



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

# Bancroft's

Independent Co-educational Day School 7–18

# Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Safeguarding, Online Safety, Learning for Life & Equal Opportunities.

## 1. Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to maintain an environment characterised by warmth, co-operation, respect and mutual support. Diversity is celebrated and all members of the school should flourish without fear. We seek to create an ethos of good behaviour where all members of the community treat one another with respect, recognising that this is the right way to behave. This is emphasised by the 'welcome' in the pupil digest, which is given to every pupil as an E-copy and available to staff in E-copy and hard copy. This forms appendix 1 to this policy. Bullying of any kind is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This policy refers to bullying of pupils; staff procedures relating to workplace behaviour are outlined in the employment manual. A bullying incident relating to pupils should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and staff should act in accordance with the safeguarding policy. We are committed to promoting healthy relationships.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The school regards bullying as a very serious issue. It can cause serious psychological damage. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, threatening behaviour and malicious communications. These include the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Public Order Act 1986. If the Head believes that an offence may have been committed, assistance from the police may be sought. A record will be kept of the decision-making process in this context on the school's pupil information system, CPOMS.

All pupils are made aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy as part of their induction to Bancroft's. A summary is published in the Pupil Digest and it is promoted in assemblies. Pupils may access it on the pupil VLE. Pupils are encouraged to think about the implications of the policy in Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) [now called Learning for Life] lessons. There are opportunities to raise awareness in many curriculum areas, such as Religious Studies, in Drama or when discussing literature, historical events or current affairs. Staff and older pupils reinforce values of respect for others by setting a good example. Success in creating a friendly, inclusive community is celebrated.

We understand that bullying can be fuelled by prejudice including: racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic and pertaining to disability. Bullying can be related to appearance, a health condition, special educational needs or because a child is adopted or is a young carer. Pupils who are perceived to be different in some way can be vulnerable. It may occur directly or through cyber technology such as social media, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email (see appendix 3).

We understand that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse. Please see section on 'Allegations Against Child on Child Abuse' in the Safeguarding Policy.

The school takes an active approach to prevent bullying and to promote respect for others.

The Anti-Bullying policy is communicated to parents on the website. Parents are requested to contact their child's Housemaster or Housemistress if they have any concerns about bullying. The Head, Senior Tutor, and Deputy and Assistant Head (Pastoral) are available in the absence of the Housemaster or Housemistress or if the matter requires further intervention or investigation.

Our policy has regard to the [Safe to Learn- Embedding Anti-Bullying work in Schools](#) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Guidance for staff is available in the Staff Handbook and training is provided at Staff induction and at regular intervals.

Housemasters and Junior Housemistresses meet with the Deputy Head Pastoral, Assistant Head Pastoral, Senior Tutor and other senior staff to discuss behaviour and the Senior Tutor meets with the Senior Deputy Head and Heads of Sections to review behavioural data to facilitate the identification of patterns of bullying to be identified. The gradual extension of CCTV through the main thoroughfares within school has enhanced our ability to investigate allegations of bullying. The reform of staff duties has enhanced staff presence about the school site during breaks which has helped prevent low level poor behaviour. The opening up of classrooms and assigning these to Year groups has decongested corridors and mitigated poor behaviour in the corridors. The approach to bullying is regularly evaluated, for example taking into account developments in technology and reviewing case studies.

### **3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING: WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying consists of a complex web of anti-social behaviours. These include physical intimidation, verbal harassment, belittling, verbal and non-verbal signals, the abuse of power, flaming, threats, defamation of character, the aggressive manipulation of friendships and other aggressive actions, which have the deliberate intention to cause a victim to feel distressed, humiliated or socially isolated through face-to-face methods or the use of technology. These anti-social behaviours may be carried out by one perpetrator or by many. Culpability can lie just as much with those involved in supporting bullying behaviour or with being a by-stander who fails to report such behaviour, as with the bully. Bullying is behaviour that is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another person or group of people physically or emotionally, making them feel uncomfortable, miserable, or threatened. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability or because a child is adopted or a carer.

