



ANTI-BULLYING AND PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE POLICY

June 2023 onwards

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Last updated: June 2023
Review date: July 2025

ANTI-BULLYING AND PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE POLICY

At Geneva English School bullying and peer-on-peer abuse, is considered to be an extremely serious offence.

INTRODUCTION

Geneva English School expects all members of the school community to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure, whether at school or elsewhere, and to be protected when vulnerable, so that all may flourish without fear or unfair treatment or harassment.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the victim and the bullies. It affects the children who may witness violence and aggression and the distress of the victim. It damages the atmosphere of the school. Less aggressive pupils may be drawn into the taunting and tormenting of a victim by group pressures.

The school's policy on bullying is unequivocal: it is always unacceptable. Bullying is hurtful behaviour that usually occurs over a period of time. It is behaviour that a reasonable bystander would say was calculated or intended to hurt or to upset the victim. It is behaviour that harasses, humiliates or intimidates others. It may take the form of teasing, verbal criticism and harassment on the grounds, for example, that someone has different coloured skin, the way they talk, their gender preferences, their size or their name. Many experts say that bullying is associated with an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and 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 and peer-on-peer abuse can cause lasting psychological damage to a victim and, in extreme cases, lead to suicide. All complaints should be taken seriously and pursued. Acting against bullying is a part of every teacher's duty of care, and that of all members of the school community.

Bullying and peer-on-peer abuse can manifest itself in several forms:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, “play-fighting” (which may not be “play” for one of those involved); and hiding, taking or damaging belongings.
- Verbal – aggressive name calling, teasing, mockery, insults. It is important to consider the effects that the name calling has upon the victim, rather than simply the actual words used which may seem to others to be harmless.
- Emotional – being deliberately unfriendly, excluding someone from a group, activity or place, tormenting, spreading rumours, inciting others to do the same.
- Racist – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity
- Religious/cultural – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of religious belief or other cultural issues
- Sexual or sexist bullying – making inappropriate comments about appearance and attractiveness, uninvited propositions, uninvited touching and using innuendo or inappropriate imagery. This also includes upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Homophobic – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of actual or perceived sexual orientation
- For reasons related to special educational needs or disability – physical, verbal or emotional abuse against a person or group because of learning difficulties or other disability
- Cyberbullying – the use of information and communications technology, particularly mobile phones, email, social websites, text messages, cameras and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. Cyberbullying can take place outside of the normal school day and be directed towards the victim while he or she is at home. Silent phone calls or abusive texts or emails can be just as distressing as

being bullied face to face. Cyberbullying can have a profound effect on a child as the technology allows information (or misinformation) to be distributed widely, instantly and directly to the child's home or mobile device. The victim can feel that there is nowhere available for him to escape from the bullying. The School will take action against any pupil responsible for using electronic devices to bully another pupil even if the bullying is taking place outside of the grounds of the school ([Refer to Acceptable Use of ICT Policies and E-Safety Policy](#)).

The following policy applies to the whole school, to conduct both in and out of school time and on or off the School's premises should the Head deem that the behaviour is damaging to the School and/or pupils.

Expectations of staff, pupils, parents and governors

All members of the school community have a responsibility to show that they believe that any form of bullying or peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and to set an example of positive behaviour which reflects that view. All members of the School community should help to create an atmosphere in which bullying will be spoken of openly, taken seriously and responded to with appropriate action.

We believe that it is unacceptable for any pupil to watch bullying and peer-on-peer abuse taking place and to do nothing about it. We encourage all pupils to bring their concerns to the attention of a member of staff and / or their parents. We create an atmosphere in which pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that the action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. Pupils need to know that not reporting incidents of bullying has the effect of protecting the bullies, and gives them the message that they can continue to act in this way. If a child is being bullied, feels tempted to bully or sees someone else being bullied, they should tell someone they trust. They could tell:

- another pupil (their best friend, or an older pupil, peer mentors)
- their parents
- any member of staff
- their class teacher/tutor
- a member of SLT
- the DSLs or Deputy DSLs

A parent who is concerned that a pupil (their own child or another pupil) may be being bullied or be subject to peer-on-peer abuse should report concerns in the first instance to their child's class teacher, subject teacher or tutor. Most concerns will be sufficiently resolved at this stage. In some instances, the member of staff may seek the help and guidance of the Deputy Head or Assistant Heads of KS3, 4 or 5 (Secondary) or the Deputy Head or Phase Leaders (Primary). More serious incidents may need to be investigated by the DSLs. All incidents of bullying will be logged and discussed at SLT level.

