in accordance with the school's behaviour recording procedures.

Records will be used to:

- monitor patterns and trends;
- identify repeat concerns;
- inform pastoral support and safeguarding decisions;
- evaluate the effectiveness of interventions; and
- support ongoing monitoring by school leaders.

Follow-up conversations will take place with students to ensure that bullying has stopped and that any support remains effective. Monitoring information may also be used to inform staff training, curriculum development and wider preventative strategies.

Where appropriate, findings from this monitoring may also be reported to trustees as part of the school's regular monitoring and assurance arrangements.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Preventing bullying is a shared responsibility. Every member of the Kingstone High School community has an important role in creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

8.1 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- ensuring the school has appropriate policies to prevent and respond to bullying;
- monitoring the effectiveness of the school's approach through appropriate reporting; and
- ensuring the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities.

8.2 Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that:

- this policy is implemented consistently across the school;
- staff receive appropriate guidance and training;
- reports of bullying are managed fairly and consistently;
- appropriate systems are in place to record and monitor incidents; and
- bullying is addressed as part of the school's wider safeguarding and behaviour culture.

8.3 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- promoting positive relationships and modelling respectful behaviour;
- maintaining high expectations of student conduct;
- taking all reports of bullying seriously;
- responding promptly to concerns in accordance with this policy;
- recording and reporting concerns using school procedures; and
- contributing to a culture in which students feel safe to report concerns.

8.4 Students

Students are expected to:

- treat others with dignity, kindness and respect;
- contribute positively to the school's culture;
- report concerns about bullying involving themselves or others;
- support their peers by acting responsibly rather than ignoring or encouraging bullying; and
- cooperate honestly with any investigation.

8.5 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- support the school's expectations for respectful behaviour;

- raise concerns promptly where they believe bullying may have occurred;
- work constructively with the school throughout any investigation;
- encourage their child to report concerns and seek support when needed; and
- reinforce positive relationships and responsible behaviour at home.

9 - Monitoring and Review

The school will regularly monitor bullying concerns to identify patterns, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and inform future preventative work.

- Information may be reviewed to identify:
- recurring incidents or patterns of behaviour;
- trends involving particular year groups, locations or forms of bullying;
- the effectiveness of support and interventions;
- any emerging safeguarding concerns; and
- opportunities to further strengthen the school's positive culture.

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the school to ensure it remains effective, reflects current statutory guidance and continues to meet the needs of the school community.

Appendix A – Examples of Bullying and Non-Bullying Behaviour

This appendix provides examples to help distinguish bullying from other forms of unacceptable behaviour. Every incident will be considered on its own merits, taking account of the available evidence, the context and the impact on those involved.

The examples below are intended as guidance only and should not be treated as an exhaustive list.

Scenario	Bullying?	Reason
Two students argue during lunch and apologise afterwards.	No	This is a one-off disagreement with no ongoing pattern or imbalance of power.
Two friends fall out and stop speaking for a few days.	No	Friendship difficulties are not normally bullying, although support may still be required.
A student deliberately pushes another student once during an argument.	Not normally	This is serious poor behaviour and will be addressed through the Behaviour Policy, but a single incident would not usually meet the definition of bullying.
A student repeatedly insults another student's appearance over several weeks despite being asked to stop.	Yes	The behaviour is intentional, repeated and causes emotional harm.
A group deliberately excludes the same student from activities every lunchtime.	Yes	Repeated social exclusion intended to isolate another student constitutes bullying.
A student repeatedly spreads false rumours about another student online.	Yes	Ongoing online behaviour intended to harm another person's reputation or wellbeing.
A student sends several abusive messages through social media over a number of days.	Yes	Repeated online abuse is a form of cyberbullying.
A student makes a single racist remark.	Possibly	A single incident may not meet the definition of bullying but remains serious discriminatory behaviour and will be investigated and addressed appropriately.
A student repeatedly targets another student because of their race, religion, disability or another protected characteristic.	Yes	This is repeated prejudice-related bullying and will always be treated seriously.
One student repeatedly threatens another who feels unable to defend themselves.	Yes	The behaviour demonstrates repetition, intentional harm and an imbalance of power.

A student is accidentally left out of one group activity.	No	Accidental or isolated exclusion is not normally bullying, although staff may intervene where appropriate.
Students exchange insults during a sporting activity before resolving the disagreement.	No	This is conflict rather than bullying, although inappropriate behaviour may still require intervention.

Important Points

When determining whether behaviour constitutes bullying, the school will consider:

- **whether the behaviour was intentional;**
- **whether it formed part of a repeated pattern;**
- **whether there was an actual or perceived imbalance of power;**
- **the impact of the behaviour on the student concerned;**
- **the context in which the behaviour occurred; and**
- **any relevant safeguarding, SEND or medical considerations.**

Not all unacceptable behaviour is bullying. However, all incidents of poor behaviour will be addressed appropriately in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy, and serious one-off incidents may result in significant consequences even where they do not meet the definition of bullying.

Appendix B – If You Are Being Bullied

not every report will meet the school's Everyone has the right to feel safe, respected and included at Kingstone High School. If you think you are being bullied, it is important that you tell someone. We will take your concerns seriously, listen carefully and work with you to help resolve the situation.

If you think you are being bullied:

- **tell a trusted member of staff as soon as possible;**
- **speak to your Form Tutor, Head of Year or another adult you trust;**
- **if the bullying is taking place online, keep any messages, images or screenshots where possible and avoid deleting them before speaking to a member of staff;**
- **avoid responding with aggression or retaliating, as this may make the situation more difficult to resolve;**
- **continue to report concerns if the behaviour does not stop or starts again; and**
- **remember that asking for help is the right thing to do and helps us keep everyone safe.**

You can also speak to your parent or carer, who can contact the school on your behalf if you would prefer. Every concern will be considered carefully. While definition of bullying, every student has the right to be listened to, supported and treated fairly.

Appendix C – If You Witness Bullying

Creating a safe and respectful school is everyone's responsibility. If you witness bullying, you can make a significant difference by acting responsibly and seeking help.

If you witness behaviour that you believe may be bullying:

- **report your concerns to a member of staff as soon as possible;**
- **support the student being targeted where it is safe and appropriate to do so;**
- **avoid encouraging, joining in with or sharing bullying behaviour, including online;**
- **do not forward, like or comment on hurtful messages, images or videos;**
- **never assume that someone else has already reported the incident; and**
- **cooperate honestly if you are asked to provide information during an investigation.**

Reporting bullying is not "telling tales". It is about protecting others and helping to create a school where everyone feels safe, respected and able to learn.

By speaking up, you help us to address concerns promptly, support those who need it and maintain the positive culture that we expect throughout Kingstone High School.

Appendix D – Responding to Reports of Bullying

The flowchart below provides a simplified overview of the school's usual response to reports of bullying. Whilst every incident is considered on its own merits, concerns will normally progress through the stages outlined below to ensure they are investigated fairly, responded to appropriately and monitored effectively.

- **Concern Reported**
- **Initial Safeguarding Assessment**
- **Investigation Commences**
- **Evidence Gathered**
- **Findings Reached**
- **Support & Behaviour Response**
- **Monitoring & Follow-up**