Bullying includes:

- Any form of physical contact that intends to harm or cause distress – e.g., hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking.
- Sexual or sexist harassment, racial, religious, cultural or homophobic abuse, unkind references to a disability, special educational needs, being adopted or a carer, persistent or malicious name calling – e.g. teasing, insulting, threatening, swearing.

- Behaviour that is deliberately unfriendly, and makes other people feel uncomfortable, humiliated or excluded – e.g., spreading rumours, graffiti, tormenting, intimidating glances or gestures.
- Hiding, removing or damaging property or borrowing without the owner’s permission.
- Offensive telephone calls/text messages, hurtful or defamatory e-mail or other electronic messages/images. Malicious references to members of the School community on the internet are also seen as being in the School's area of concern. This type of bullying is referred to as cyber-bullying.

Although this policy is primarily concerned with behaviour in School and offsite activities, action will be taken against bullying wherever it occurs.

#### **4. PREVENTION OF BULLYING**

Measures taken by staff to prevent bullying include:

The promotion and discussion in tutor periods of what constitutes a healthy friendship / relationship

Discussions with pupils about differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language

Anti-bullying lessons in PSHE [Learning for Life]

All pupils are encouraged to exercise their responsibility to be upstanders where it is safe to do so.

Addressing the issue in assemblies and chapel and through drama, literature, historical events, current affairs etc.

Low profile, but frequent, patrolling of areas where bullying may occur: such as the lunch queue, tuck shop queue, playing areas, corridors and classrooms.

Opening of classrooms to use as form rooms has given pupils areas to socialise and decongested corridors.

Being aware of vulnerable pupils, including those with special needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) pupils, and supporting them in class to avoid isolation and humiliation; highlighting the value of cooperation so that positive peer pressure reduces the potential for bullying to occur. Group work has the potential to encourage a collaborative ethos.

Diversity and Inclusion Mentors have been introduced, who promote awareness of matters relating to Diversity and Inclusion, particularly in relation to protected characteristics. They support pupils in understanding each other and in recognising the importance of understanding each other’s differences and similarities.

## **5. PUPIL-LED INITIATIVES**

Anti - Bullying Ambassadors (ABAs) were piloted in East House 2017/18 and were established in all Houses during the Autumn Term 2018. The ABAs directed Anti-Bullying week and initiatives included flying an ABA flag, a Kindness Tree, kindness messaging, and an on-line lecture on healthy relations by Natasha Devon. The ABA initiative has been concluded and superseded by School Congress led initiatives from 2022.

The School Congress, newly formed in September 2018, has begun to play a significant role in enhancing communication of pupil concerns and in identifying methods by which these can be addressed. It has already played a key role in shaping our revised Rewards and Sanctions policy and Sixth Form uniform code. The Middle School and Junior Congress, newly formed in 2020, complete the formation of the new school congress amplifying further our ability to gauge pupil voice and for their concerns to be communicated to staff.

The L4<sup>th</sup> received Peer Mentoring training in Nov 2020. By 2024 on a rolling programme, Years U4 - U6 will have been trained and it is hoped that many pupils will have gained experience in mentoring their peers and many will have gained significant benefit from being mentored.

## **6. RECOGNISING SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN THE VICTIM**

People react differently to bullying and the level of a person's distress or hurt is not always evident. They may initially be unwilling to discuss the situation, or even deny that there is a problem. Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, withdrawn, feigning illness or clinging to adults. They may show changes in their work patterns, lack concentration or even truant from school. They may isolate themselves both inside and outside the classroom.

## **7. ENCOURAGEMENT TO TALK**

The victim of bullying or witness of bullying should feel able to talk directly to a trusted teacher or a House Prefect. To facilitate this, we must create the right climate by being available, listening objectively and reassuring the pupil that what they say is being taken seriously.

Pupils may wish to talk to their tutor, Housemaster/mistress, a prefect, the School Nurse, a school counsellor, the Deputy Head Pastoral, Assistant Head Pastoral, or any member of staff with whom they have a good rapport.

The provision of in-house counselling is available to all, both victims and perpetrators, as the School understands that attempting to modify bullying behaviour through understanding is fundamental.

'Concerns boxes' where a pupil may leave an anonymous record of their concern have been set up at various locations in the school.

