

LANCASTER ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT

Number 30	Date Approved by the Trustee Safeguarding Committee May 2025
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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY **(including racist, sexist and homophobic bullying)**

This policy is based on the DfE guidance: Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017

This policy should be considered along with the Behaviour of Pupils Policy, Pastoral Care Policy, Pupil Relationships, Sexual Violence, and Sexual Harassment Between Children Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

The School's Aims

1. This policy aims to create an environment where pupils are free from any kind of bullying by other members of the school community. It has been created to ensure that students feel a strong sense of wellbeing, security and happiness inside and outside school and also with the aim of opening up channels of communication between students, staff, parents and carers, other members of the community and relevant support networks where necessary.
2. To promote a message that bullying can have a devastating impact on a students' mental health or well-being or can have serious long term consequences and therefore to create an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
3. To promote the anti-bullying message through the academic and pastoral curriculum and to encourage all members of the school to act with tolerance and consideration to others at all times.
4. To ensure a good communication system with a range of people in whom pupils can confide and to ensure that pupils know that their problems will be dealt with sensitively and confidentially, and indicate ways in which bullies and their victims are dealt with.
5. To provide teaching staff with the necessary skills and in-service training to identify and deal with bullying.
6. To raise awareness that LRGS takes bullying seriously and will support parents and pupils that report bullying.
7. The policy applies to all members of the school community and will be made known to staff, pupils and parents annually.
8. To celebrate diversity, ensuring that all members of the school community feel valued and respected.
9. To comply with the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Definition

The broad definition of bullying is anything said or done to hurt, harass or intimidate someone else. It can be unprovoked and is often repeated over time. The points below, while not an exhaustive list, seek to outline examples, themes and actions which may be described as bullying.

- Physical: assault, pushing, shouldering, elbowing, tripping, kicking, spitting, unacceptable touching, (including that of a sexual nature), throwing missiles, blocking (preventing passage or movement in and around the school) or any other physical activity that is used in such a way that makes another

person feel threatened or intimidated.

- Verbal: racist, sexist, homophobic biphobic and transphobic remarks, any words used in a sexual manner to hurt or cause offence, comments about size, appearance including hair colour, odour, clothing, academic or other abilities, perceived weaknesses, home life, social circumstances or financial circumstances, spreading rumours or any other comments designed to be hurtful or used to intimidate.
- Written: insults contained in note passing, threatening letters, graffiti, defacing any property belonging to another individual, Cyber- inappropriate use of all areas of internet, such as e-mail, instant messaging and internet chat room misuse, web logs, mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, ie camera and video.
- Interference with another individual-theft, extortion, vandalism, defacing property, ruining games, blackmail or any other activity designed to intimidate or hurt.
- Intentional psychological pressure-social exclusion, passing or starting rumours, reorganising or pressurising friendship groups or any other activity to intimidate or hurt an individual.
- Identity: focused on a person's identity including any special educational need or disability.

It is not bullying when:

- There is no intention to hurt or harm (i.e. behaviour is thoughtless or accidental)
- There is a one-off fight/ argument between pupils
- There is a good reason why others cannot be included in a group activity
- A pupil is called a nickname with which they are happy.

The Limits of the Policy

Where bullying behaviour occurs in school and on school visits etc. the school policy will be applied. If bullying takes place out of school, but there is a school connection the school will, if it is within their powers, take action. If bullying takes place out of school and there is no school connection, the policy cannot be invoked but the school may offer support.

Preventative Strategies

LRGS has a number of preventative measures designed to prevent bullying. They include:

- Issues around all aspects of bullying are discussed within the curriculum particularly in the Values programme
- The school ethos is one which is supportive and tolerant
- Behaviour is very good as pupil and staff relationships are very strong
- Monitoring of attitudes towards bullying through pupil and parental questionnaires
- Peer mentoring system
- Seward Committee Meetings
- A Student Welfare Deputy Head of School (Senior Prefect) and a Form Prefect system
- "Who to turn to" system
- Anti-Bullying Assemblies and Form Period Resources
- Wide range of extra-curricular activities
- Anti-Bullying Week; Mental Health Week, Diversity Week and Safer Internet Week
- Pastoral Heads meetings will discuss friendship groups or particular incidents to develop strategies to prevent bullying

Symptoms of bullying

This is the key feature in the eradication of bullying within any school. Adults should be aware of the signs or behaviour that could be symptoms of bullying. They may include:

- deterioration of work
- spurious illness
- isolation
- erratic attendance
- desire to remain with adults
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- changes friendship groups
- unexplained cuts and bruises
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- is worried about going to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- feels ill in the morning
- has possessions that are damaged or they 'go missing'
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong

These may be symptomatic of other problems but can be the early signs of bullying.

