



Home from Home



Anti-Bullying Policy 2023

Approved by: Karen Pickles
Designated Safeguarding Lead
Date: 15th September 2023

Approved by: Jo Clark
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Date: 15th September 2023

POLICY REVISION RECORD (annual reviews)

Date	Section	Revision	Updated by
21/08/2019	7.3	Additional helpline added	Jo Clark
02/06/2020	update KCSIE 2020	updating all references to KCSIE	Jo Clark
06/07/2021	update KCSIE 2021	updating all references to KCSIE	Jo Clark
05/07/2022	update KCSIE 2022	updating all references to KCSIE	Karen Pickles
09/09/2023	Re-written policy	Re-styled to include all above as required and KCSIE 2023	Karen Pickles

Statement

Berkeley Guardians is committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all the children in our care and also our staff. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and anyone who is bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At Berkeley Guardians we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We actively encourage staff and children within our care that if they are aware that bullying is happening, they are expected to tell an appropriate adult whether in the host family, their school or our own DSL/DDSL (*in the case of the children*) or the DSL/DDSL (*in the case of adults*).

Definition of Bullying:

Repeated targeted behaviour, often over a period of time which intentionally hurts another student or group, physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of protected characteristics, such as race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer or is in a host family environment – it may occur directly or through social media, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email. Single incidents of bullying will still be recorded to ensure a single incident does not become a series of incidents.

It may be:

- **Physical** - hitting, kicking, sexual abuse, taking belongings, spoiling belongings.
- **Verbal** - name calling, repeated teasing and insulting.
- **Indirect** - spreading malicious gossip about someone, excluding someone from social groups, sending unpleasant or threatening notes, emails or text messages, phone calls, photographs, or any other type of cyberbullying including postings on social media.
- **Spatial** - excluding from an area that should be available, through threatening behaviour.

Identifying Bullying

The varying forms of bullying may include:

- Emotional
 - being unfriendly
 - excluding
 - tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)
 - ridicule
 - humiliation
- Verbal
 - name-calling
 - sarcasm
 - spreading rumours
 - threats
 - teasing
 - making rude remarks

- making fun of someone
- Physical pushing
 - kicking
 - hitting
 - pinching
 - throwing stones
 - biting
 - spitting
 - punching or any other forms of violence
 - taking or hiding someone's belongings
- Racist
 - racial taunts
 - graffiti
 - gestures
 - humiliating cultural and religious beliefs
- Sexual
 - unwanted physical contact
 - sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic
 - because of/ or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Online/cyber
 - setting up 'hate websites'
 - sending offensive text messages and/or emails
 - abusing the victims via their mobile phones
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. Therefore, the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone is not classed as bullying. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose.

Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

NB *It is not bullying when two students of equal power or strength have an occasional quarrel or disagreement (considered to be a one-off), which is resolved amicably and speedily*

Berkeley Guardians does not tolerate bullying in any form and promotes an open, honest and trusting community and through our anti-bullying policy we aim to:

- *Put in place systems that should discourage and prevent bullying and give each pupil the right to flourish in a safe environment when in the host family accommodation. This should promote positive behaviour and respect towards all.*
- *To raise awareness of what constitutes bullying, the damage in terms of physical, psychological and emotional distress that it may cause and raising awareness of the criminal laws (linking threatening and harassment laws)*
- *To provide clear guidelines for staff, host families and pupils/parents for correctly identifying and managing a bullying incident*
- *To ensure that pupils are in no doubt as to the level of sanctions which may be put in place should bullying occur, including removal from a host family etc.*

We aim to work on preventative measures, working with in conjunction with the schools we are linked with and with regular and updated training for staff and host families as to the procedures and the need to report any instances to the DSL or the DDSL as soon as practicably possible.

We will encourage host families to promote discussion of differences between people and the importance of prejudice-based language use.

We will, through safeguarding and child-protection training for host families and staff, alongside the regular updates for KCSIE and Working Together guidelines ensure that staff understand their responsibilities and know to whom they may turn should they need support or help.

We will encourage our host families and Guardian Angels to promote open discussion about difficulties with friendships and about anything a pupil perceives to be bullying and needs to confide in a trusted adult.

We aim to prevent bullying through:

- Promoting discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language
- Ensuring Berkeley Guardian's anti-bullying policy is understood and legal responsibilities are understood by the staff and the host families and that sources of further support are available
- Making sure that information is given to parents and pupils on joining the guardianship
- To be aware that research shows that emphasis is made to the nature and prevention of bullying among girls which is more prevalent in discreet situations, rather than boys who find themselves more physically prone to bullying
- Students are encouraged to tell someone they trust about bullying, either when they are the victim or when they are aware that someone else is being bullied. At the outset this may be a friend or someone in the family, but it should also quickly include someone in the host family or guardianship staff group.
- If a pupil or staff member need to report cyberbullying, they are told not to delete any messages and try to keep screen shots and a record of the date and time of calls. Pupils can call 999 if in immediate danger. They are taught about the organisations that provide support and advice if they are worried about bullying, such as Bullying UK, Childline and Kidscape

- The staff member or host family will inform the DDSL or DSL and they will record all cases of bullying and act accordingly and as appropriate to the case.
- Parents will be informed, as will the pupil's school, as soon as is practicably possible
- At all times the victim will be listened to sympathetically and in confidence as far as possible. If the victim feels able to deal with a situation, then they will be supported but will be told that there will always be further support offered at all times should it be needed
- Under normal conditions, the person accused of bullying will be approached with the knowledge and agreement of the victim and this will be dealt with sensitively
- The person accused of bullying will have every opportunity to be heard and the victim will be informed of the situation at each stage
- Both parties will then be helped to deal with the situation. The bully will be made aware that bullying is wrong and not tolerated and will be helped to work out ways of responding more appropriately to those around her. They will be made aware of the feelings of the person who is being bullied.
- The school and the parents of the victim and the bully will be made aware and will be updated as necessary
- Should the victim wish, they will have the opportunity to talk about their feelings to the bully, with a member of staff present
- The DSL will ensure that everything is written up fully and will contact the victim's and the bully's parents to communicate the decision. The DSL will also speak to the appropriate school's DSL
- Any incidents based on protected characteristics will be identified as such on the incident log which the DSL will keep updated
- Severe or persistent bullying may result in serious sanctions such as exclusion.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

- This can be sexual violence, sexual harassment, physical abuse, sexting, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- All types of abuse are just that – abuse – and cannot be passed off as 'banter' or just 'having a laugh'
- Any allegations will be recorded and dealt with under this policy and the safeguarding policy, mindful that both victim and perpetrator are considered 'at risk'
- A bullying incident or peer-on-peer abuse may 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. External agencies such as First Response, Families in Focus or the police may be informed

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Staff and host families should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking around the local area
- doesn't want to go on the bus/in the taxi
- begs to be personally driven
- changes their usual routine/route
- begins truanting (The School may liaise with Berkeley Guardians)
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence

- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to underperform in school/tutoring work
- arrives at the homestay with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go “missing”
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has other monies continually “lost”
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- arrives at the homestay very hungry (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what’s wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

Berkeley Guardians provides a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are. All staff and host families are aware that children who have learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we will therefore be always particularly vigilant with these children.

High attainers, gifted or talented children can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

Contact details

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Karen Pickles, a Berkeley Guardians Director. Karen can be contacted in office hours or in an emergency on: **07565493818**. Her email is karen@berkeleyguardians.com

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