Staff must communicate clearly the message that keeping silent only protects the person(s) responsible for the bullying.

It is hoped that the newly launched Peer Mentoring programme will help pupils to discuss their own development and that of their peers. By re-enforcing our values, we hope that those who bully in particular may come to see that their behaviour has no place in our community.

Appendix 2 'At Bancroft's there is always someone to talk to' posters are widely publicised across the school

## **8. PROCEDURES FOR STAFF**

Upon observation of or upon receipt of a complaint of bullying, the member of staff should consult the appropriate Housemaster or Housemistress.

Pupils involved could be asked to make a written report, if appropriate.

When it is clear that bullying has taken place, it must be made clear to the victim that revenge is not appropriate and to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. If appropriate, those involved in the bullying incident are brought together to discuss the situation with a view to reconciliation and fostering a positive relationship.

The school counsellors may have a role here in helping both the victim and perpetrators and will be training key pastoral staff in conflict reconciliation.

The Housemaster or Housemistress will make a decision about an appropriate way forward including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, as appropriate, will be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others. If appropriate, external assessment by a qualified professional and counselling can be arranged. The Deputy Head Pastoral and Assistant Head Pastoral have contact details for referrals.

The incident will be recorded by the Housemaster or Housemistress and a copy of the report passed to the Deputy Head Pastoral, Assistant Head Pastoral and the Senior Tutor.

Parents will be contacted by the House staff and kept informed as to the progress of the case.

The most serious cases of bullying are referred to the Senior Tutor or the Head and a record is kept. Records of all bullying incidents are kept on CPOMS and enable patterns of bullying to be identified and addressed, and in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted. In the worst cases, a bully will be suspended or excluded.

When the allegations involve bullying by a teacher, the reporting procedures laid down in Safeguarding Policy should be followed.

\*In the Prep School, concerns about bullying will be dealt with by the Class Teacher in the first instance, who will involve the Deputy Head, Pastoral and the Prep Head, as appropriate (See Appendix 3).

The School provides training to staff to raise awareness of the policy so that its principles are understood, legal responsibilities known, and actions identified to resolve and prevent problems. It is made clear that sources of support are available and where appropriate, the School will invest

in specialised services to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) pupils.

Staff awareness of the Anti-Bullying Policy is raised by a process of formal and informal training. All staff receive Child Protection training on joining the school and annual updates and key members of staff receive Level Three training. All staff received Anti-Bullying training in 2020 & two programmes of Diversity and Inclusion training in 2019 – 20. Keeping abreast of current developments in bullying and all its forms is ongoing and was addressed in 2018 via a session about cyber-bullying and making good choices on the internet/social media led by Jonathan Taylor. Case studies are used to train staff and for discussion among tutors and pupils. The Deputy and Assistant Head Pastoral hold tutor clinics, an open forum where staff may raise issues of concern and discuss approaches to resolving behavioural issues. Staff aim to be proactive in identifying pupils who may be experiencing bullying.

The House staff and tutors play a crucial role in identifying behavioural patterns, establishing strong relations with parents and being a source of support to pupils, although pupils may speak to any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable. The Senior Tutor and the Deputy Head Pastoral work closely with the House staff to resolve issues and to develop ways of identifying behavioural trends and encouraging healthy behaviour. Tutors and House staff receive a weekly register of Red Slips to monitor low-level disruption. There are termly reviews of disciplinary data by led by the Senior Tutor, with the Heads of Section and Senior Deputy Head.

The Learning Support Department provides support for SEND pupils on a one to one basis or in small groups. All teachers may recommend to a pupil's Housemaster or mistress that a pupil be referred to the Learning Support Department. All new pupils are now screened as a matter of course to enable earlier intervention. Provision is made for such pupils on a case-by-case basis in liaison with parents/ carers, medical staff and social workers where appropriate. Support for pupils with special dietary needs and those suffering from diabetes or eating disorders is provided by meetings with the catering staff to ensure that pupils may eat healthily and unselfconsciously. The PSHE [Learning for Life] programme addresses bullying, relationships and homophobia in an age appropriate way, by lecture and through discussion. We celebrate diversity and our aim is to promote cooperation, respect and mutual support among all pupils and staff. LGBTQ+ issues are discussed, both within the PSHE programme and at meetings of the Diversity Society (Equalitea) and recently Pride club (established 2021). All Senior School academic teaching staff received gender awareness training in July or September 2018 and Autism training in September 2019.

