



ANTI-BULLYING AND HATE POLICY

Lead Person:	Deputy Head (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing)
Support:	HOYs, Form Tutors, All Crypt Staff
Governing Body Committee:	Pupil Welfare

Aims

The aim of Crypt School's anti-bullying and hate policy is to promote the emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing and development of all pupils by providing a healthy and safe social and learning environment - as such, the school rejects all forms of bullying and cruelty.

The Equality Duty (with reference the Equality Act 2010) requires that the school has 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.

This policy is written with reference to:

- Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025).
- OFSTED Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges (June 2021)
- Sharing nudes and semi nudes: advice for education settings working with young people (December 2020)
- Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE 2014)
- Bullying or counter-connecting? Two inclusive definitions for schools (Dr Julia Badger, Oxford University research, 2025)

Introduction and definitions:

Bullying is repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe. Bullying behaviour is unacceptable at The Crypt School.

Our school community is based upon respect, kindness and integrity, in line with our school values. 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 pupils can flourish. Bullying can also take more specific forms such as physical, emotional, sexual, homophobic, racist, in person and online (email, social media apps, messaging or commenting). This whole school policy

sets out the aims of the school in relation to bullying behaviour and provides a set of procedures and strategies to be followed. It attempts to indicate how these procedures relate to the organisation and structures within the school and to provide a framework within which any actions against bullying can be implemented and their effectiveness reviewed.

We aim to deal with all incidents sensitively, consistently and efficiently.

Bullying of any kind is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or by actual or perceived differences between people. Many types of bullying are prejudice-based or discriminatory. For example, bullying may involve actions or comments that:

- are aimed at a person's race, religion (or perceived religion), belief or culture
- are homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist
- misogynist or sexual
- focus on actual or perceived disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape) or special educational needs
- are aimed at the individual because of their family context, for example because they are adopted or a young carer.

Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the target. 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.

Counter-connecting involves a pattern of behaviour repeated over time and causes unintentional victimisation of another. Harm may be inflicted unintentionally. Counter-connecting is a useful term to understand behaviour that is not deemed to be bullying but can be upsetting for a child. Research shows that both definitions - 'bullying' and 'counter-connecting' - should be used in schools to ensure that negative behaviours are managed correctly, and appropriate support is provided, especially for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Signs of bullying

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

- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to lessons or morning registration
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor quality 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 accent)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Pastoral Room or First Aid with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers
- Displaying withdrawn body language and unusually poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares
- Talking of harming themselves, suicide or running away

Preventative measures

We take the following preventative measures:

- The Crypt School 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 lead various initiatives to tackle bullying at school. They wear badges and present assemblies to ensure they have a strong profile in the community.
- We use assemblies, dedicated Community Time and Tutor Time to educate pupils about the school values (including kindness and respect).
- Personal Development lessons give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities and educate them about the safe use of social networking sites and the internet.
- Our Behaviour Policy makes clear that bullying is not tolerated and specifies helpful measures such as the fact that pupils are not allowed to take photographs in school without prior staff permission, and mobile phones must not be used by pupils year 7-11 from 8.30am - 3.15pm.
- We expect all pupils to adhere to the Pupils' Acceptable Use of ICT policy and certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and pupil use of iPads is monitored. We may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- All pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place - they can do this in person or use reportbullying@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk
- 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. Staff are on duty and key times and areas of the school day - for example canteen, playground, corridors.
- We have a strong, experienced and caring pastoral team including Form Tutors, Pastoral Support Workers, Heads of Year and Deputy Headteacher (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing), supported by a school-based counsellor and School Nurse who visits once a week.
- Information about friendship issues, specific incidents and any known conflict between pupils is shared with staff so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying.
- Posters around school display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as SHOUT, Childline, Young Minds and Talk Well (previously Tic+).

Procedures for reporting bullying

To encourage pupils to report bullying or unkindness with confidence and to make the reporting of incidents as easy as possible, there are many avenues that can be used.

A pupil can report bullying to any member of staff (including but not exclusively; Form Tutor, Pastoral Support Worker, Head of Year, any teacher). Anti-bullying ambassadors, Prefects, and members of the Student Executive are also appropriate and supportive peers. Additionally, a pupil may choose to use the Call It Out form on the google homepage or email reportbullying@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk. Alternatively a child might prefer to speak to somebody external for example through Childline or SHOUT textline.

