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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Committee	Risk and Compliance
Policy Type	School
Policy Owner	Vice Principal & DSL
Statutory	Yes
Published on website	Yes
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Next review date	September 2027
Review Cycle	Annual
Expiry date	This policy will not expire but will be reviewed as per its designated cycle. This policy remains effective whilst the review is taking place and will become non-applicable once the updated version has been approved.
Version	v 2.1 - minor changes due to final publication of KCSiE 2026 on faith based abuse.

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Aims and Objectives- Statement of Intent

At KEHS, our community is based upon respect, good manners and care for others. Everyone has the right to be safe and happy in school and all pupils have an obligation not to discriminate against, harass or be unkind to others, so that every one of our girls can develop to her full potential. Child on child abuse, in whatever manifestation, is directly contrary to KEHS's ethos and is not tolerated. We expect our pupils to treat each other, and members of staff, with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere.

We recognise the seriousness of bullying, both physical and emotional, and its ability to cause psychological damage. If bullying does occur, the victim should feel confident about asking for help within the school community. Pupils should understand that withholding information protects the bully and allows them to continue the practice. Bullies only prosper where there is silence and fear. We aim for KEHS to be a "speaking out" school. We want people to tell us if they are bullied and we want them to tell us if they witness or hear of any bullying taking place. We encourage everyone to make it known to bullies that they disapprove of their actions.

We aim to deal with all incidents sensitively, consistently and efficiently. Our prime concerns are firstly to prevent any continuation of the bullying and secondly to improve the behaviour of the person doing the bullying.

Parents and carers play an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Parents should feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child. They should always report any suspected case of bullying to the Form Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Head Pastoral, Director of Sixth Form, or Vice Principal & DSL. Acceptance of this policy and our Behaviour and Discipline Policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Exclusion, Removal and Review Policy and applies to all pupils whether or not they are in the care of the school when the bullying behaviour occurs. Strong sanctions as outlined in these policies, including exclusion, may be deemed necessary in cases of severe or persistent bullying.

The school understands that relationships break down for all sorts of reasons and it is not possible to make everyone like everyone else. Accusations of bullying often, on investigation, turn out to be very complex and sometimes there is fault on both sides.

We recognise that children can abuse their peers. When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a bullying incident is addressed under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Where this is the case, school staff must report it immediately to the DSL who will take advice from BSCP.

This policy has been written in compliance with the non-statutory DfE advice [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(July 2017\)](#). It is made available to parents and pupils on the school website. Pupils are also given guidance on the issue in their planners, through PSHE lessons, tutor time activities, assemblies and through the work of the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.

Definition of Bullying

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. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying may occur in person and or through technology (cyberbullying) such as social media, smart technologies, text messages, photographs or email. Cyberbullying can happen at any time of the day, with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Online bullying will be treated with the same urgency as an offline case would be.

Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways: it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Bullying of any kind is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or by actual or perceived differences between people. Many types of bullying, children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination and such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and willingness to seek help. Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be experiencing such harm and respond in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

For example, bullying may involve actions or comments that:

- are aimed at a person's race, religion, belief or culture
- are homophobic, bi-phobic, transphobic, sexist or sexual
- focus on disabilities, or other attributes (such as hair colour or body shape), learning difficulties or special educational needs
- are aimed at the individual because of their situation, for example because she is adopted or is a young carer.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

Signs of Bullying

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

- frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet

- failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to appearance or vocabulary)
- diminished levels of self confidence
- frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- unexplained cuts and bruises
- choosing the company of adults
- displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- difficulty in sleeping; experiencing nightmares
- talking of harming themselves, suicide or running away

Preventative Measures

We take the following preventative measures:

- we use appropriate assemblies and tutor time activities to explain the school's approach to anti-social, hurtful behaviour and bullying, including cyber-bullying and the responsibilities of bystanders
- PSHE lessons give girls an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities, the importance of careful decision making and educate them about the safe use of smart technologies, social media and the internet
- other lessons, particularly RS, English, History and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce our expectations by teaching texts, moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills and empathy
- KEHS is part of the Diana Award Anti-Bullying Ambassador programme. Several of our pupils, from across age ranges, are selected to receive formal training from the programme leaders. These pupils then lead various initiatives to tackle bullying in the school. They wear badges, present assemblies and run 'Craft & Connect Club' to ensure they have a strong profile in the community
- our Behaviour and Discipline Policy makes clear that bullying is not tolerated and specifies helpful measures such as the fact that pupils are not allowed to use their own cameras/ smart phone cameras/ recording devices in school