## Appendix one

### Welcome page to Pupil Digest

Every member of the Bancroft's community, pupils and staff has an important role to play in upholding and maintaining our values with regard to respect, tolerance, kindness and care for all. These values will be genuinely upheld if day-by-day each of us helps to create a compassionate and supportive environment, one in which people feel valued, able to be themselves and are free from any form of intimidation.

Safeguarding is everyone's concern. If we all act as described above and are mindful of how we are encouraging Bancroftians to behave, as set out below, we will ensure that Bancroft's is a happy, safe and nurturing environment.

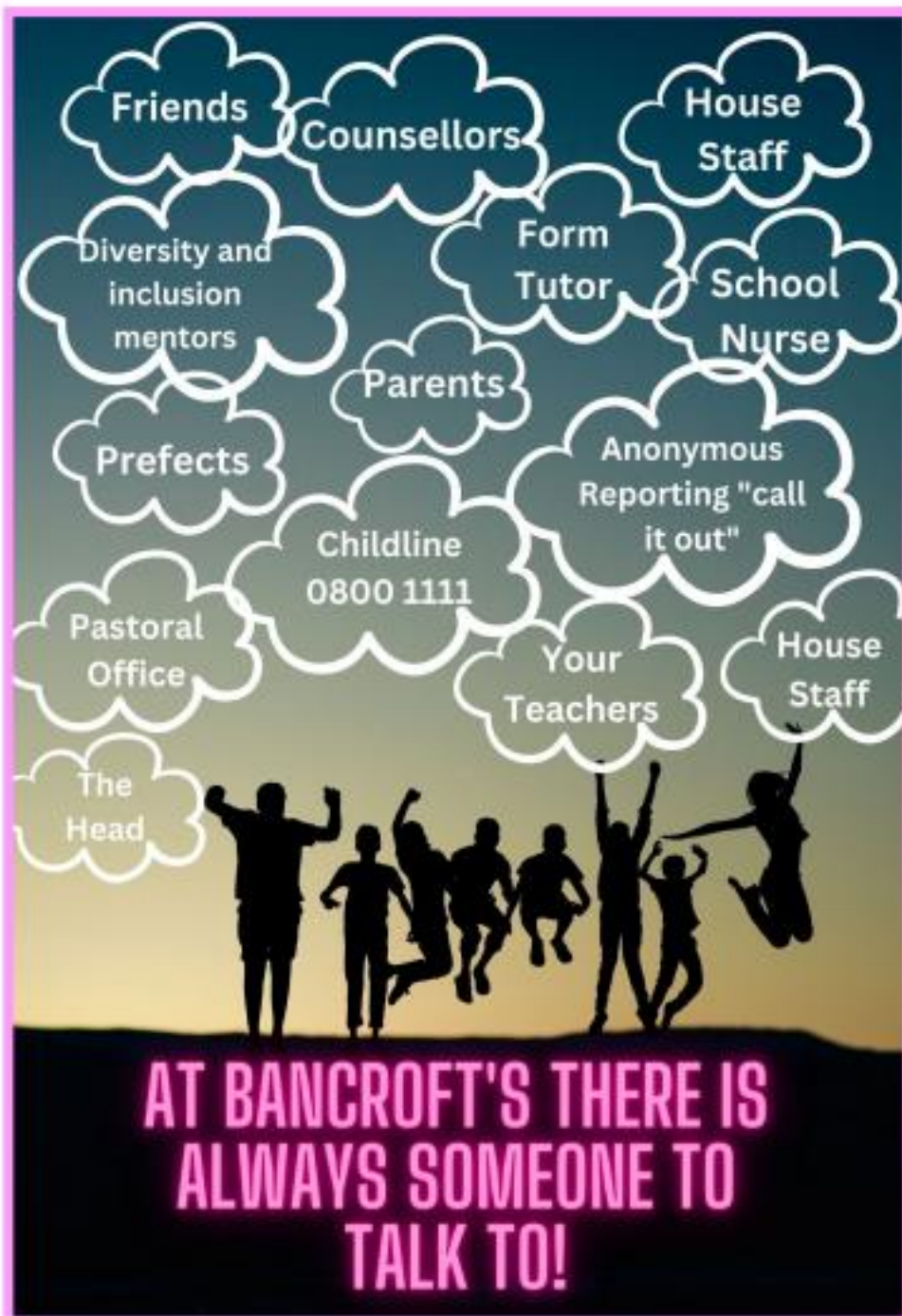
As intelligent and thoughtful young people, we believe that you are capable of judging the impact of your actions and words on another person. All forms of behaviour, whether in person, at school, or in the virtual world should be maturely considered and rooted in kindness, civility and decency.

