

**PENWORTHAM GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL**

## **ANTI-BULLYING Policy**

(June 2022)

**Updated Annually**

**Next review Summer 2023**

### **THE MISSION**

**To prepare  
Articulate, Questioning, Tolerant and Independent Women  
for the future.**

## Our Aim, Mission and Core Values

### **PGHSuccess:**

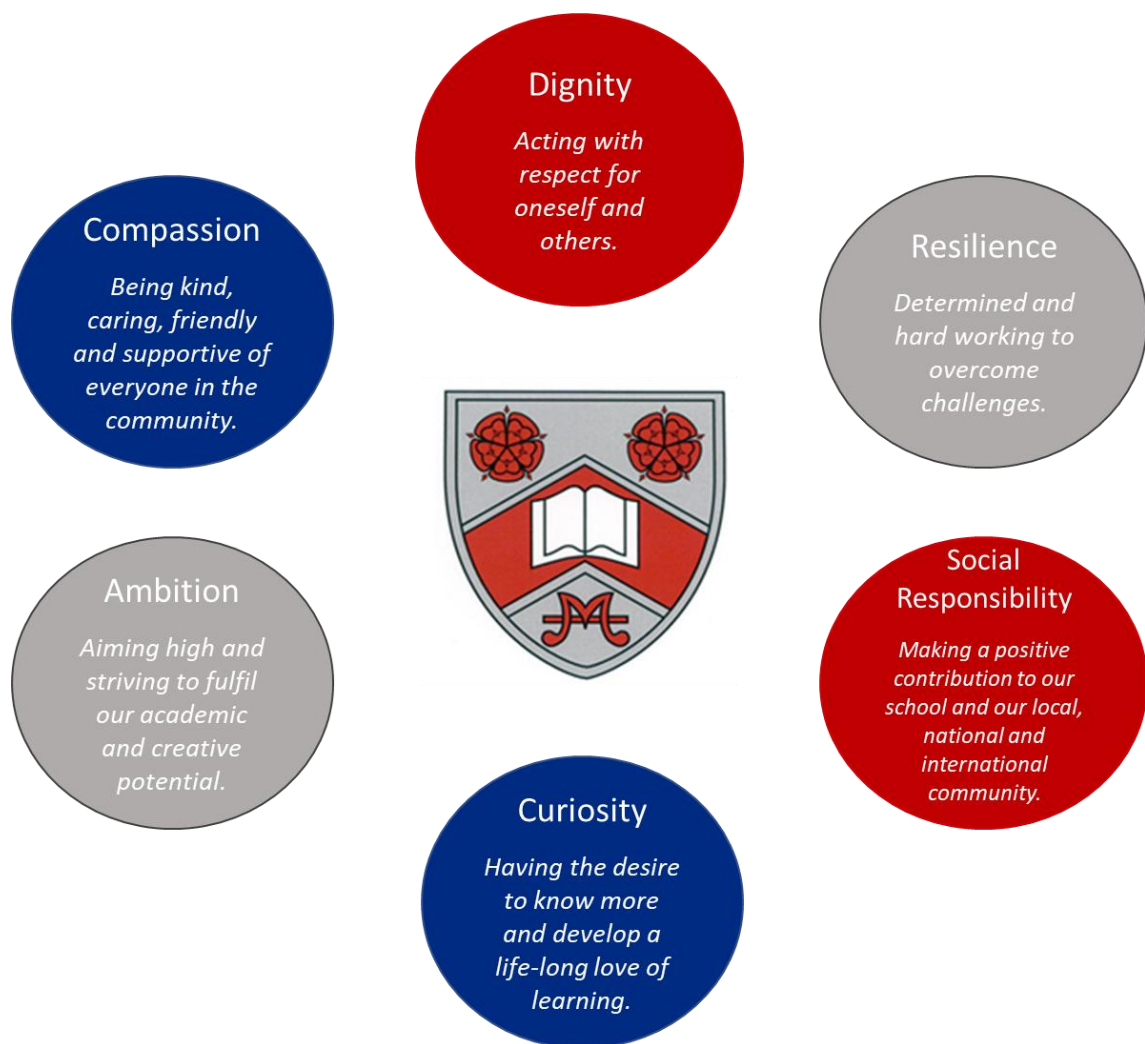
It is our aim to make all our students a PGHSuccess. A student becomes a PGHSuccess when they have the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes required to achieve their ambitions; academically, creativity and socially.

### **Our Mission is:**

To help our students to achieve their version of PGHSuccess, we have set ourselves the mission of *'preparing articulate, questioning, tolerant and independent women for the future'*, as we believe that these qualities are central to success in our modern society.