- we expect all girls to adhere to the Pupils' Acceptable Use of ICT, Mobile Phones, Smart Technologies and Electronic Devices Policy. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and girls' use of school devices is actively monitored. We may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet
- all girls are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place
- all reported incidents are recorded and investigated promptly. Incidents and disclosures are logged on CPOMS under 'potential bullying'. Following rigorous investigation, the Vice Principal & DSL or Assistant Head Pastoral will decide whether the tag is changed to 'actual bullying' or left as 'potential bullying'. A log of investigated incidents found to be bullying is kept and monitored by the Vice Principal & DSL so that it can be seen where a pattern is being established; this log is regularly scrutinised by the Safeguarding Governor and the Risk and Compliance Governance Committee. We always monitor reported incidents and provide support to both the victim and perpetrator
- we have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Form Tutors and Heads of Year who support the Assistant Head Pastoral, Director of Sixth Form, and Vice Principal & DSL; they are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority and are alert to possible signs of bullying
- information about friendship patterns, particular incidents and any known conflict between pupils is shared with staff so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying; separate categories of 'friendships' and 'general difficulties with relationships' are options on CPOMS and help build a picture which can prove to be preventative
- our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies
- all staff are aware that they must be vigilant for any signs of bullying and that it is every member of staff's responsibility to report any perceived cases
- we reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely. Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour. Pupils who remain behind after school are supervised by a dedicated member of staff in the Library
- pupil planners display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and web sites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline, Young Minds and Samaritans
- we advise our Form Prefects of the importance of offering support and assistance to younger girls and to those who may be vulnerable. Form Prefects receive scenario-based training
- all girls in the Thirds (Year 7) have a buddy who is in the Lower Fourth (Year 8)
- we reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, and on school visits and trips, involving girls from KEHS

- we welcome feedback from parents, carers and pupils on the effectiveness of our preventative measures

Procedures for Reporting Bullying

To encourage people to SPEAK OUT with confidence and to make the reporting of incidents as easy as possible, we provide as many initial contact points as possible for pupils to report incidents with confidence within the school. It must be the pupil's choice as to whom they reveal the problem. The following list is for reference only; the order is of no significance:

- Form Tutor
- Head of Year
- Assistant Head Pastoral
- Director of Sixth Form
- Vice Principal & DSL
- School Nurse
- Any Member of Staff
- Form Prefect
- Anti-Bullying Ambassador
- School Counsellor

The person to whom the pupil has revealed the problem will inform the appropriate Head of Year and the Assistant Head Pastoral, Director of Sixth Form and Vice Principal & DSL, as appropriate. We will always deal with incidents that have occurred inside and outside of school if they have been reported to us and affect the health and happiness of a KEHS pupil.

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- the member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the girl/s involved

- he/she will immediately inform the appropriate Head of Year and the Assistant Head Pastoral, Director of Sixth Form and or Vice Principal & DSL, as appropriate, and record the incident on CPOMS as 'potential bullying'
- the victim will be interviewed on her own and may be asked to write an account of events
- the alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and may be asked to write an immediate account of events
- the member of staff will calmly explain the range of disciplinary measures that are potentially involved
- the investigative process will be recorded, together with the action taken and the category of 'actual bullying' added to the CPOMS record, if it is found to be the case
- all relevant staff will be informed of the incident
- in very serious incidents, the Chief Master & Principal will be informed and a decision will be made as to any further action that is required in accordance with the range of action set out below. The parents of the victim/s and the alleged bully/ bullies will be notified and informed of the action being taken

Range of Action

Where a complaint of bullying behaviour is upheld, the range of responses may include one or more of the following non-exhaustive list:

- the victim will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. She will be offered support and have both her wishes and feeling considered, and those of her parent/ carer, when determining possible sanctions and interventions. She will also be encouraged to develop a strategy to help move forward positively, including support from external services where appropriate. It will be made clear to her why revenge is inappropriate
- the bully will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim. Her views will be taken seriously and it will be made clear why her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. She will be offered guidance on modifying her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- the parents/carers of all parties should be informed and given the opportunity to discuss the matter with a member of the pastoral team
- a way forward, which may include disciplinary sanctions and counselling, will be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others

- the motivation behind the bullying behaviour will be considered and whether external services/agencies should be involved to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations lead to any concerns that the bully may be at risk of harm, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed
- a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, *may* be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode
- a monitoring and review strategy will be put in place
- if a girl who has reported bullying is found to have wilfully wrongly accused another, disciplinary sanctions, in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy, and counselling may be appropriate
- where a child's behaviour, or the harm caused to another child by that behaviour, is deemed to be, or could be, a form of abuse and warrants a response under child protection as well as, or instead of, anti-bullying procedures, this must be reported to the DSL. The DSL will take advice from BSCP and it is likely that all pupils involved, including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse, will be treated as being "at risk". Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will make a referral to BSCP. See the Safeguarding Policy for further detail.

Log of Concerns

All cases of actual or potential bullying are recorded by staff on CPOMS, where they are marked as 'potential bullying', 'actual bullying' or 'child on child abuse'. This creates a central file, which sits alongside the bullying log and is regularly reviewed by the Assistant Head Pastoral, the Vice Principal & DSL and Safeguarding Governor to evaluate the effectiveness of the approaches adopted and look for any trends or patterns that may need to be addressed.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness and update it as necessary.

Complaints

We hope that parents, carers and pupils will not have any complaints about the operation of our Anti-Bullying Policy; nevertheless, copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to parents on request and can be found on our website.

