



## DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS' ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**Anti-bullying advice given to pupils in planners and on notices or posters follows the tenor of this policy but in language appropriate to their age and situation.**

### 1. General Statement

The governing body and staff of Dame Allan's Schools are totally opposed to bullying. Bullying is wrong and damages children; the bully and the bullied. It can lead to serious and prolonged difficulties for all individuals concerned and possibly lead to lasting psychological harm or even suicide. The aim of this policy is to provide pupils with a safe and secure working environment and a consistent response to any incidents of bullying that occur.

It is recognised that all schools are likely to have incidents of bullying at some time. The Schools regard bullying as particularly serious and firm action will always be taken against it. Dame Allan's aims to create an atmosphere in which every pupil has a sense of involvement and in which they can develop as a young person of integrity, social conscience and courage.

The Schools strive to be a community in which everybody feels valued and safe and within which individual differences are accepted, tolerated and regarded positively. Every pupil has the right to enjoy school, to learn and to be respected. Every pupil has the responsibility to respect others, use common sense and be supportive

towards each other. It is the right and the responsibility of everyone in the school to take a stand on bullying. Bullying issues form a key part of the Schools' PSHE programme.

Pupil behaviour which undermines these stated values will not be tolerated and action will be taken to deal with it. Where such behaviour takes place outside school which includes behaviour on school or public transport or online and via social media, the Schools will do what is reasonably practical to act against it.

## 2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is the persistent demeaning of an individual or individuals over a period of time: it is the intention of a pupil, or a group of pupils, to cause physical or emotional hurt towards another pupil or group of pupils. Bullying involves deliberate aggression in a relationship in which power is unequally distributed. It is persistent and results in the victim's pain and distress. It may be motivated by prejudice against particular groups for example, on grounds of appearance, health conditions, race, religion, culture, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability or due to the family background of a child, including the bullying of young carers or looked after children. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case. It can take place for no apparent reason.

Bullying can sometimes amount to child on child abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. Further information about child on child abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident of child on child abuse is reported can be found in the School's Child Protection / Safeguarding policy.

Unpleasant actions and unkind or offensive words are not necessarily classed as bullying and are dealt with through the Behaviour Policy.

Bullying can take the following forms:

- Physical e.g. punching, hitting, pushing.
- Verbal e.g. mocking, ridiculing or tormenting; offensive, racist name-calling or using obvious hurtful names; sexist or homophobic remarks; threatening behaviour.
- Indirect, e.g. the spreading of rumours or social exclusion; continually putting someone down.

- Taking or damaging property
- Prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Cyber bullying:

#### Definition of cyber-bullying:

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as smartphones, email, chat rooms, online gaming or social media sites such as Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and Snapchat to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target someone. It is an aggressive, intentional act often carried out repeatedly over time, (but a one off incident could also be considered cyberbullying), and often against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves. The School acknowledges that cyberbullying may take place inside School, outside of School and at any time of the day. Unlike physical bullying, cyber-bullying can often be difficult to track as the cyber-bully (the person responsible for the acts of cyber-bullying) can remain anonymous when threatening others online, encouraging them to behave more aggressively than they might face-to-face.

#### Types of cyber-bullying

- Flaming: Online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.
- Denigration: Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube).
- Using a mobile phone camera image to cause distress, fear, or humiliation;
- Exclusion: Intentionally leaving someone out of a group chat or continually removing someone from a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.
- Outing: Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.
- Trickery: Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.
- Hacking or cloning email accounts.
- Messaging in a threatening or abusive manner.
- Impersonation: Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.
- Generating or altering images of someone into a compromising position.
- Harassment: Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online via text, instant messaging or calling.
- Cyber-stalking: Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.

Bullying is the abuse of power, uninvited aggression and behaviour intended to offend.

Prejudiced and discriminatory bullying on the basis of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex) is taken particularly seriously.

Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority, however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Policy. Whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, sexting, the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (in certain circumstances), upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Actions NOT considered to be bullying:

- Not liking someone.
- Not spending all of your time with one specific group or person
- Arguments.
- Isolated acts of aggressive behaviour, intimidation, or meanness or expressions of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others.

### 3. Monitoring and Recording

Staff will investigate if bullying is occurring if a pupil:

- Becomes withdrawn and anxious
- Shows loss of confidence and unexpected mood swings
- Shows a deterioration in his/her work across a range of subjects and activities
- Starts to attend school erratically
- Has spurious illnesses and absences
- Reports having nightmares
- Persistently arrives late to school
- Prefers to stay with adults; has a tendency towards being a “loner”
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Suddenly begins to lose belongings or reports belongings/uniform are damaged

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to form teachers/tutors and to the relevant pastoral leaders, who will conduct

investigations and make a record of findings including an entry onto the bullying log, if appropriate.

