



The Banda School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Rationale

At The Banda, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop to their full potential. The school has a 'duty of care' towards its pupils with regard to bullying in that the Head and staff stand in loco parentis (in place of the parents).

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally." (Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education, July 2017) Bullying often involves an imbalance of power, which can be physical, social, or emotional. While bullying is typically repeated, a single serious incident may also be considered bullying, particularly where there is significant harm or safeguarding concern.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are sexual or sexist, homophobic, racist, which focus on religion or cultural or family background, special educational needs, disabilities or physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape), or be connected to a child who is adopted or a carer.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone – pupils, other young people, staff and parents. It is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory. It can be extremely harmful and involve psychological damage.

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including pupils, staff, parents and visitors, and covers behaviour both in school and, where appropriate, outside school (including online), where it impacts the wellbeing of pupils.

The policy is informed by:

- UK Department for Education guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)
- Principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- The Children Act (Kenya, 2022)

Bullying includes:

- Verbal bullying – teasing, name-calling, taunting, threats, or offensive comments, including those of a racist nature
- Physical bullying – hitting, kicking, punching, or damaging belongings
- Emotional/social bullying – exclusion, spreading rumours, humiliation, coercion
- Cyber bullying – misuse of technology, including:
 - Messaging platforms (e.g. WhatsApp, Snapchat)
 - Social media

- Gaming platforms
- Email or anonymous apps
- Sharing or creating harmful images or content

Cyberbullying may occur outside school but will be addressed where it affects relationships, wellbeing, or safety within the school community.

Measures designed to support the school's policy:

- Pupils are told that bullying is not tolerated at The Banda. This is reinforced through PSHE, Form Time, Computing and Assemblies which focus on aspects of bullying and interpersonal relationships. Openness is encouraged.
- Pupils are actively encouraged and empowered to share any instances of bullying with a trusted adult – whether they are the direct victim of such an instance or have witnessed it – with emphasis being placed on the fact that they will not be negatively affected by doing so.
- Staff are advised on measures to prevent, detect and deal with bullying whilst non-academic staff are encouraged to report unacceptable behaviour they witness and pupils who seem anxious or unhappy. Parental support and communication is encouraged.
- Reliance is placed on the Form Tutors and Class Teachers - pupils should feel they have access to a confidential 'ear' on a regular basis as these teachers will see the pupils daily. They are on the alert to pick up an 'atmosphere' and unusual patterns of behaviour. Pupils and parents are also encouraged to talk to the Senior Deputy Head, the Assistant Head Pastoral, Heads of Year 5 & 6 and Year 7 & 8, the Head of the Lower School, or the Head of Pegasus Early Years. All pupils are reminded that they can speak to any member of staff they feel they can trust should they have concerns of any sort.
- Our School Counsellor is available throughout the week, either for drop in visits or for pre-arranged appointments. Our counsellor ensures that she is well-known to the children through class visits and regular walks around the school during break times.
- The Head Boy, Head Girl, Prefects and House Captains are encouraged to listen to, and report where necessary, the concerns of those in their own or younger year groups. These pupils are selected and voted for based on their ability to deal with issues in a mature and responsible manner.

- Any form of cyber-bullying is taken very seriously. E-safety is regularly taught through both the Computing and the PSHE curriculum. Active management of hardware, software and connectivity and the vigilance of teachers and parents have a part to play in the safeguarding and protection of pupils. iPads belonging to the pupils in Years 6, 7 and 8 are regularly checked by staff to ensure they are not being used inappropriately, and these pupils sign a contract on receiving their iPad in which they promise to use the device responsibly.
- The School is committed to fostering an environment of dignity, respect and inclusion for all members of its community. Any use of racist language or behaviour is taken seriously and is not tolerated. Racist language includes, but is not limited to, the use of racial slurs, derogatory remarks, stereotyping, “jokes” or banter relating to race, ethnicity, nationality or culture, and the mocking of accents or cultural practices. Such behaviour is unacceptable regardless of intent. All incidents of racist language will be addressed promptly and recorded in line with safeguarding and behaviour procedures.
- Regular kindness themed days or weeks take place as a means of reinforcing the important messages surrounding anti-bullying. These events make use of class activities, displays, assemblies, mixed year group sessions and outside speakers to highlight bullying and what to do to prevent, detect and deal with it.
- All relevant behavioural concerns, including bullying, are logged on the school database, CPOMS, and are reviewed by the Senior Deputy Head, the Assistant Head Pastoral, the Head of Lower School and the Head of Pegasus Early Years in order to ascertain whether a pattern is emerging.
- A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. As with other child protection concerns, incidents should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Lucy Haywood – see Safeguarding Policy for further details) who may then seek advice from CPAN (the Child Protection Advocacy Network).
- Bullying is distinguished from other forms of poor behaviour by the fact that the unkind actions are ongoing and targeted. Sometimes this does happen and the following guidelines offer help in how to deal with such situations. These guidelines are for pupils, parents and teachers who come across any form of bullying.

First steps for:

Pupils:

- a) If you feel you are being “picked on” (or teased) tell a member of staff (The School Counsellor, Form Tutor, Class Teacher, Assistant in Pegasus Early Years, Head of Early Years, Head of Lower School or any other) in confidence. This information will be dealt with carefully and sensitively as no one wants to make the situation worse for you or anyone else.
- b) If you see anyone being bullied (or teased) inform a member of staff immediately.
- c) Never support a bully.
- d) Do not accept a bully as a friend.
- e) Remember that you can hurt others by doing and saying unpleasant things as well as being a physical bully.
- f) Remember also that by doing and saying nothing, you are helping the bully.
- g) Always report any messages sent via email or social media that cause you to feel upset.