Legal Aspects

DfE guidance: Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017 provides information regarding the relevant legislation relating to bullying.

What should you do if Bullying is taking Place?

Pupils

If you are being bullied or you know of someone else who is being bullied tell an adult at school.

How do I report bullying?

- you can e-mail help@lrgs.org.uk
- tell a teacher or another adult who works in school, or ask a parent/guardian to report it for you

What will happen next?

A teacher will meet discretely with those involved and work to make sure the bullying stops. We make sure that the person who is being bullied feels supported, knows what is going on, and that their views of what should happen are taken into account.

Parents

Parents should also feel free to contact any staff member at any time. The school strongly encourages such exchanges of information.

Recording and Dealing with Incidents

Staff must listen carefully to pupils and react in accordance with any information received. Staff should:

- never ignore suspected bullying
- not make premature assumptions
- listen carefully to all accounts

All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously. A record of the incident will be made by using the school's Information Management System. This information will be passed to the pupil's form teacher and if necessary their Head of Year for action. The central record produced on the data base is used to identify patterns of behaviour.

All pupils who attend the medical centre due to injury are asked to complete an accident report form. If the medical staff suspects that it may have been more than an accident then a copy of the accident form is sent to the Head of Year to investigate further. These accident reports are filed according to the location in the school that the incident took place so that any patterns can be identified.

In dealing with incidents of bullying, staff will point out to pupils the distress they are causing by their unsociable and inconsiderate behaviour. Sometimes it is necessary to speak to groups of pupils or forms to sort out the problem. The situation will be monitored, usually by the form teacher, working closely with the Head of Year. Parents will be informed at an early stage. Sanctions will be used as laid out in the school's 'Behaviour Policy'. When sanctions are necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. Copies of all correspondence are kept by the school.

A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

If the senior staff considers that a criminal offence may have been committed assistance from the police will be sought. The school will also take into account any special educational needs or disabilities that a pupil may have and consider the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Boarders: If an incident takes place in school involving a boarder the procedure will be the same as above but the Housemaster who is acting in loco parentis must be fully involved in the process. The Housemaster will be the main contact with parents. It must be noted that bullying within boarding can be particularly harmful as the victim and perpetrator may live together and as such there is no escape for the victim. This distinction from day pupils is perhaps becoming less distinct given the preponderance of new technology and cyber-bullying which of course boarders may also suffer from.

The level of bullying across the year groups will be monitored by the Deputy Head (Pastoral Care) working with the Heads of Year. This will take place annually following the school questionnaire.

Sometimes there may be a need to intervene to change behaviour if bullying persists, and all pupils involved in these incidents will need support. This may include the offer of counselling either within or outside school through the student support team or school nurse or involve other outside agencies. Staff may also need to mediate between pupils in order to rebuild safe and appropriate relationships.

Monitoring, evaluation and review.

A variety of procedures and groups are in place to monitor the effectiveness of this policy as follows:

- Senior Staff and Governors will review this policy annually and a report will be made to assess its implementation and effectiveness, and adjustments will be made to address any ongoing concerns. Any changes will be communicated with parents/carers and pupils.
- This policy is available on the school web-site and other relevant policies include Behaviour of Pupils, SEN, Child Protection, and Acceptable Use of ICT policies.

- The 'Bullying and Friendship Related Issue' CPOMS category is used as a log of bullying concerns the statistics from which are reported to Governor committees
- All Friday school detentions need authorisation by a Head of Year to allow for moderation and to identify trends and patterns
- Form Tutors, Housemasters and Heads of Year receive notifications of misdemeanours and commendations
- Weekly meetings between Heads of Year and Deputy Head: Pastoral Care are used to discuss cases, trends and issues
- Weekly meetings between Housemasters/mistresses and Head of Boarding are used to discuss boarding issues
- Bi-weekly Pastoral Heads meetings are used to discuss cases, trends and issues including pastoral and safeguarding data (attendance, rewards and sanctions, detentions)
- 'Pupils and Safeguarding' is a standing item on SLT agendas
- There are mechanisms for pupils to comment on the effectiveness of this policy through pupil voice groups and the Seward Committee; pupils are invited to be part of a consultation when this policy is reviewed
- The school is committed the principles of equality in line with the school's Equality Policy. We will use tracking data to monitor the impact of this policy on minority groups, specifically to ensure that Black and Minority Ethnic and SEND pupils are not systematically disadvantaged. This monitoring will influence policy review and actions plans.