The Schools take into account the needs of pupils with SEND when investigating bullying.

#### The Role of the Pupils:

Pupils are encouraged to report incidents of bullying, rather than suffering in silence.

Pupils can:

- Tell the bully to stop. Make it clear that the behaviour is unwelcome and hurtful.
- Seek help. Talk to somebody whom they trust.
- Report it. Either in person or using Whisper. Dame Allan's does not tolerate bullying. Trust the Schools to deal with any incident appropriately.

There are specific guidelines on this in the planners issued to all pupils.

#### What to do to help prevent bullying of other pupils

Dame Allan's encourages pupils to be vigilant for bullying happening to other people, and to challenge it if they do notice it.

Pupils should:

- Care enough to take action, whether you are personally involved or not.
- Intervene at an early stage so that the problem is dealt with before it gets out of hand.
- Have the courage to report bullying either in person or using the Whisper app.
- Do not follow friends when you disagree with what they are doing.
- Learn to be tolerant and broad-minded and to rejoice in individual differences.
- Be aware of the Schools' anti-bullying policy and give it your full support.
- Sometimes bullies exclude people. If you are popular and have a positive peer-group, include the victim in your activities.
- Listen to, and ask for advice in, PSHE lessons.

#### 4. Rights / Responsibilities

All pupils have a right to an education free from bullying. It is the responsibility of all adults in the school community to ensure that the schooling experience of all members of the community takes place in a safe, caring and protective atmosphere.

Specifically, the Principal is responsible to the Governors for determining policies and procedures in conjunction with other school leaders and in discussion with all staff, and for ensuring that appropriate training is available to all staff.

The Vice Principal (Pastoral) is responsible for the day to day management of the policy and oversees the operation of the policy in Years 7-13 in conjunction with the Head of Girls and Boys 7-11, Heads of Year and the Head of Sixth (in conjunction with their assistants). The Head of the Junior School (in conjunction with their deputy) oversees the operation of the policy in the sections of the School for which they are responsible.

Form teachers and 6<sup>th</sup> form tutors will liaise with pastoral leaders over all incidents involving pupils in their forms/tutor groups.

All staff will:

- Know the policy and procedures (all new staff will receive training on the anti-bullying policy as part of their induction training).
- Direct all pupils to the anti-bullying policy in the pupil planners.
- Be observant and ask pupils what is happening to them.
- Make timely records of conversations between the pupil and themselves about bullying.
- Deal with incidents according to the policy.
- Never let an incidence of bullying go unreported to the form teacher and /or pastoral leader, whether on-site or during an off-site activity.
- Ensure pupils know that if they have been bullied they are not to blame.
- Ensure pupils know that nobody deserves to be bullied.
- Ensure that all pupils know that everyone is entitled to enjoy school.
- Make pupils aware that staying silent solves nothing.
- Make pupils aware that we are here to help.
- Ensure that victims of bullying are treated with care and respect.
- Act when incidents of bullying are reported by those other than the victim.
- **Know that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection (CP) concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm.'**

#### 5. Strategies to implement this policy:

All members of the Dame Allan's community are made aware of this policy.

Pupils are encouraged to tell an adult if they feel they are being bullied rather than suffering in silence. Staff will deal promptly with any reported case of bullying. A written report of the incident will be made and passed to the relevant form teacher and pastoral leader. The victim(s) will receive support from staff. They will be reassured that their concerns are taken seriously and that appropriate action will be

taken as outlined below. Should there be any future incidents they will be advised to:

- Stay calm
- Be firm and clear, look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- Remove themselves from the situation as quickly as possible
- Immediately talk to an adult about what has happened
- Write down their account of what has happened

Pupils who may have witnessed an incident of bullying, but not reported it, will be given support to empower them if a future incident occurs. Where behaviour may develop into but has not yet become bullying, pastoral staff will meet with the potential perpetrator to discuss a change in behaviour.

Where it is established that bullying has occurred, the following structures allow the bully (bullies) to receive support from staff to prevent any recurrence of the incident/s and to help them to change patterns of behaviour. Whilst the policy allows for escalation of responses through the stages detailed below, sufficiently serious cases of bullying (for example, those involving actual or threatened violence towards another pupil) may be dealt with immediately at the appropriate stage.

At any stage, should there be reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm due to bullying, then the matter becomes one of child protection and so the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be referred to.

### **Warning:**

If a pupil is beginning to behave in a manner which could be interpreted as bullying, wherever possible a warning will be given. In this way it is hoped that many potentially serious situations will never materialise. The relevant pastoral leader will determine an appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying and will involve the victim's and bully's form teachers/tutors in implementing these

If a pupil is bullying others, staff will consider some or all of the following options:

- talking to the pupil to explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy
- discussing with the pupil how to join in with others without bullying
- talking to the pupil about how things are going at school, his or her progress and friendships
- giving the pupil lots of praise and encouragement when he or she is being kind to others

- informing parents of victim(s) and bully (bullies) as necessary and enlisting their support

However, the warning stage is at the discretion of the Schools and a pupil involved in a serious instance of bullying can bypass this stage and be placed directly on Stage 1. The warning will be recorded on the bullying log and the school data management system.

