



SHREWSBURY HOUSE
PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School recognises the seriousness of all forms of bullying and takes all concerns raised seriously.

We recognise that we owe a duty of care to all of the pupils who attend Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School both as part of our responsibility for child protection and to enable the children to gain full benefit from their education.

We have a strong anti-bullying culture in the school. Bullying in any form is not acceptable in the School and it affects young people's confidence, self-esteem, attendance and attainment and can cause great psychological damage.

The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is made available to prospective and current parents through its publication on the School Website.

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher, the Head or Deputy Head immediately. Parents also have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the School. In the event that parents feel that a situation has not been resolved satisfactorily, they should refer to the school's Complaints Procedure.

As laid out in the DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' non-statutory guidance (revised July 2017): "Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences."

The School has referred to the DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' non-statutory guidance (revised July 2017) and 'Cyber-Bullying: Advice for Head Teachers and School Staff 2014' when developing this policy, which also reflects the guidance given in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2024) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated February 2024).

Aims and Objectives

All children at Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School have the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the School community achieve their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this from being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. The School promotes respect, equality and mutual tolerance.

Should a child think that bullying exists, they must feel confident enough to approach a member of staff to ask for help and this policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any concerns raised about bullying.

Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School takes an active approach to promoting good behaviour and respect for others, seeking to ensure that bullying in any form does not occur in the first place and we promote an anti-bullying culture. We aim to educate the pupils about people's differences and show them how we are all different and yet equal, as a way to help prevent bullying occurring, using such methods as both formal and informal discussions in assemblies, PSHE sessions, and in class. We also focus on values of respect for one another and considering how our actions affect others.

However, when bullying does occur, we respond promptly and firmly. We also seek to ensure that all school staff and pupils have the tools and confidence they need to prevent and tackle bullying whenever and wherever it occurs. If there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm as a result of a bullying incident, this will be treated as a child protection matter.

Definition

Bullying can be defined as:

Behaviour that may be repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, deliberate exclusion, or complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and threatening. Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. This could lead to peer on peer / child on child abuse.

At Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School, staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Bullying goes against the School's policy on equal opportunities.

Cyberbullying

Cyber-bullying can be defined as: 'the deliberate use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) - particularly mobile phones and the internet, including photographs, email and social networking sites to upset someone else.' Social Network sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat are now widely used and do provide increased opportunity for cyber bullying through misuse of photographs or methods such as 'fraping' (logging in as somebody else and pretending to be them). The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen at any time, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

We are aware of the ease by which pupils have access to ICT and also the potential for great harm (and great good) that such access allows, so we seek to educate pupils, staff and parents/carers to the possibilities and

dangers of cyber-bullying and to show that it will be treated as seriously as any other form of bullying. Staff, pupils and parents are made aware of both the good and injurious potential of available technologies and reminded of their roles in the protection of the pupils at school and at home. An internet safety training programme is in place for both pupils and parents, with such groups as ChildNet used to deliver this, alongside our own ongoing education. This includes guidance on sharing personal information online, age-appropriate information on grooming, warnings over the potential content of internet sites, and 'what to do' guide if you encounter a problem online, while also reinforcing the seriousness of using technologies to tease, threaten or bully others.

A suitable filter system operated by The London Grid For Learning, is in place on school based internet facilities and clear rules are in place for the use of computer systems at school.

Cyberbullying (along with other forms of bullying) of any member of the School community will not be tolerated.

- All incidents of cyberbullying reported to the School will be recorded.
- There are clear procedures in place to investigate incidents or allegations of cyberbullying.
- Pupils, staff and parents/carers will be advised to keep a record of the alleged bullying as evidence.
- The School will take steps to identify the bully, where possible and appropriate. This may include examining school system logs, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and police if necessary.
- Pupils, staff and parents/carers will be required to work with the School to support the approach to cyberbullying. Please refer to the e-Safety Policy for further guidance on cyberbullying.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the School Staff should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may in turn refer this to the Local Authority Children's Social Care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the School may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child committing the act of bullying.

Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it can cause great psychological damage, so it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. Where it is felt that such an offence may have been committed, the Head would seek assistance from the Police.

Equality Act 2010

At Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School we seek to eradicate discrimination and to comply with The Equality Act 2010 by:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- This includes any intentional hurt, emotional or physical against particular groups e.g. on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability or because a child is

adopted or is a carer, directly or through cyber technology, including social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email.

- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Signs of bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- unwillingness to come to school;
- displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work;
- personal possessions suddenly go missing;
- diminishing levels of self-confidence;
- unexplained cuts and/or bruises;
- frequent absence;
- choosing the company of adults;
- displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact; difficulty in sleeping, bad dreams and/or bed wetting; behaviour inconsistent with the child's character.
- concern over the use of technology

It must be emphasised that these are guidelines to possible symptoms, although there may be other causes for some of them, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents/carers and teachers. We would differentiate between what is intentional and unintentional. Other unintentional behaviour can hurt a victim, either physically or psychologically. This is not acceptable and requires guidance, but we would not include it in our definition of bullying which we would emphasise is something that is intentional.