### **Our Core Values:**

In order to achieve our mission statement, our policies and actions are guided by six core values. These core values are interwoven throughout all we do in school, including forming the basis of our pastoral care.



### Related Policies and documentation:

- a) Behaviour Policy
  - b) Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
  - c) Online Safety Policy
  - d) Confidentiality Policy
  - e) Mental Health Policy
  - f) Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
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- 1) Life Skills SoW / Resources
  - 2) ICT/Computer Science SoW / Resources
  - 3) Peer support programmes

### 1.0 Core Principles

As a school, we take bullying and its impacts seriously. We pledge to support the victims of bullying and to educate and guide those who bully. The aim of this policy is to create a school in which our students can grow happily, free to develop their version of PGHSuccess, without fear of intimidation, coercion, or harm.

Students and parents/carers should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to immediately. Bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within the school, in the local community, or online. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this. Clear consequences related to any form of **bullying or peer on peer abuse** are part of the school's Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all students, school staff and parents/carers.

As a school community, we take every opportunity to promote a safe and harmonious environment in which behaviours associated with bullying are alien and not accepted. We encourage all members of our school community to show compassion to each other and to always act with dignity. We encourage all students to be socially responsible and report any concerns about bullying behaviour. Our students are taught the importance of tolerance and are expected to embody this attribute in all their actions.

At PGHS we encourage all our students at all times to be '**safe, sensible and sensitive**'.

## **2.0 Bullying definitions used in this policy**

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention **of verbally, physically, or emotionally** harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

All members of the school: students, teachers, parents, carers, support staff, welfare staff, office and supervisory staff are part of our **telling community**. Any member of our school community may report an instance of suspected bullying.

**Bullying can also be linked to peer on peer abuse.** Peer on peer abuse is defined as a serious form of bullying (abuse) between persons of a similar age and as such has wider safeguarding implications.

All allegations of bullying or peer on peer abuse must be recorded on cpoms and assigned to the appropriate pastoral leader (Head of Year) or the pastoral Senior Assistant Headteacher, who will investigate the matter as a priority. Definitions of the categories of bullying / Peer on Peer abuse are summarised below.

Students can report incidents of bullying directly to members of staff or alternatively they can use the **Impero confide system** to report concerns anonymously.

This policy acknowledges that there are different types of bullying or peer on peer abuse. As a school, all forms of bullying are treated with the same level of importance, and perpetrators will be reprimanded with the same sanctions. These sanctions are clearly signposted in the school behaviour policy which is shared with students, staff and parents.

The school recognises that vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:

- Students who are adopted or in care.
- Students suffering from a health problem.
- Students with caring responsibilities.
- Students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Students with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Students who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students.
- Students with SEND.

### Categories of Bullying / Peer on Peer abuse

**Derogatory language abuse** is when a victim is subjected to verbal abuse which is deliberately designed to be hurtful. This can include expletives terms and other unacceptable terms.

**Biphobic abuse** is when a victim is targeted specifically because they are bisexual.

**Homophobic abuse** is when a victim is targeted specifically because they are homosexual.

**Transphobic abuse** is when a victim is targeted specifically because they are transsexual.

**Disability abuse** is when a victim is subjected to any type of abuse because of their disability.

**Religious abuse** is when a victim is subjected to any type of abuse because of their disability.

**Racist abuse** is when a victim is subjected to any type of abuse because of their disability.

**Cyberbullying** can include; abusive messages, posting abusive comments on social media, sharing humiliating photos or videos online, stealing someone's identity, spreading rumours online, trolling, developing hate sites about another person, prank calls or messages, group bullying or exclusion online, anonymous messaging or encouraging someone to self-harm.

**Initiation / Hazing** involves the practice of rituals, challenges, and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group.

**Physical abuse** involved the victim being subjected to physical harm.

**Non-consensual activity** is when a victim is touched inappropriately and without consent.

**Intimate relationship abuse** can include the victim experiencing a range of abusive behaviours including insults and name-calling and controlling the victim.

**Sexual harassment** involves any comments or behaviour which involved sexualised jokes, unwanted sexual comments or sexual threats.

**Sexual violence** causing another student to engage in sexual activity without consent.

**Sexting** involves sharing suggestive images, messages, or videos on a smartphone or through the Internet. Sexting includes sending: nude or nearly nude photos or selfies.

As a school we take online bullying extremely seriously. We acknowledge that the 24-7 nature of online activity, the potential for a wider audience, and the ability of bullies to hide their identity can make cyberbullying particularly challenging for the victim.