Procedures for dealing with reported bullying

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation will reassure and support the pupil(s) involved.
- He/she will inform the appropriate Head of Year and Pastoral Support Worker and/ or Deputy Headteacher (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing), as appropriate, immediately and record the incident on MyConcern. Pastoral Support Workers will add the tag as 'Bullying - alleged'.
- The target will be interviewed on their own and may be asked to write and sign their account of events.
- The alleged perpetrator, and all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and may be asked to write and sign their 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 'bullying - [type eg physical]' added to the MyConcern record, if it is found to be the case.
- All relevant staff and parents will be informed of the incident for awareness and to support those involved.
- In very serious incidents, the Headmaster will be informed and a decision will be made as to any further action that is required. The parents of the target and the alleged perpetrator 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:

- Following interviews and evidence gathering outlined above, a way forward, which may include disciplinary sanctions (ranging from detentions to exclusions) and counselling, will be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for those who bully others.
- The motivation behind the bullying behaviour will be considered and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the perpetrator which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations lead to any concerns that the perpetrator 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 kind and respectful way forward for all concerned to close the episode.
- If a child who has reported bullying is found to have wilfully wrongly accused another, disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour 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 Children and Families Front Door 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 the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- If a criminal offence has been committed, the School may inform the Police.

Child on Child Abuse

The school recognises the potential crossover between child-on-child abuse and bullying. The importance of consent must always be recognised and where child protection concerns become apparent, any incident will be dealt with as a safeguarding matter under that policy.

The school is guided by the following statement in this regard:

The Crypt School recognises that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. We take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. This includes verbal as well as physical abuse. Child on Child abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or part of "growing up". We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within our school and beyond. In cases where child-on-child abuse is identified we will follow our safeguarding procedures, taking a contextual approach to support all children and young people who have been affected by the situation. We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting or youth produced sexual imagery (sometimes known as sending "nudes" or "pics")
- Up-skirting / down-blousing
- Bullying
- Radicalisation
- Physical or emotional abuse or controlling behaviour in intimate relationships
- Children who display harmful sexual behaviour
- Gang association and serious violence (County Lines)

Some of these behaviours would be handled with reference to other policies in school such as the behaviour policy, and safeguarding policy. We are compliant with the statutory guidance on child-on-child abuse as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) and should be read in conjunction with the Children and Families Front Door Procedures, and any relevant safeguarding Practice Guidance.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy will be evaluated and updated biennially. The views of anti-bullying ambassadors, pupils, parents/carers and staff will be used to make changes and improvements to the policy on an ongoing basis. The school will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies, eg: by discussing relevant data with Governors at the Pupil Welfare Committee.

Complaints

We hope that parents/carers and pupils will not have any complaints about the operation of our anti-bullying policy; however, copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to parents/carers on request and can be found on the school website.

Links to other policies

This policy will operate in conjunction with the following school documents

- The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- The School Behaviour Policy and Home School Agreement
- The Safeguarding Policy

NB: The application of this policy will be suspended immediately in the case of a Child Protection allegation and all further dealings will be carried out under the guidelines of the School's *Safeguarding Policy*.

Annex A: Advice for Parents/Carers

Guidance for parents: If your child tells you that they are being bullied at school we suggest the following:

- Continue to monitor your child's mobile phone and iPad use so you are aware of their friendships, any challenges and content viewed.
- Try and stay calm and objective when you discuss with your child what has happened and collect as much detail as you can (where, when, who, witnesses and why?)
- Ask your child to report all further incidents to their form tutor, Pastoral Support Worker or any member of staff they feel most comfortable with suggest they write these down in a log which is kept discreetly by the pupil
- Notify your child's tutor and Head of Year
- Remember that the tutor may be hearing about these incidents for the first time or may be aware of conflicting accounts
- Be as specific as possible when reporting the incident - ask also how you can support the school in the action they propose to take
- Give the school time to deal with the issue but stay in contact after the incident and remember to let us know if things are improving as well as if they are not
- Remember that finding a permanent and effective solution to a bullying issue may well involve not just sanctioning the perpetrator but also supporting them

Reviewed by Deputy Head (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing): June 2025

Approved by Headmaster: September 2025

Review cycle: 2 years

Next Review: June 2027