



Peterhouse School

Peterhouse: Anti-Bullying Policy

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REVISION STATUS

This Review Date	Details of Changes	Sections Changed	Author	Date of next review
April 2017	General review and update		Janet Allan	April 2020
Dec 2019	General review and update		Janet Allan	April 2023
October 22	General review and update	Cyber bullying added to Section3	Calvin Wallace	October 23
December 22	Endorsed by the Governance Committee			
February 2025	General review and update	Generative artificial intelligence (AI) (Section 3) Review of Preventative measures including curriculum (Section 5)	Peter Rimmer	February 2026
April 2025	Endorsed by the Governance Committee			

RELATED / RELEVANT POLICIES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

This document should be read in conjunction with:

Peterhouse School Equality and Diversity Policy

Child/Vulnerable young Adult Safeguarding Policy

Positive Intervention Policy

E-Safety Policy

AUP Agreement

Peterhouse Positive Behaviour Policy

Behaviour Principles Statement

Peterhouse Suspensions and Exclusions policy

Complaints policy

School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Teaching and Learning Policy

The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011

The Education Act 2002

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

The Equality Act 2010

The Independent School Standards (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012

The Children Act 1989

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

The Malicious Communications Act 1988

Communications Act 2003

Public Order Act 1986

This document explains Peterhouse School's anti-bullying policy in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

1 RATIONALE

Peterhouse holds as a basic principle that it will encourage co-operation and positive interaction between all persons, staff, students and visitors, in school and residential units.

All children, young people and adults have the right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and that is free from harassment or bullying.

It is the right of every pupil at Peterhouse School to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.

1.1 Statutory Duty of Schools

1.1.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

1.1.2 The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Maintained schools and Academies are required to comply with the new Equality Duty. Part 6 of the Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. In England and Wales Part 6 of the Act applies to maintained schools and Academies and to other independent schools.

1.1.3 Safeguarding children and young people

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

1.1.4 Criminal law

Although most bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is.

1. To ensure all staff are aware of the definition of bullying and the signs and indicators that it may be happening to our pupils either in or out of school.

2. To ensure that all staff, parents and other professionals understand the complexity of dealing with bullying within the context of autism and to outline the wider aspects of our work.
3. To make clear individual responsibilities to preventing and responding to any incidents of bullying within Peterhouse School.
4. To set out the procedures within Peterhouse School should incidents of bullying occur.

3 WHAT IS BULLYING?

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it's usually defined as 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 (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying may involve an imbalance of power between the perpetrator 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 can take many forms, for example: -

- **Emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching etc.
- **Racist** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** – because of, or focusing on the issue of a person's sexuality
- **Prejudicial** – may be motivated by all forms of prejudice such as sexism, racism, ageism, disablism or by homophobia, biphobia or transphobia
- **Verbal** – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber** – all areas of the internet such as e-mail, chat room misuse
- **Mobile phones** – threats by text messaging and calls

Bullying can cause distress, and the following signs should be identified and recognised: -

- Withdrawal
- Social isolation
- Repeated / feigned illness

- Making self-vomit
- Refusal to eat
- Stammering
- Insomnia, uneven sleeping patterns
- Desire to remain in the company of adults
- Depression (leading to threats of or actual attempts at suicide)
- Deterioration of work
- Lack of interest, concentration
- New, different or unusual changes in the behaviour presentation of individuals

The above indicators could and often are facets of autistic behaviour, however they could be indicative of bullying and should never be taken at face value. Staff should also be aware that pupils may be experiencing bullying away from school which they are unable to understand or articulate.

Cyberbullying

The school recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school, and so we will respond to any cyber-bullying we become aware of carried out by pupils when they are away from the site.

Cyber-bullying is defined as “an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself”.

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones.
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear, or humiliation.
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory, or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites.
- Using e-mail to message others.
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts.

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal. If we become aware of any incidents of cyberbullying, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate or are required to do so.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Peterhouse School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Peterhouse School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our anti-bullying policy.

4 AUTISM CONTEXT

It is recognised that the differences in communication (understanding and use), flexible thinking, getting on with others and sensory sensitivities experienced by young people with autism spectrum condition can often lead to behaviours which are challenging to themselves and others.

Bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and cannot be assumed to be viewed from a neuro typical viewpoint. Not all pupils at Peterhouse will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it; equally not all pupils would recognise their own behaviour as bullying towards another individual. Likewise, some pupils may misunderstand and perceive bullying behaviour, rather than what is actually a breakdown in social communication. During periods of crisis, the cognitive load of a student will be diminished. This will have an impact how they are able to plan or control their own actions which could result in behaviours perceived as bullying.

Many of our pupil's desire friendships but do not possess the necessary skills to initiate, reciprocate and maintain relationships. Young people too may be vulnerable within their own local communities as the rise of 'mate crime' is particularly prevalent amongst young people with autism spectrum condition as they struggled to distinguish genuine friends from those who may bully or abuse them.

Any management of the bullying behaviours including sanctions will take into account the individuals need, understanding and their view of the world through the Autistic Lens

5 PROACTIVE AND PREVENTATIVE MEASURES REGARDING BULLYING WITH AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS

A significant amount of work is done with our pupils to help them develop the understanding, skills and strategies for successful, safe and appropriate interaction with others. It is essential that any intervention takes into account the cognitive functioning, language ability and social / emotional understanding of each individual.

Work/approaches include.

Autism practice based in current research

Staff have received training based on research by Dr Kate Silver (Deputy CEO, Autism Initiatives) "*Enabling autistic pupils to contribute their own thoughts and knowledge to significant conversations*". Through this training staff are aware of the importance of viewing a pupils' perspective through the autism lens and checking for understanding of context and vocabulary used, both by staff and the young person.

1-1 sessions

This can include weekly personal tutorials, emotional wellbeing sessions, therapy interventions SEMH intervention work, Safer Schools Police involvement or counselling. This is a dedicated 1-1 session with a pupil's personal tutor or the school counsellor. This

work is part of the hidden curriculum and is relating to the underlying support provided daily to meet the needs of all of your students.

Scales of Justice

This reflective tool can be used in 1:1 sessions which reflects on an incident to attribute numerical data to an event in order to effectively look at the responsibility all participants in an incident may have. This may include assigning specific behaviours a certain number of points which can then be compared to other behaviours or the actions of other individuals to understand perspectives of an incident in a visual and more concrete way. This approach allows for all views and perspectives to be heard and includes staff involvement too.

Pupil's individual records/plans

Each pupils have a Positive Intervention Support Plan, an individualised Risk Assessment which highlights risk to others as well as self, An About Me Document and an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Any, or all, of these documents could highlight the issue of bullying and the approaches in place to address this.

Social Thinking Curriculum

Where appropriate pupils take part in Social Thinking which is a social skills curriculum developed by Michelle Garcia Winner. The curriculum is intended for students with social learning disabilities, especially those with autistic spectrum conditions. Its focus is on teaching students to think about how others perceive them. This includes programmes such as '*Superflex*' and '*Social Detective*' to work with our students using motivating superhero style characters at an appropriate and age-related level. Its focus is on teaching students to think about how others' perspectives and to generate their own strategies in a range of scenarios.

Zones of Regulation

Zones are a systematic, cognitive behavior approach used to teach self-regulation by categorizing all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete zones. The Zones curriculum provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their sensory needs, and improving their ability to solve problem conflicts.

The curriculum

Curriculum drivers inform us of everything we do to work with our young people in becoming successful adults with autism. The four main drivers include Identity, Independent Learning and Creative Thinking, Knowledge of the Wider World and Quality of Life. Within these drivers there are smaller topics which are designed to allow students to develop, including tolerance of others, personal responsibility, rules of society, how to seek help, understanding of the law and emotional wellbeing to name a few.

Work on bullying is addressed through the PSHE within the Peterhouse Preparing for Adulthood Curriculum. There are opportunities for pupils to experience multi-cultural experiences linked to the curriculum, visits from culturally diverse groups and links with the community police. The school participates in Anti-Bullying week and Safer Internet Day.

Individual Classroom Management Strategies

Due to the unique needs of our young people across the school. Different management strategies are employed in different classes to meet the needs of learners in a person specific way. These are linked to whole school expectations which are consistent and include.

- Achieve your goal in every lesson (Lessons Goal)
- Do not swear or use language that will upset other people (Kind words)
- Do not hurt anyone or break things (Kind hands)

The approaches across the school will vary depending on the ability and understanding of the pupils in the class and may include.