### **2.1 Bullying is not**

It is important to understand that bullying is not an occasional fall-out or argument. Students do sometimes fall out and/or say things that upset others. It is important that they learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, occasional name-calling or pettiness. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop the social skills to repair relationships.

Concerns about friendship issues will be recorded on cpoms and referred to the Friendship Coordinators to provide support in resolving conflict between students.

### **2.2 Bullying and the law**

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students.

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation (e.g. threats or abusive messages on social media). Schools must follow the anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school. Further guidance on safeguarding procedures related to peer on peer abuse is outlined in the Peer on Peer abuse policy.

Following an incident of bullying, the school and/or the parents/carers of the victim may feel it is appropriate to register the incident with the police. The school is committed to supporting the police with any investigation into bullying or discriminatory behaviour which involves our students. The school in these circumstances will seek guidance from the police on how to proceed.

### **2.3 Bullying outside of school**

In certain circumstances, the school may exercise its legal power (Section 89, Paragraph 5 – Education and Inspections Act 2006) to intervene in cases of bullying which occur beyond the school premises. The school may take action in cases of online bullying where the key/majority of the students involved are students from our school. Students may also be sanctioned if bullying-related activities have occurred during their journey to, or from, school, including problems occurring on public transport.

### **3.0 Bullying and the Curriculum**

Through our core values focused curriculum and pastoral programmes we aim to provide our students with the social tools needed to cope with a range of friendship / peer challenges associated with growing-up and being a part of a large and diverse community, including combating bullying. We aim to ensure all our students can identify bullying when it happens and know how to raise bullying concerns with a teacher.

Due to our focus on dignity and compassion, building positive friendships and responding appropriately to disagreements and fallouts are topics regularly covered through our Life Skills course and pastoral programmes, including form time activities and assemblies.

Life skills has the core purpose of educating students about the society that they are growing up in; helping them to develop a better understanding of themselves and a more tolerant view of those who have made different choices. This compulsory course includes content on rights and responsibilities, managing conflict, understanding identify, and gender/sexuality stereotyping.

As a school we promote and actively take part in a number of national initiatives aimed at tackling bullying by celebrating the differences which make our school community so diverse, vibrant, and enriching.

The school's efforts to promote a diverse and free from fear community, where bullying in any form isn't accepted has been acknowledged by a number of awards, including UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Silver Award and all of the Lancashire Equality Charter marks.

#### **4.0 Signs and Symptoms for Parents/Carers and Staff**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- struggles with sleep or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do make less effort with school work than previously
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- eating disorders
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when receiving a digital message
- lack of eye contact
- change in attitude to people at home

These signs and behaviours could indicate other social, emotional and/or mental health problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.



#### **4.1. Guidelines to staff when dealing with alleged bullying.**

<b>ATTEND</b>	Listen to what is being said, try not to show shock or disbelief. Patience is needed, wait during silences and prompt gently.
<b>ACCEPT</b>	Keep an open mind. You never know whether what you are told is true or not. Try not to criticise the alleged bully. It is the act not the person we are dealing with and our aim is reconciliation.
<b>ALLAY fears</b>	Reassure the girl that she is right to tell. However, do not promise definite sanctions, take sides or other confidentiality
<b>ASK</b>	neutral questions "Tell me what happened" "Who was involved?" "When and where did it happen?" "What did you do and say at the time?" "How often has this happened, or is this the first time?" "Was there anyone who saw or heard this?"
<b>ANNOTATE</b>	Make brief notes during the interview. As soon as possible, log on CPOMs. Do not record your interpretations or assumptions. Ensure the log is sent to the appropriate Head of Year and member of the SLT pastoral team. If the incident involves a PP or SEND policy, also forward the account to the PP coordinator or SENCo. <u>If the disclosure raises child protection concerns, then the account must be sent to our DSL or Deputy DSL only.</u>
<b>ASSUAGE</b>	The victim may feel guilty or ashamed. Reassure her that it is not her fault that she feels bullied: she is not the only one to suffer; if bullies get into trouble it is not her fault etc.
<b>ADVISE</b>	Give the victim strategies to deal with the situation in the interim. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stay with the friends</li> <li>▪ Don't go home alone</li> <li>▪ Tell someone if it happens again etc.</li> </ul>

#### **4.11 Recording Incident of bullying**

**Remember that not all cases of unpleasant behaviour are bullying.** If you believe the incident was a friendship fallout rather than a genuine case of bullying, ensure the entry is logged as this. CPOM entries are tracked and reported on a weekly basis. It is therefore important that this data is a true representation of events in school. If with further investigation, the investigating staff member believes the incident is not a case of bullying, the coding will be changed.