Parents:

- a) Talk to your child and gently find out as much information as possible. Listen attentively to your child when he or she talks about the bullying. Your child’s emotional expression is an important aspect of healing. Ask for details, but don’t push too hard.
- b) To ensure that trust is maintained with your child, be discreet at all times when dealing with the information they may give you.
- c) Try to see both sides of any situation.
- d) Give your child advice on how to deal with the situation over the next few days.
- e) If the problem persists make contact with your child’s Class Teacher or Form Tutor. This could be done via an email, a phone call or in person. Any teacher can also make an appointment for you to see the School Counsellor.
- f) A meeting can be held with the relevant teacher in order to find a way forward to assist your child.
- g) The school will always be willing to listen to any concerns that parents may have about the wellbeing of their child. Communication is very important.

Staff:

- a) Remain calm; you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may give the bully control of the situation.
- b) Take the incident or report seriously. Incidents need to be resolved, not just smoothed over.

- c) Take action as quickly as possible, but give yourself time to think through the situation before reacting. Blame may not be one sided. Both victim(s) and alleged bully(ies) must be spoken to. Do not jump to conclusions.
- d) Make a careful judgement as to whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This will be based on:
 - the seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing
 - the pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions
- e) Reassure the victim(s). Don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- f) Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view and put themselves in his/her place.
- g) Deal with every bully in an appropriate way. Take into account your knowledge of the pupil and which type of sanction would be effective for the bully. Refer to the school's Behaviour Policy for more guidance on appropriate sanctions and ensure that any sanctions given are in line with this policy.
- h) If a red card or any more serious sanction is to be given, this should be discussed with either the Deputy Head, the Assistant Director Pastoral, the Head of Lower School or the Head of Pegasus Early Years. This will help to ensure that the correct decision has been reached and that the decision has been thoroughly thought through.
- i) Remember it is known that the "blame-punishment" approach is flawed – the bully usually ends up feeling abused and vengeful. It does not encourage the bully to accept responsibility for their behaviour and try to change.
- j) There are many useful websites that give advice on dealing with bullying which offer concrete suggestions for teachers who feel a little uncertain:
 - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
 - www.stopbullying.gov
 - www.kidscape.org.uk

The Banda's approach should be constructive and positive and not only punitive

Involving others – DO

- Inform the Head, Senior Deputy Head, Assistant Head Pastoral, Heads of Year 5 & 6 and Year 7 & 8, or Heads of Lower School or Pegasus Early Years
- Inform colleagues if the incident arose out of an unexpected situation where everyone should be vigilant in the future.
- Ensure a detailed written account is passed on to the Pastoral Leaders or Heads of Lower School or Pegasus Early Years – this will then be entered onto the relevant section of the school pastoral database, CPOMS.

- Ensure that parents of all pupils connected to the incident are contacted immediately.

Final steps – DO

- Make sure that the incident does not live on through reminders from you or others.
- Try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident, if you uncover the trigger factor.

If you have to deal with bullying, what should you avoid?

DON'T

- Be over-protective and refuse to allow the victim to help him or herself.
- Do not assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour with the bully and think about the reasons why they might be behaving in this way. Deal with the incident not with the person.
- Keep the whole incident a secret because you have dealt with it or if the victim asks you to.
- Call in the parents without speaking to the Head, Senior Deputy Head or Heads of Lower School or Pegasus Early Years first and without having a constructive plan to offer either side.

The School's Responsibility

The Head and the Staff take a very serious view of bullying and will investigate all cases with vigour and urgency.

- The School's ethos encourages and supports an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.
- Pupils are assured that someone will listen to their version of events.
- Systems are in place to allow all staff to report concerns about pupils to the senior staff or Form Tutor / Class Teacher.
- A meeting between the Head / Senior Deputy Head / Assistant Head Pastoral / Head of Lower School or Pegasus Early Years and the parent (and if need be the culprit or/and victim) will take place.
- Counselling by the School Counsellor will be offered to all sides.

- Appropriate disciplinary sanctions which reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect will be applied (strong sanctions such as suspension may be necessary in cases of severe or persistent bullying). Sanctions should be in line with those laid out in the Behaviour Policy.
- Any reports of bullying by a member of staff should be taken directly to the Head. This will be investigated immediately and the Head will make the decision with regards to any appropriate action required.

The main elements of the school's policy are:

- Bullying is wrong and all members of staff (including non-academic staff), children, teachers and parents, have a responsibility to report any unacceptable behaviour or if they witness pupils who seem anxious or unhappy. The prevention of bullying is everybody's business.
- Any reports of bullying will be taken seriously.
- The Senior Deputy Head, Assistant Head Pastoral, Head of Lower School and Head of Early Years (and, by extension, the Head) should be informed of any incidents of bullying and they will decide whether parents should become involved.
- Teachers should use the curriculum to get across messages about acceptable behaviour - drama, discussion groups, role-play etc.
- Everybody is encouraged to speak out against bullying. Everybody must care and accept responsibility to prevent it. Silence and secrecy nurture bullying.