

UPPINGHAM

Anti-Bullying Policy

1 Policy statement

- 1.1 All members of the School deserve the right to feel valued and respected, without fear of being bullied. Uppingham's definition of bullying is:

1.1.1 *Any persistent behaviour by an individual or group, verbal or non-verbal, electronic, physical or psychological, which deliberately intends to make another person feel hurt, uncomfortable, humiliated or unhappy as a result.*

2 Aims of the policy

- 2.1 To promote Uppingham's aims and values, with regard to a culture of kindness and consideration amongst all pupils and staff throughout the School.
- 2.2 To develop a positive and supportive environment in which bullying is not tolerated.
- 2.3 To promote inclusion, mutual respect, self-esteem and individuality with a view to meeting the emotional needs of all members of the community.
- 2.4 To deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and to deal with negative behaviours.
- 2.5 To make reference to and to keep abreast of all current philosophy and Government guidance with regard to the prevention and tackling of bullying, for example:
- 2.5.1 [Department for Education \(DfE\) guidance July 2017 – 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies'.](#)
- 2.5.2 [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September 2025\)](#)

2.6 Context

- 2.6.1 Bullying is contrary to all our aims and values and will not be tolerated at Uppingham. Such behaviour causes fear and distress for the victim and may distract them from enjoying their work and play.
- 2.6.2 Bullying often affects other children who witness the behaviour and it can damage the atmosphere in a classroom or a boarding house.
- 2.6.3 Bullying within a boarding school environment can be particularly damaging to an individual or community because pupils spend a significant amount of their time in the school and hence, cannot escape their bullies for long periods of time as they are not going home as often. Any instances of bullying are therefore managed swiftly, but also sensitively, bearing in mind the fact that pupils might continue to live in close proximity following any disciplinary outcomes.
- 2.6.4 Senior colleagues and members of the pupil body (through the pupil leadership team: Pollies and House Captains and School Council) will review the anti-bullying policy annually.
- 2.6.5 There needs to be recognition that anyone can be a bully, or a victim, and that bullying can take many forms.
- 2.6.6 All members of the School need to accept that there is a collective responsibility for the successful implementation of an anti-bullying stance.
- 2.6.7 Pupils are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, whether they are victims or bystanders.
- 2.6.8 All staff will respond to pupil, staff or parental concerns seriously and support the School's anti-bullying stance.
- 2.6.9 Parents are encouraged to advise their children to speak out and/or to speak out themselves if they sense that their child is the victim of bullying behaviour.

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- 2.7 Bullying may be a Child Protection issue. If there is a risk that a student has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the School's safeguarding and child protection procedures will be followed as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. In some circumstances bullying may also be a criminal matter and cases may be referred to the police.
- 2.8 DfE guidance states that where bullying (involving an Uppingham pupil) outside the School is reported to School staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The School has specific power to enable the policing of behaviour away from the School site and when pupils are not under the charge of School staff:

"... may, to such extent as is reasonable, include measures to be taken with a view to regulating the conduct of pupils at a time when they are not on the premises of the school and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff at the school." (Education and Inspections Act 2006).

3 Types of bullying behaviour

- 3.1 Bullying behaviour is behaviour which hurts or causes distress by taking advantage of the vulnerability of its victim, making them feel uncomfortable or threatened. Bullying is a serious issue, whether it is physical or emotional.
- 3.2 Bullying involves 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 a number of ways. It may be physical or psychological/emotional, or it may derive from an intellectual imbalance. Alternatively, it can manifest itself by having access to the support of a group or the capacity to isolate socially. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.
- 3.3 Bullying is sometimes motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, culture, Special Educational Needs, disability or adoption. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or by perceived differences. A victim may therefore be vulnerable because of his/her age, physical appearance, nationality, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation (homophobic bullying) or because they are new to the School, appear to be uncertain or have no friends.
- 3.4 Bullying may occur directly or through cyber-technology.
- 3.5 Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and is not acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.
- 3.6 Examples of bullying are:

3.6.1 Physical

Hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, holding down, spitting, touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way, deliberately damaging property, hiding someone's possessions and stealing / 'borrowing' things.

3.6.2 Verbal

Spreading negative rumours about someone else, name-calling in a personal way, offensive or threatening remarks, taunting, teasing, sexual or racist remarks.

3.6.3 Psychological

Social exclusion, intimidating, putting pressure on someone into doing things they do not want to do, abuse of power and gaslighting.

3.6.4 Online bullying

- The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school.
- On-line bullying may be defined as: 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the Internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'.

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- It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g., repeatedly sending unwanted texts or messages on social media platforms), vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images (particularly on social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.) and 'trolling' (abusing the Internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

For more information on online bullying refer to the School's:

- Online safety policy (including an Acceptable User Policy)
- Online bullying policy (which includes advice to pupils on how to deal with online bullying)

4 Child-on-Child abuse

- 4.1 Uppingham recognises that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. This includes verbal as well as physical abuse. Within a full-boarding context Uppingham understands that pupils spend a significant amount of time together throughout the whole day and week (including night-time and weekends). Uppingham is therefore mindful of the additional pressures and risks that living together for long periods of time can create. Child-on-child abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of 'banter', 'teasing', 'a game' or part of 'growing up'. 'It was only a joke' or 'it happened to me in the Fourth Form' are not regarded as acceptable justification for bullying-type behaviour.
- 4.2 In cases where child-on-child abuse is identified, Uppingham will follow its discipline and behaviour policy and when necessary its child protection procedures, to support all pupils who have been affected by the situation.
- 4.3 For more information on child-on-child abuse refer to the School's:
- 4.3.1 Child Protection policy
 - 4.3.2 Online safety policy

5 Anti-bullying culture and strategies

- 5.1 Uppingham believes that bullying is best tackled by having a strong anti-bullying culture and through education.
- 5.2 Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

6 How is bullying identified and monitored?

- 6.1 Refer to Appendix 2

7 Reporting incidents

In the event of an incident which may involve bullying (including online bullying) the following procedures are in place.

7.1 Initial complaint

In the event of an incident which may involve bullying staff should:

- 7.1.1 Report the allegation in writing (recording the details on PIMS or MyConcern) to the Housemaster/Housemistress (of the victim and bully – if known) or directly to a member of the Senior Pastoral Team.
- 7.1.2 The Housemaster/Housemistress will inform the Senior Deputy Head (or Assistant Head Pastoral Assistant Head Safeguarding) depending upon line-management responsibilities) for information/advice, at this stage and as appropriate.
- 7.1.3 The Housemaster/Housemistress will keep notes of what is alleged to have happened (a 'who has done what to whom & when' file).

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- 7.1.4 No member of staff should begin an investigation into a potential bullying incident unless specifically requested to do so by a member of the Senior Pastoral Team
- 7.1.5 All information known should remain confidential and on a 'need to know' basis.

7.2 Next steps

- 7.2.1 A fact-finding investigation will be carried out under the supervision of a senior member of staff.
- 7.2.2 At the conclusion of the fact-finding stage, two possible outcomes will be determined:
 - Complaint of bullying is upheld
 - Complaint of bullying is not upheld, and no further action is taken in respect to this policy
- 7.2.3 Note:

At all stages during an investigation phase the member of the Senior Pastoral Team managing the case will ensure that all relevant agencies are informed.

7.3 Outcomes

The precise outcome of a bullying incident will vary according to the specific detail of each case and is rarely clear-cut. It is likely to include several of the following:

- 7.3.1 The victim
 - Appropriate pastoral support (for all pupils affected). This may include counselling and suitable therapeutic support
 - A meeting with parents
 - Parents will be informed of outcome in writing
 - Possible involvement in a restorative justice programme
- 7.3.2 The perpetrator
 - Appropriate pastoral support. This may include counselling and suitable therapeutic support
 - A disciplinary sanction (in accordance with the School's behaviour and discipline policy). This might include:
 - Gating
 - External rustication
 - Final warning
 - Expulsion (in a serious case of persistent bullying (or a single case of very serious bullying)
 - A formal meeting with parents
 - Parents will be informed of outcome in writing
 - Possible involvement in a restorative justice programme
 - Should online bullying have taken place: confiscation of mobile electronic devices, increased monitoring procedures or limiting access to the School's internet and email facilities
 - Such other action as may appear to the Headmaster to be appropriate
- 7.3.3 In addition, group/team-building work may be required as a follow-up to a bullying incident which has occurred within a boarding house.

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APPENDIX 1: Anti-bullying culture and strategies

Ethos

Our expectation of all members of the School is that:

- Everyone will uphold the Cardinal School rules.
- A pupil or member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it (to the pupil's Housemaster/Housemistress in the first instance).
- A complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously.
- No-one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

Staff

Through induction, training and experience, members of staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- Anticipating problems and providing support to help avoid issues escalating.
- Being alert and aware in all areas of the School to unkind or pressured comments, which may be signs of a child being 'picked on'.
- Advising Housemasters/Housemistresses if they have concerns about a pupil.
- Responding immediately to individual incidents of bullying and informing relevant Tutors and Housemasters or Housemistresses who will provide support, investigate and mediate/invoke the disciplinary process as appropriate.
- Recording incidents on PIMS and/or My Concern (as appropriate).
- Supporting and protecting children who are being bullied and helping them develop positive strategies for resilience and self-assurance; helping them to strike the right balance between protection and empowerment; keeping a special watch on those involved.
- Reinforcing good practice in electronic communication at all times.
- Disciplining sensibly and fairly.
- Avoiding use of nicknames when addressing pupils.
- Ensuring the regular discussion of bullying at meetings of ELT, Housemasters/Housemistresses, Common Room; meetings between tutors and tutees and within House tutor teams.
- Making opportunities to listen to pupils.
- Giving wise advice to pupils who may unwittingly bring problems upon themselves.
- The monitoring of bullying by means of staff meetings, an annual questionnaire on bullying and an experienced awareness of pupils co-existing in boarding houses.
- Encouraging all pupils to break the silence about bullying behaviour; emphasising that those who watch bullying and do nothing about it are encouraging and endorsing bullying behaviour.
- Helping bullies to change their behaviour.

Pupils

Through the pastoral care systems, pupils are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. They are encouraged:

- To celebrate individuality.
- To celebrate the effort and achievements of others.
- To hold and promote positive attitudes towards themselves and others.
- To share problems with staff, older pupils, parents. There is a list of people pupils can talk to on UPPnet and on House noticeboards.
- To turn to anyone they trust if they are struggling.
- Not to feel guilty about speaking out when they are unhappy.
- Never to stand by and watch someone else being bullied. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening.
- Via the School Council and individual House Councils to regularly include bullying as an agenda item.

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A clear anti-bullying document/booklet ('Bullying: What it means; Why it happens; How to stop it.') is distributed to all (Lower School) pupils in the School at the start of the academic year and is posted on House noticeboards.

Pupils must sign the ICT Acceptable Use Policy at the start of each academic year, the key points of which are highlighted by Tutors. The policy contains clear School rules about the use of the School computer network and includes advice on how to avoid cyberbullying.

Education and raising awareness

The effects of bullying

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each individual's response to being bullied is unique, however some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Depression and anxiety
- Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to be at school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Self-destructive behaviours such as self-harm or talking about suicide

The long-term prevention of bullying

At Uppingham we are proactive and aim to create a pervasive anti-bullying culture through:

- Having positive staff role models in terms of communication and mutual respect.
- Having positive relationships between staff and pupils and between older and younger pupils based on trust and respect.
- Actively encouraging an inclusive environment and an atmosphere which celebrates pupil success, builds positive self-image and commends appropriate behaviour in all areas.
- Housemasters and Housemistresses talking regularly to their Houses about behavioural matters, including bullying.
- Size: boarding houses are well-staffed and Housemasters and Housemistresses know their pupils very well.
- Guidance for Housemasters/Housemistresses on managing peer relations and balancing an educational approach with a disciplinary one, where necessary.
- Dining in House: enabling staff to monitor relations between members of a year group and between year groups, on an informal basis.
- One-to-one contact with Tutors for every pupil on a regular basis.
- Staff being actively involved with pupils in all areas of the House when they are on duty.
- Tutor teams and weekly tutor lunches allowing staff time to discuss any potential concerns.
- Older pupils acting as mentors to younger pupils and the expectation on those older pupils to act as role models.
- The responsibilities of senior pupils being properly limited and explained. House and School Pollies receive training each September on how to manage younger pupils sensitively.
- Comprehensive Internet security, filtering and ICT education.
- A structured Wellbeing programme (see below) which aims to develop personal and interpersonal skills and deals specifically with the issues of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Taking advantage of opportunities to consider and discuss issues of difference and tolerance, in lessons, events and in Chapel.

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House and/or room charters

Houses create a variety of charters (sometimes room, sometimes year group and often whole House charters). Such charters are created by the pupils to help establish the values by which pupils in the House wish to live together as a community. They help set the blueprint for good behaviour and infuse an anti-bullying ethos amongst all members of the House.

Wellbeing curriculum

Bullying is addressed within the Wellbeing curriculum and will be carefully aimed at particular age groups given that bullying behaviour tends to be associated with the younger years as they go through their early teens. Bullying is discussed informally in Houses and tutor groups, during Chapel services and at House lunches. The discussion is often informal but underlines and constantly reiterates the fact that Uppingham does not tolerate bullying behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to speak out about bullying and reminded often about who to go to for help or to report bullying. During the Fourth Form wellbeing conferences include sessions on anti-bullying and forming positive relationships.

APPENDIX 2: How is bullying identified and monitored?

Identifying bullying behaviour

Pupils may sometimes be reluctant to disclose bullying either because of threats or because they believe that disclosure will make the problem worse so it is especially important that adults are alert to the signs and symptoms that a child may be being bullied.

These may include if a pupil:

- Standard of academic work deteriorates
- Is frightened of walking around school
- Does not want to go into the school or take part in co-curricular activities
- Changes their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries herself/himself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning and begins to do poorly in school work
- Returns to the boarding house with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other students or siblings
- Stops eating
- 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 a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Students with a Special Educational Needs, Looked After Children and formerly Looked After Children are amongst the groups of students who are especially vulnerable to bullying.

Monitoring is provided through:

- The annual Pastoral Survey, which all pupils have the opportunity to complete, and contains many questions to provide evidence of pupils' opinions about the nature and amount of bullying they are aware of. The Survey has been conducted for several years and therefore provides a historical record about pupils' views at Uppingham and allows trends and patterns to be identified.
- The annual Discipline Review completed by the Senior Deputy Head. This provides a record of all bullying incidents which have occurred in any one year and allows trends and patterns to be analysed and appropriate actions taken.
- Discussions held at Housemaster/Housemistress meetings.
- Discussions between the Senior Deputy Head, Assistant Head Pastoral, Assistant Head Safeguarding and Housemasters/Housemistresses at individual line management meetings and any ad hoc informal meetings when the need arises.
- Incidents logged on The Pastoral Information Management System (PIMS).