There may be times in which you feel concerned by unkind behaviour that has happened to you, or that you have observed happening to someone else. If this is the case, as a member of Bancroft's, please recognise that you have a responsibility to share any on-going concerns with a trusted adult. It is not acceptable or humane to turn a blind eye or stand by and allow known acts of unkindness to continue without letting a teacher or parent know.

This caring action is not only for your happiness or the benefit and well-being of another person, but most importantly it clearly upholds the compassionate, kind, respectful and long-standing culture of Bancroft's. We are all very proud of our school's welcoming atmosphere and trust that you will always recognise your vital role in sustaining it.



Appendix two



**AT BANCROFT'S  
THERE IS ALWAYS  
SOMEONE TO TALK TO**



Counsellors

Diversity and inclusion mentors

Prefects

House Staff

Friends

Parents

The Head

Form Tutor

School Nurse

Your Teachers

Anonymous Reporting "call it out"

Pastoral Office

Childline  
0800 1111

**A PROBLEM SHARED IS A  
PROBLEM HALVED**

## Appendix three

Prep School Additional information:

The Whole School policy on Anti-Bullying sets out clearly the attitude and approach taken by Bancroft's towards bullying. The children in the Prep School are younger but the policy applies to us too, although the systems and personnel involved in seeking to prevent and deal with bullying may be different to those of our Senior School.

The Prep School aims to model and promote pro-social behaviours not least through our core character values of kindness, integrity and courage. We want our school to be a healthy school and as part of this we talk to all the children about what healthy friendships look like and equally how unhealthy ones may manifest themselves. Through whole school and phase assemblies, our PSHEE programme and the form time that the children spend with their Class Teachers, we seek to address issues around bullying and how we aim to deal with it. Anti-bullying is not just a focus of anti-bullying week but is something we talk about all year round.

We want to provide children with the necessary life skills so that all of them are empowered to solve problems they may have in their daily interactions with others, whilst always making clear that we are there to help them and support them with friendship issues they cannot resolve on their own. As a staff we all want to be trusted adults who the children can turn to.

The Class Teacher is generally the first person to deal with concerns about bullying whether they are raised by the children themselves or by parents. Any issue which may prove to be the starting point for bullying is registered by staff using our Prep CCC (Concerns, Complaints and Compliments) email box. Concerns referred to Prep CCC are reviewed regularly by the Deputy Head, Pastoral, who is also our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the Deputy DSL and the Head. This system allows us to nip in the bud potential problems, as well as spotting patterns of concern within classes and year groups or with particular children. We have an open door policy at Bancroft's Prep when it comes to parental concerns and we aim to investigate and deal with any that may relate to bullying as a matter of urgency. We are proud of our record of resolving problems but we are never complacent about bullying and the extreme effects it can have upon children.

We want our school to be a place where healthy friendships and interactions are the norm. We also want both staff and children to 'look for loneliness' and to seek to include those children who for whatever reason are on the margins. We believe in the power of saying sorry but we also believe in imposing sanctions where children are involved in bullying. Our Disciplinary Scale, as set out in our Behaviour Policy, indicates what sanctions may be faced by children who bully. That said, we are always determined to help resolve conflict and to rehabilitate those children who have engaged in bullying, as well as supporting and empowering those children who have endured it.