GES expects staff, pupils, parents and governors to:

- treat other people with respect and sensitivity;
- think carefully before speaking or acting in a way which may cause another person to be upset;
- respect differences and variety; including gender, religious beliefs, culture, sexual orientation;
- be sensitive to the fact that what may seem fun to some (especially when in a group) may seem much more threatening to others (especially an individual);
- show kindness and consideration to those who appear unhappy or vulnerable;
- make a stand against those who ignore or go against these aims.

INVOLVEMENT OF PUPILS AND STAFF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The Deputy Heads share the School's anti-bullying policy and procedures with new staff as part of their induction, including reporting and recording (see below). All staff understand that confidentiality should never be promised to a child.

The School raises the awareness of staff to the issues described in this policy through training and discussion in staff meetings, and action is taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur. We ensure that children are supervised appropriately, especially at break times and in less formal learning situations, in order to avoid potential 'danger zones'.

PROMOTING A PROACTIVE STANCE AGAINST BULLYING AND PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE AT GES

As a staff team, we promote, role model and reward positive relationships and kind behaviour on an ongoing basis, as well as through one-off events (e.g. Kindness Week, Anti-Bullying Week).

During PSHCE lessons, and in other lessons and assemblies, children are taught the values and principles of:

- Kindness and thoughtfulness
- Rights of the individual
- Tolerance and respect of differences and diversity
- Social responsibility i.e., caring for and a duty towards all members of a community
- Appropriate reporting of rule-breaking, i.e. when telling is appropriate
- The difference between good and bad secrets
- Assertiveness
- Positive relationships (including through SRE)

In addition to this, we hold an Anti-Bullying Week on an annual basis, with children across the entire school focusing upon age-appropriate aspects of friendship and bullying in class, in assemblies and through whole-school activities. As appropriate, children are introduced to ideas of stereotypes, discrimination, prejudice and the legal protection of characteristics such as gender, race, religion, faith, disability and sexuality.

PROCEDURE IF A CHILD OR PARENT REPORTS ALLEGED BULLYING TO A MEMBER OF STAFF:

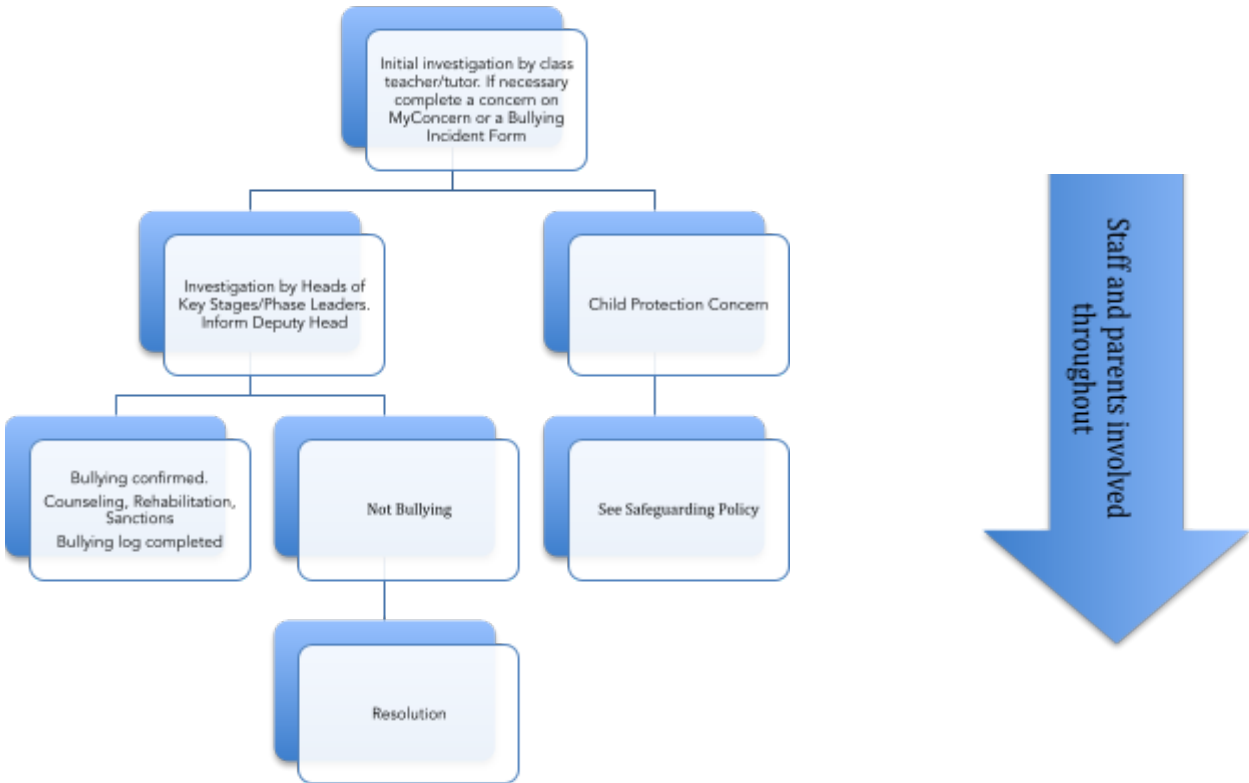
(see flowchart below)