Peterhouse Points

Collecting Peterhouse points which can then be redeemed for items and purchased through school. In order to collect rewards, students can earn points. This is done in a positive way in 'earning points rather than in a negative 'losing points' approach.

Primetime/Golden Time

Additionally, or as an alternative, free time can be earned at the end of the day/week to be used for motivating activities within the class or across the school. If students have not successfully earned points in the day, they may be able to have some time for reflection in developing thinking skills about why and work on strategies with staff to help them achieve the points the next day.

Immediate reward

Some students do not have the cognitive ability to reflect outside of the here and now and in order to reinforce positive behavior, shorter immediate rewards may be used to ensure students continue to have a positive experience from achievement in an immediate way.

Reflection time

Students may need an opportunity to reflect when things have not gone to plan or when there has been a problem. In order to do this effectively, consideration must be made about who worked with the students and when this happens. This could be implemented

immediately, at the end of the day or in personal tutorials. It may be conducted with class or preferred staff to best meet the students' individual needs.

Nomination for reward

As students move through the school and gain more understanding, there are class groups who may nominate students for prizes at the end of the term. The criteria for the nominations will follow the Peterhouse School behavioral expectations although this may mark out specific individuals for praise who may have improved a great deal or have faced significant challenges over this time.

In addition, it is recognised that some of our students may present with unpredictable challenging behaviour which may cause upset to others in the environment. To minimise this, we have:

- risk assessments which hi-lights risks posed to others and strategies to minimise this
- class groupings are defined by compatibility
- high ratio of support staff
- personalised approaches to behaviour
- classroom environments offer the opportunity of quiet areas for pupils to independently 'take a break'

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governance Committee

This anti-bullying policy is reviewed annually for effectiveness by the Governance Committee. Incidents which are deemed to be instances of serious bullying are reported and discussed at every Governance Committee meeting.

Records of Bullying are reported to the Governors within each governor's report, and these are broken down into categories of racist, sexual, emotional, homophobic/prejudiced based, physical, cyber and other. A narrative is included to provide context around the issue as well as the actions and outcomes which have arisen from the bullying concerns.

The Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement this anti-bullying policy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Governance Committee about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy at least annually or on request. The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to read and understand the contents of this policy and follow the procedures and guidance within it. Staff must attend the specific training provided to ensure they are equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

Staff must be vigilant to signs and indicators of bullying at all times, but especially during the less structured times of break and lunch.

It is similarly important that members of staff treat each other with mutual respect and are seen to be working in a co-operative manner, as role models for our pupils.

Involvement of Pupils

We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Work with pupils to learn how to recognise bullying and are able to express and report concerns.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied to ensure their wellbeing is not being negatively impacted and to check for understanding.
- Work with pupils who are displaying 'bullying behaviours' in order to change this behaviour and develop their skills and strategies to enable them to tolerate and behave appropriately towards others.

The role of Parents and Carers

Parents and Carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's teacher immediately.

Parents and Carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy. In line with Home-School agreement. Parents will be consulted on the effectiveness of the school's approach when dealing with bullying. This occurs annually through Annual EHCP review feedback.

7 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents: -

1. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the most appropriate member of staff (e.g. class teacher, personal tutor)
2. A clear account of the alleged Incident will be recorded as a 'child on child' record on CPOMS. This will be read by a member of the senior leadership team and actions identified. These records will be kept in line with IRMS Toolkit Guidance for Record Retention in Schools.

3. All pupils concerned will be supported in a way personalised to them as actioned above.
4. Parents will be informed of any incidences of alleged bullying and of any actions to be taken.
5. Depending on the seriousness of the incident one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads will be informed and a referral made to Children's Social Care and/or CEOP
6. The young persons' risk assessments will be updated to reflect the risk as both potential victim and perpetrator
7. Any 'bullying behaviour' will be treated as a behaviour of concern and added to a pupil's Positive Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP). The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate or are required to do so.
8. If parents do not feel the bullying concerns have been dealt with appropriately through the outlined procedure, please see the complaints policy on raising a complaint

8 SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS AND GUIDANCE

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.
- Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- DfE: "Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies", and "Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools" March 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: "No health without mental health": <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- NDCS: www.ndcs.org.uk
- **Cyberbullying**
- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- **SEND**
- DfE: *SEND code of practice*: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice>