

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR PUPILS

*Before all else live together in harmony, being of one mind and one heart on the way to God.
For is it not precisely for this reason that you have come to live together.*

Do not quarrel. But if you do have a quarrel put it to an end as soon as possible, otherwise an isolated moment of anger grows into hatred. If you have hurt a person be careful to make amends for the harm as quickly as possible, by apologising.

The Rule of St Augustine

Diversity, Equality & Inclusivity Statement:

The commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusivity is at the heart of our values at Austin Friars. Equality means creating an environment where pupils have the chance to achieve their full potential, free from barriers, prejudice, and discrimination. Inclusion is about recognising that each pupil is unique and that their needs can be met in different ways. Diversity means recognising, respecting, and celebrating the added value that differences bring. Our unwavering dedication to our school values – Truth, Love and Unity - is how we fulfil our mission at Austin Friars. It is through our commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusivity that our pupils are empowered to be authentic and succeed.

Austin Friars is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This policy is the responsibility of the Deputy Head and will be reviewed biennially.

References taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, DFE advice on preventing and tackling bullying (2017) and Cyber bullying advice for Headteachers and school staff (2014)

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all phases of the School from EYFS to VI Form.

Statement of intent

- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and all pupils must be made aware that bullying may cause psychological damage to the person being bullied. Bullying hurts, threatens and frightens. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.
- When bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
- The School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment so that all pupils can enjoy and achieve during their time here.
- Bullying in all its forms will not be tolerated, these include child on child teacher to student or student to teacher or indeed parent to teacher.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is any behaviour that is repeated over time and intentionally or otherwise, hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability, or because the child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social networks, phone calls, text messages, photographs and e-mail).

Not all bullying is deliberate or necessarily intended to hurt. Some individuals may perceive their hurtful conduct as ‘teasing’ or ‘a game’ or ‘banter’. Banter (or similar) can constitute bullying when it is targeted and the person at the receiving end feels threatened and upset by the exchange. Poor behaviour towards another pupil, as a one-off, is clearly not desirable, but does not necessarily constitute bullying.

Bullying can be:

Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)

Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
Homophobic because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality/gender

Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Discriminatory or prejudiced (towards protected characteristics)

Cyber all areas of the internet – email, misuse of chat rooms; threats by texting, social media generally and, telephone calls; misuse of technology, i.e. camera and video facilities. Further details and impacts identified in Safeguarding policy

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Objectives of this policy

- Bullying will not be tolerated. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Staff and pupils should have an understanding of what bullying is, and the effect it can have on our young people. To this end, all staff will be made aware of aspects of bullying (identified in the safeguarding and anti-bullying policy), during Induction.
- Staff and pupils should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- Staff pupils and parents should be aware that whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it could be a criminal offence under the protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the Public Order Act of 1986, the Education Act of 2002 and the Equality Act 2010.
- Staff and pupils should have an understanding of the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Signs and symptoms of bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and symptoms and they should investigate if a young person:

- Is unwilling to go to school
- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the School bus
- Asks to be driven to school, rather than use the bus
- Changes their usual routine
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Attempts or threatens suicide, self-harming or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn/muddy clothes
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervy and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- Is secretive

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and be investigated.

Procedures

All bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.

- If a pupil is being bullied or knows of someone else who is being bullied they **must tell someone**. Pupils who are bullied should not blame themselves.
 - If a parent finds out about bullying of their child or any other child, they should inform the school **immediately**.
 - The school can only do something if we know there is a problem.
1. Report bullying incidents to any member of staff. It is best to inform the tutor/class teacher, or Head of School. Pupils can communicate incidents of bullying in a number of ways:
 - Speak to a member of staff – preferably your tutor/class teacher, Head of School or Deputy Head
 - Write a short note to the teacher, Head of School or Deputy Head
 - Speak to the Health and Well-Being Co-Ordinator in the first instance.
 - Speak to a Prefect (many of which have completed the Mental Health First Aiders Programme), however, be aware that they will need to pass this on to a member of staff.

2. Pupils who are being bullied will be helped in the following ways:
 - Being given an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor/class teacher, or Head of School or Deputy Head.
 - The bullied pupil will be offered reassurance and support as the tutor/class teacher, Head of School or Deputy Head begins an investigation.
 - The bullied pupil will be asked to provide a written statement which identifies the bully/bullies and nature of the bullying, notes will be made by the member of staff
 - Witnesses to bullying will also be asked to produce a written statement
 - In order to safeguard pupils welfare, provide appropriate pastoral care and deal with any issues of bullying or suspected bullying the Deputy Head/Head of School will inform parents of situation that arise
 - Should the bullying be deemed to be severe the Deputy Head/Head of School will refer the incident to the police or the Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership CSCP Hub where there is a reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This sharing of data will fall under the School's legitimate interests and specific permission from pupils will therefore not be required.
 - The School's Mental Health Nurse and the Chaplain will be available for additional support.

3. Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:
 - Discussing what happened
 - Discovering why the pupil became involved
 - Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
 - The bully / bullies will be asked to provide a written statement of the bullying incident(s).
 - Witnesses to bullying will also be asked to provide a written statement.
 - Where appropriate, evidence will be collected from social media
 - Parents will be informed by the Head of School or the Deputy Head
 - The School's Mental Health Nurse and the Chaplain will be available for additional support should that be deemed appropriate.

4. The Head of School or Deputy Head will make a judgement, based on the evidence, to take any one or more of the following courses of action:
 - Mediation between the bullied and bully
 - Disciplinary action against the bully and mediation with the bullied and bullying pupil(s). Where possible, the pupils will be reconciled with each other.
 - In extreme cases the Headmaster may take the decision to exclude a pupil for a fixed term or, in more extreme cases, recommend permanent exclusion.
 - If necessary, the police will be consulted.
 - An attempt will be made to help the bully to understand and change their behaviour.
 - Support will be given to the bullied pupil.
 - A record of the bullying incident will be made which identifies the pupils involved and the nature of the bullying. This record will be used annually to make amendments to the PSCHE /Enrichment programme to help prevent further bullying incidents.

- Parents of the bullied child will be informed by the Head of School or Deputy Head of the outcome of the investigation as soon as possible.
5. After the incident has been investigated, it is the responsibility of the Form tutor, Head of School/Deputy Head and pupil, to monitor the situation to try to prevent any further bullying from taking place.
 6. As part of the Information Evenings in the Senior School, the School's policy on bullying, and in particular cyber bullying will be outlined to parents.

Bullying outside the School's premises

No pupil should suffer in silence. Where a pupil or parent report bullying off the school premises, a range of steps may be taken:

- Talk to the police about problems on local streets
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses
- Talk to the head of another school if their pupils are thought to be bullying Austin Friars pupils
- Remind pupils of the safe route to school
- Cyber/malicious messages will be referred to the police.

Prevention of bullying

The school promotes a culture of zero tolerance towards bullying. This will be achieved by:

- School Assemblies that address bullying issues
- The PSCH/Enrichment programme for each year group will be reviewed each year and the programme amended to take account of incidents recorded in the Bullying Log for the previous academic year.
- All new pupils and their parents will receive a copy of the anti-bullying policy and advice on how to prevent bullying using materials from appropriate and relevant websites as part of the pupil handbook.
- Close contact between Tutors and Heads of School and parents is encouraged, in order that any concerns can be dealt with swiftly and before they develop into something more significant
- Pupils will be directed to avoid any forms of language which could be seen as Prejudiced Based Language e.g. homophobic or racist.
- As part of their Induction Programme all new staff to the school will be made aware of the School Anti-bullying Policy, its procedures and their role in dealing with incidents of bullying and their prevention. The School will also actively seek to train staff on a regular basis with regard to preventing bullying in school as noted below.
- The School will ensure that staff are regularly trained in bullying issues as part of the INSET Programme.
- The School promotes its core values of *Unitas, Veritas and Caritas* to help reinforce positive behaviour and cooperation. Through encouraging inclusion in the ECA programme and participation in all House events pupils can learn the value of being part of the School community.
- Cyberbullying is tackled in a variety of ways including:
 - Part of the PSCH/Enrichment programme Covered extensively in the ICT programme of study (Head of ICT undergoes

CEOPS training)

New 1st Form parents will receive it at the appropriate Information Evening

- o The ICT Systems manager uses a blocked list to prevent pupils from accessing inappropriate materials.
- o Visits/talks and presentations from the local Police re ‘Diversity and Tolerance’ as well as Drama productions delivered in conjunction with the local police force.
- o e-safety is part of the PSICHE/Enrichment programme and specifically addressed by the ‘e-safety modules as part of the IDEA course’ in Lower School.
- o There are links to organisations that can offer further advice on the School website. o Augustinian Focus week further emphasises the sense of “community” within the School.
- o Being a good friend is addressed frequently in EYFS o Use of cameras/ mobile phone cameras is not permitted in school
- o Pupils are required to adhere to the IT Acceptable Use Policy that they have signed.

C Holmes
Deputy Head

2nd September 2025

Reviewed and endorsed by Trustees Meeting: Summer Term 2023

Next Review by Trustees: Autumn Term 2025

Appendix of useful websites

- <http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/>
- <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/> <https://www.bullying.co.uk>
- <https://youngminds.org.uk> › feelings-and-symptoms
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk> › types-of-abuse › bullying-a...
- <https://www.stompoutbullying.org>