As above, most concerns will be sufficiently resolved at class teacher/tutor stage. In some instances, the member of staff may seek the help and guidance of the Deputy Heads or Heads of Key Stage. Once the incident has been established as bullying or peer-on-peer abuse, the following protocol should be followed:

- During the initial report, while any child who is prepared to report bullying must be offered support and protection, staff must under no circumstances promise confidentiality – any action taken will necessarily involve others.
- The first member of staff involved should complete a written report of the incident. It should be written directly into MyConcern <https://www.myconcern.education/Account/Login>. If no Internet connection is available it should be written on an incident form (see below) in pen, signed, dated and submitted to the DSL. It should also be scanned and uploaded to MyConcern as soon as possible. The account should be recorded during or immediately after the meeting has taken place with the alleged victim of bullying/their parent, and include what was asked and what was said.
- If the concern is urgent, it should be marked as urgent on MyConcern and the relevant Deputy Head contacted immediately, or if they are not available, the appropriate Head of Key Stage (or in their absence the Head or the most senior person in school on that day). The relevant Deputy or Head will coordinate any investigation from then on..
- Do not start your own investigation
- If the incident relates to safeguarding then the protocol set out in the Safeguarding Policy will be used.
- A bullying incident will 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 member of staff will report his/her concerns in accordance with the School's safeguarding and child protection procedures to the DSLs (Deputy Heads) or Deputy DSLs as appropriate. ([Refer to Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)),
- In all other cases, the Deputy Heads will be responsible in the first instance for the investigation of any incidents. The Deputy Heads will keep both the Head and the parents of all parties concerned informed of the situation. The investigation may include: talking to and/or written accounts from the children involved, their class teachers, subject teachers and/or tutors, parents and/or other staff who interact regularly with them. The investigation should be carried out in a sensitive and timely manner. Written records of all meetings with pupils should be made.
- Once the investigation is complete, a decision needs to be taken by the Deputy Head as to whether bullying has taken place, whether both parties were at fault, or whether the incident was not as serious as initially described. The definition of bullying in the introduction to the policy should be used to make this judgement.

- If bullying is judged not to have taken place, then the Deputy Head should take charge of the incident and support an amicable resolution with both parties.
- If bullying is judged to have taken place, then the perpetrator should be assured of counselling and rehabilitation, as well as given appropriate sanctions. The School's [Behaviour and Discipline Policies](#), School Rules (Primary) and Student Code of Conduct (Secondary) outline the expectations for children's behaviour at GES, along with the rewards and sanctions that are used to help children achieve these and to learn from mistakes. In addition to restorative approaches, such as counselling and rehabilitation, clearly established and persistent bullying may lead to suspension from the School, as laid out in [Behaviour and Discipline Policies](#). The School places great emphasis on the intervention and support of parents in this process, who will have been involved at earlier stages. For particularly serious cases of bullying, or where a child continues to bully the victim after a previous incident has been addressed, the Head may decide to permanently exclude the individual from the School.
- Staff will be made aware of situations that require monitoring through staff briefings, meetings or other communications.

Procedure if a child or parent reports alleged bullying to a member of staff:



BULLYING INCIDENT FORM

(To be used when there is no Internet connection and therefore the report cannot be completed on MyConcern)

Please give to the relevant Deputy Head as soon as possible and then scan into a concern on MyConcern.

Member of Staff.....

Date..... Time.....

Who was involved?

Who else was there?

What happened?

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What action did you take?

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Please write overleaf if you need to write further.