### **Stage 1**

Where, after due investigation, the Schools are satisfied that bullying occurred, it will be explained to the bully why the behaviour is unacceptable and positive strategies will be pursued to raise their self-esteem as well as to protect the victim. The bully's parents will be informed by letter; the incident will be recorded on the bullying log and the school data management system. The bully may be subject to sanctions as detailed in the Schools' disciplinary policy. It is possible that after a considerable period of time during which the pupil has not only totally desisted from bullying, but also given evidence of positive support of and participation in the anti-bullying policy, that the pupil will be removed from stage 1 by the relevant Head of School. However this is entirely at the discretion of the Schools and a pupil involved in a further incident of bullying will be placed directly on to stage 2.

### **Stage 2**

If the bullying continues, arrangements will be made to minimise contact between bully and victim. The bully's parents will be called into the Schools to discuss the situation. The bully will sign a statement promising that the bullying will not be repeated. It will not be possible to be removed from stage 2 or any subsequent stage. This will be recorded on the bullying log and the school data management system. It is envisaged that in most cases these two stages are sufficient.

### **Stage 3**

Where no improvement in the actions of the bully takes place, the bully may, at the Principal's discretion, be excluded from the Schools for a fixed period of time. This will be recorded on the bullying log and the school data management system.

### **Stage 4**

As a last resort, and where it is clear that the bully endangers the welfare of fellow members of the Schools community, the bully may be permanently excluded from Dame Allan's Schools.

## 6. Prevention/Education:

For all aspects covered in this policy, classroom and form teachers/ tutors act as the first port of call. Form periods and timetabled PSHE lessons will, where appropriate, be used for discussion of relationships between members of the community and are used to educate and inform pupils about how to protect themselves from all types of bullying, including cyberbullying and to encourage resilience in pupils if they are experiencing it. Pupils will be made aware of attitudes and behaviour which are unacceptable through assemblies and through other elements of the curriculum (e.g. drama, English, history), where appropriate.

Places and times which provide an opportunity for bullying to occur will be identified and monitored. PE staff will be in and out of changing rooms, and staff patrols at break and lunchtime monitor areas where bullying may occur, particularly any areas identified by the bullying log.

Posters will be displayed throughout the school buildings highlighting the issue of bullying. Telephone numbers of help lines (e.g. Childline) will be displayed prominently around the Schools. The School Counsellors will be available to help both victims and bullies in the Schools. The mentor program will continue to offer support by trained Sixth Formers for younger pupils in the Senior Schools.

As part of INSET staff will be given training so that the principles of this policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available; where appropriate, the Schools can invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.

The use of cameras, including those on mobile phones, are strictly forbidden in school. Pupils will be made aware that misuse of mobile phones, message internet sites, social networking sites and emails can be prosecuted under the Malicious Communications Act 1988. All pupils are expected to adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy/Code of Conduct for Computer and Internet Use. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Network Department monitors pupil use.

### Prevention of cyberbullying

For the prevention of cyberbullying, in addition to the measures described above, the School:

- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet in accordance with the Behaviour Policy;

- Issues all pupils with their own personal School email address. Access to most social media sites is not allowed inside the School;
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing their personal data;
- Ensures its pupils are aware of the various forms in which cyberbullying can take place, that it can have severe and distressing consequences, and that participation in cyberbullying will not be tolerated;
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details private and secure;

#### Procedures for dealing with cyberbullying

The School will follow the procedures set out in this policy and in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy where relevant for incidents of cyberbullying, taking such disciplinary action that is considered reasonable in the circumstances, with a view to regulating pupil conduct and protecting the reputation of the School, and the welfare of its pupils.

Although cyberbullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are however criminal laws that may apply to communications of a harassing or threatening manner or the unauthorised publication of private images, upskirting, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, and sexting. Where the School considers that a reported incident of cyberbullying may amount to a criminal offence, it will inform the Police.

#### Electronic devices

In response to an allegation of cyberbullying, certain staff are permitted to conduct a search for electronic devices, such as a pupil's mobile phone, with the authority of the Principal. Staff do not require the consent of the pupil, or their parents to undertake a search, provided they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, or an item that has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to any person (including the pupil being searched), or cause damage to property, and provided they have the Principal's prior consent to undertake a search.

The search will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set out in the Behaviour Policy.