Strategy to Identify Incidents of Bullying

In order to prevent bullying occurring and to identify potential incidents of bullying we carry out the following strategies:

- staff are diligent in fulfilling their supervision duties and make themselves clearly visible at playtimes;
- appropriate behaviour should be normal practice; regular reminders of playground behaviour are issued to staff and discussed with the children.
- all staff watch and check for early signs of distress in pupils;
- all staff listen and act when alleged incidents of bullying are raised by others;

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Cases of Alleged Bullying

At Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School, measures are in place encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of the pupils and in particular preventing all bullying amongst pupils. It is important to recognise that sometimes due to the age of the pupils, they are still very much learning how to conduct themselves well in a variety of social situations and sometimes there will be no deliberate intention to cause concern or upset to another pupil; nevertheless, at times inappropriate social behaviour could be misunderstood as bullying and it is important that all such concerns are looked into thoroughly.

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. Staff must try to remain neutral when dealing with a case of alleged bullying and try to deliberately avoid direct questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each child must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping any inappropriate conduct or perceived bullying from recurring if it is taking place. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too - that is why they bully. Communication is the key to addressing bullying.

- Discussions with the victim, following Safeguarding best practices. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – listen, believe, act. An account of events will be written.
- Identify the potential bully/bullies. Check with other witnesses if relevant. Advise the Head or Deputy Head.
- Particular care should be taken in the investigation of any alleged incidents relating to SEND pupils and those with other protected characteristics.
- Discussions with the potential bully. Ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at Shrewsbury House Pre-Preparatory School. An account of this will be written.
- If they do not own up, and you believe it is merited to do so, investigate further.

If allegations are proven, the following school procedures are in place:

- The bully should be helped to recognise their unsociable behaviour, if it is relevant to do so and offered support to modify that behaviour.
- Inform all relevant staff of the situation.
- Where a child is deliberately aggressive, for example, in the playground, he/she should be removed from the situation so that others can enjoy their break. Then gradually re-introduce the child to the playground, monitoring progress carefully.
- Depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s), sanctions for the bully may include obtaining an apology, withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, suspension from school.
- Inform the parents of all involved that an incident has occurred and the action that has taken place and ask that they support the strategies proposed to tackle the problem.

- A record of the incident will be written and filed in the Anti-Bullying Log.
- Continue monitoring the situation, including at playtimes/lunchtimes and having regular interaction with all involved.
- Provide support to the bully and the victim(s).
- Once the situation is resolved, look for ways to be positive with all children and praise good behaviour.
- Review and analyse the incident to identify lessons learnt.

Preventative Measures

- All new members of staff are given guidance on the School's Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures.
- The moral and spiritual values taught in lessons and assemblies, particularly RE, RSE, PSHE, and English show bullying to be unacceptable and help with the development of social skills.
- All members of staff are encouraged to tell the Head or Deputy Head at once if they suspect or are at all concerned that bullying is taking place.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. Records of concerns are filed by the Head in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored.
- Posters across the school encourage children to talk to staff where something is wrong.
- The Head draws the attention of children to this fact on a regular basis during assemblies and teachers ensure children have opportunities to discuss experiences and any issues during informal class discussions, role play and during Reflection Time/Circle Time.
- School TRACK Values (TEAMWORK, RESILIENCE, ASPIRATION, CARE AND KINDNESS) encourage positive behaviour
- Any concerns relating to potential bullying are discussed at the weekly staff Child Forum meetings.
- We support the annual 'Anti-Bullying Week' and refer to this in assemblies and in class.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Where bullying or a concern about potential bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Head should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police or Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator in their Local Authority of the actions taken against a pupil.

If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the Police should always be informed.

Record Keeping, Record Retention and Information Sharing

Records of any investigations into alleged incidents of bullying are retained by the Head, in line with the School's Data Protection & Data Retention Policy and the Pupil Privacy Notices. Please do refer to the Pupil Privacy Notices in the Policy Section of the School Website:

<https://www.shrewsburyhousepreprep.net/about-us/policies-and-documentation/>

The Head ensures that all records relating to any matters concerning alleged incidents of bullying are securely stored.

- These records are routinely kept for a minimum of 7 years after the pupil (s) they relate to has/have left the School.
- Where it is considered to be in the best interests of the pupil, these records may be shared with a future school.
- Subject to the circumstances around the investigations, it is possible for the records to be retained for longer, e.g. for 25 years from the date of birth of any pupils involved.
- If there are any safeguarding considerations in relation to any investigations around pupil conduct, it is possible that these records will be retained for longer in accordance with the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- In line with the School's Pupil Privacy Notice, details of any investigations into potential incidents of bullying are shared with the Independent Schools Inspectorate, when they inspect the School.

This Policy has been approved by the Board of Governors.
This Policy is reviewed annually by the Head.
This Policy was updated September 2024.