When recording on CPOMs take care to use the correct tag. When recording a bullying/peer-to-peer abuse incident you must also select the appropriate subcategory (see guidance above). In order to ensure accurate records, only select the subcategory which best reflects the nature of the incident being reported

## **4.2 The Procedure**

### **Stage 1: Investigation**

The 'victim' is interviewed and information about the incident(s) are recorded on CPOMs. Other information is gathered from all relevant sources: other students, staff, parents, carers etc. The student is reassured that the situation is being dealt with and she is advised on interim coping strategies. Monitoring procedures are set up and all staff are alerted via morning briefings, CPOM messages or email.

### **Stage 2: Decision**

The investigating staff member (in most cases the student's Head of Year) decides whether the incident(s) constitute bullying. The appropriate Senior Assistant Head (Pastoral and Progress) is informed and a response is agreed.

### **Stage 3: Consequences / Sanctions**

Once bullying has been confirmed, an appropriate sanction will be issued. This could range from an after-school detention for an initial case of bullying, to a short-term exclusion for an ongoing targeted programme of abuse. Students carrying out bullying activities may be restricted from attending extra-curricular clubs or school trips.

As a school we acknowledge that no student is born a bully and believe that the majority of students who engage in bullying behaviours are remorseful and regret their actions. As well as ensuring support for the students who have been bullied, the PGHS community are also committed to working with the bully to foster positive behaviours and reduce the likelihood of similar future incidents. For example, students sanctioned for bullying-related activities may be required to complete a core values course during their period of isolation, focusing on dignity, compassion, or social responsibility.

Parents/carers are informed by phone and/or letter. In serious or ongoing cases, parents/carers will be required to come into school to meet with the Head of Year (and a member of SLT) to agree on a Pastoral Support Plan, or Behaviour Contract, conditions/criteria.

### **Stage 4: Ongoing Monitoring and Support**

Following an incident of bullying, the appropriate Head of Year will ensure that both the perpetrator and victim are fully supported. At regular intervals, the Head of Year will 'check in' with both parties to ensure the bullying is fully resolved and any issues that were identified have been fully addressed.

The Head of Year will record all details on CPOMS.

NB Ongoing cases of targeted abuse could ultimately result in permanent exclusion.

## **5.0 The Responsibilities of Parents and Carers**

We ask our parents and carers to support their children and the school by:

- watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- co-operating with the school if their children are victims of, or accused of, bullying
- avoiding being directly drawn into potential bullying situations, e.g. confronting students either in person, on the phone, or online
- advising their children to report any bullying to a member of staff
- monitoring their daughter's online activities, particularly social media accounts (most social media sites require members to be at 13 years-old)
- explaining the implications of allowing bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other students
- advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying
- working together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying

We understand that bullying is a very emotive subject and understand the distress bullying can inflict on the victim. We know that parents can feel a responsibility to protect their child. In these situations, we would encourage parents to contact school with all the information they have and then to remove the means for further contact from the bully, including limiting access to mobile phones and other online devices. We would discourage direct attempts to tackle the situation, such as getting involved in a chatroom discussion, replying to a text, or confronting the individual in person, as these actions often escalate rather than resolve the situation.

## **6.0 Help Organisations**

### **ChildLine 0800 1111**

ChildLine is a helpline and website for young people and children. You can call ChildLine confidentially at any time of the day or night to talk about any worries. Calls are free from landlines and mobiles, and they won't appear on a phone bill. You can also chat online to an adviser or contact ChildLine by email or message board. ChildLine's website has a useful section on how to cope with bullying.

### **Bullybusters: 0800 169 6928**

Bullybusters operates a free anti-bullying helpline for anyone who's been affected by bullying. It also has a website and message board, with sections specifically for kids and young people.

### **Bullying UK 0808 800 2222**

Bullying UK offers extensive practical advice and information about bullying for young people, and its website has a section on bullying at school.

### **EACH - 0808 1000 143**

EACH is a charity for young people and adults affected by homophobia and transphobia. It has a telephone helpline for young people who are experiencing homophobic or transphobic bullying.

**Stonewall** - <http://www.youngstonewall.org.uk/lgbtq-info/education-all-campaign>

Stonewall is a charity that campaigns for equal rights for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people. Its Education for All campaign tackles homophobia and homophobic bullying in schools across the UK.

<b>This policy has been approved by the Curriculum and Standards committee</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Reviewed BWA / JRA	June 2013
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