Where a search finds an electronic device that is prohibited by the School rules, or where the member of staff undertaking the search reasonably suspects that the electronic device has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property, the School may examine any data or files on

the device, where there is good reason to do so, for example, where there has been an allegation of cyberbullying. Parental consent to search through electronic devices is not required but they will be informed after the event unless doing so presents a further risk to any child.

The School may also erase any data or files from the device if the School considers there to be good reason to do so, unless there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the device may contain evidence in relation to a criminal offence, where the files should not be deleted and the device must be given to the Police without delay.

If, following a search, the member of staff determines that the device does not contain any evidence in relation to a criminal offence, or are advised by the Police following a report to them that they will not take any further action to investigate an alleged offence, the School can decide whether it is appropriate to delete any files or data from the device, and may retain the device as evidence of a breach of this policy and the Behaviour Policy. The School may then take steps to punish the pupil in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, where appropriate. In the event that the search highlights a safeguarding concern in respect of any pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding Policy.

The School will keep a record of all searches carried out, including the results of any search, and the actions taken following that search.

## 7. Early Years

The Early Years Department actively promotes and explicitly encourages positive values of mutual respect and concern for each other. This is done through a number of different measures:

- Weekly PSHE Early Years Assembly
- Golden Rules within the classroom
- Classroom time
- Circle time
- Informal discussion

In the event of an observed or reported instance of bullying, the class teacher will investigate/mediate and resolve. Notes will be made of the incident and kept on file. If the class teacher is unable to deal with the matter or it is of too serious a nature it will be passed on to the Head of Early Years, Deputy Head or Head exists. Parents will be kept updated at all stages.

## 8. Co-operating with Parents and Carers

The Schools will work with parents when dealing with bullying. Bullying in school is everyone's problem. All staff, pupils and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the school a happier place for everyone. Parents/carers, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should always contact their child's form teacher or Head of Year immediately. It is important to understand that telling teachers about any possible problems, or even suspicions of problems, will be taken seriously but also will not instantly lead to children being publicly identified as being a victim or other children being identified as bullies. Teachers will use information with discretion, and it can be a valuable starting point for them to start investigating possible problems, and often information provided by one parent will be added into other information that staff already have about bullying problems.

The Schools will ensure that parents are aware of the Schools' anti-bullying policy which is issued in the new parents' pack and is available on the Schools' website.

Parents, carers and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.

The Schools will encourage parents who suspect that a child is bullying or being bullied to contact the Schools and make an appointment to see the child's teacher or form tutor as soon as possible. Parents are encouraged to give the Schools as much information as possible when reporting incidents of bullying in order to allow the schools to investigate thoroughly.

Parents and carers will be informed of incidents and involved in discussions. The Schools will discuss with parents how they can work together to stop the bullying.

Parents are encouraged to use the Schools' complaints procedure if they feel that their concerns are not being addressed properly.

Even if not immediately concerned for their own children, parents can support the school's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the Schools:

- Show a real interest in your child's social life and in school events.
- Encourage your child to have friends round, to join clubs and to be tolerant and broad-minded towards others.
- Build up your child's self-esteem by emphasising positive features and accepting individual characteristics.
- Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with your child and suggest positive strategies if his/her rights are abused.
- Encourage your child to take action on bullying, but do not tell him/her to retaliate either physically or with name-calling.

- Show an example by being firm but positive and not aggressive in your approach to discipline.
- Confront the possibility that your child may be a bully and be supportive of the school in dealing with this.
- DO NOT TELL YOUR CHILD THAT BULLYING IS PART OF GROWING-UP OR IMPLY THAT IT IS IN ANY WAY ACCEPTABLE.
- If your child is being bullied, please REPORT IT – the Schools will take action.

#### 9. Review and Evaluation:

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly to identify whether or not the strategies are working. This will take place each half term and will include a review of the bullying log by the Heads of Years 7-11, Head of Juniors and Head of Sixth Form (see above). There will also be a half termly review of general pastoral issues with the Vice Principal (Pastoral).

#### 10. COVID Adjustments.

The schools are committed to ensuring this policy is adhered to even if the majority of pupils have been compelled to work from home. Reports and allegations of bullying will be investigated and appropriate staff will conduct meetings over Google Meets as required.

While any sanctions process would normally follow that which is outlined here, the Schools reserve the right to apply any sanctions they see appropriate, which may not be listed. The Schools need to take into account the needs of each individual pupil and wish to manage negative behaviour in any way that allows for successful outcomes. Such sanctions might include but are not limited to: requiring a pupil to go home but not as a fixed term exclusion; being placed on daily report regardless of the stage they are on; withdrawing a pupil from certain classes or form time.

#### **This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

Whole School Behaviour Policy

[Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

Equal Opportunities Policy

SEN Policy

Sex and Relationships Policy

Whole School Policy on the Acceptable Use of Electronic Devices and Information Technology Systems