Anti-Bullying Policy



Gecko Community

Empower, Inspire, Educate

Legislation and guidance that inform this document

● Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (DCSF 2007)
● Guidance on Prevention and Tackling of bullying (Gov.UK 2011)
● Preventing Bullying (Gov.UK 2013)
● Preventing and Tackling Bullying - Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (DfE July 2017)
● Working Together to Safeguard Children (Gov.UK 2026)
● Keeping Children Safe in Education (Gov.UK Sept 2026)

Other Gecko Community policies to be read in conjunction with this one

● Behaviour for Learning
● E-safety
● Safeguarding and Child Protection
● Staff Code of Conduct

Responsibility for Implementation

All staff are responsible for reading and implementing this policy to ensure that bullying is prevented at Gecko Community, insofar as reasonably practicable.

Statement of Intent

Gecko Community promotes the values of mutual respect and tolerance. We seek to establish a caring and secure setting in which all students can be themselves and feel valued and respected. Therefore, the overarching goals of this policy are to:
● prevent bullying occurring;
● ensure fast and effective resolution of bullying when it does occur.

Objectives

● All staff, students and parents/carers should understand what bullying is.
● All staff, students and parents should know what Gecko Community's policy on bullying is and what they should do if bullying occurs.
● All students should be aware of the serious consequences of bullying and know that this behaviour is not tolerated.
● All students should understand how they can help to prevent bullying (including as bystanders) by reporting it to an appropriate adult..
● Anyone who does bully is made fully aware that their behaviour is unacceptable. Staff seek to help them to understand how their behaviour affected another person, how they can change it and what amends need to be made.
● Everyone involved, whether perpetrator, victim or bystander, maintains their right to unconditional positive regard.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is any behaviour, repeated over time, that
● deliberately hurts someone, physically and/or emotionally;
● is unwanted by the recipient;

● is unwarranted.

No list can include every action or activity that might be classed as bullying but staff will work with students to ensure they understand the following descriptions/definitions: *Bullying involves actions (including physical, spoken, written, drawn, gesture, specific body language, facial expression… and can be actual or virtual, ie. through personal contact or online) that physically, verbally or indirectly hurt or injure another individual, that threaten or frighten, that are demoralising or humiliating, that psychologically hurt or injure*.
Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, eg. on grounds of one of the Protected Characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. It might be motivated by actual or perceived differences between young people. It often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim, whether physical, psychological, intellectual or social; this can make it difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying may involve:
● the use of demeaning, ageist, racist, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist or homophobic names or language, or language related to special educational needs and disability - it can be direct or indirect;
● hurtful, upsetting or distressing comments about another individual's or group's racial, ethnic, cultural or linguistic background, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, age or gender identity;
● hurtful, upsetting or distressing comments about one or more individuals with a special educational need or disability or learning difficulty;
● picking on an individual or group;
● pushing, punching, hitting, kicking or any physical violence;
● teasing, mocking, taunting or making offensive comments;
● spreading rumours;
● ostracising a student - deliberately ignoring or avoiding a fellow student and/or encouraging others to do the same;
● repeatedly criticising or making personal comments to an individual or group; ● threatening behaviour;
● unacceptable body language;
● taking or damaging property;
● producing offensive graffiti;
● placing a victim in a position where they cannot defend themselves.

This list is illustrative but not exhaustive.
Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are laws which apply to harassment because of age, race, culture, disability, gender identity and sex, the misuse of technology, threatening behaviour and racist behaviour.

Specific Types of Bullying

Bullying related to race, religion or culture:
This includes racist or faith-based bullying. Political and social issues can also be a factor in bullying and harassment.
Bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities:
Students with SEND can be more at risk of bullying than their peers. They may not have the social confidence and competence to protect themselves against bullying or the communication skills to report it.
Bullying related to appearance or health conditions:
Perceived physical appearance, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can

be the object of bullying.
Bullying related to status, wealth etc:
Perceived extremes of affluence (poverty, richness) can lead to victimisation, especially if a student or their family is not able to afford items of clothing or other 'desirable' possessions.
Bullying related to sexual orientation:
This refers to any hostile or offensive action against those who are (or are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying (for example, the student may not want to report bullying if
it means 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready to). This type of bullying may also affect students whose parents or other family members are (or are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
Sexist or sexual bullying:
Sexist and sexual bullying affect both genders; students identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name-calling, comments and overt 'looks' about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. It may involve uninvited touching, innuendo, propositions, pornographic imagery, graffiti or sexting (sending sexually explicit images or messages, usually by mobile phone).
Cyber-bullying (refer to the Gecko Community E-safety Policy):
Cyber-bullying includes malicious, upsetting, repeated emails, images, texts, videos, tweets or other messages/postings sent directly to, or about, an individual. It may involve the use of mobile phones, email, internet messaging services, gaming or social media (eg. FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp) and other technologies and applications that may become available in the future. There is no escape for the victim, as there is 24/7 contact, and the impact of such bullying is magnified through its relentless nature and the massive potential audience.

Preventing Bullying

Gecko Community aims to foster a safe environment (both in person and online), where individuality is celebrated and students can flourish without fear or harassment, irrespective of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and special educational needs or disabilities. Our ethos is one of mutual respect and tolerance. This is both embedded in Gecko Community's culture (eg. staff modelling respectful behaviour and relationships) and addressed directly (eg. issues of difference and prejudice discussed in PSHE lessons).

Responding to Bullying

Bullying hurts and inevitably causes pain and distress. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Whilst it can take many forms, all bullying, both physical and emotional, must be viewed as very serious; it can have a significant and potentially long-lasting impact on an individual's mental health. Perpetrators of bullying behaviour need to understand and acknowledge the negative impact of their actions.
Trustees will:
● ensure that all staff are aware of Gecko Community's anti-bullying policies and procedures and their legal responsibilities;
● ensure that students are aware of their responsibilities in preventing bullying, through reporting it to an appropriate adult;
● investigate and take appropriate action on reported incidents of bullying, including cyber-bullying;
● ensure support is provided for both victim and perpetrator, as appropriate for their

circumstances and needs;
● keep records of all instances of bullying and review these records to ensure careful monitoring of behaviour, to evaluate the effectiveness of Gecko Community's approach to bullying and to enable any patterns to be identified;
● seek assistance from the police if he/she believes a criminal offence may have been committed.
All staff will:
● know the policy and procedures and deal with incidents in accordance with the policy;
● be vigilant;
● inform the DSL of any (suspected or known) bullying;
● take action to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely;
● always challenge any instances of sarcasm, unpleasant behaviour or put-downs, whether in person or online, and take further action as appropriate.

Guidance for Students

If you are bullied or you see another student being bullied (including online), **you must tell someone**. Ignoring bullying allows it to get worse. Tell an adult that you trust and feel comfortable talking to.
If you tell a member of Gecko Community staff, he/she will:
● listen carefully;
● record what has happened;
● tell you that you have acted correctly in reporting the bullying;
● not put you under any pressure;
● not make you feel that your complaint is silly, that you have 'asked for it' or that the person doing the bullying 'can't help it';
● help you to decide on actions you can take to prevent bullying;
● follow up the incident(s), maybe with other staff after consulting you;
● check with you that the situation has improved, that the bullying has stopped.
What happens to the person who has been carrying out the bullying? Staff will ensure that the person who has carried out the bullying is made fully aware that their behaviour is unacceptable.
In accordance with Gecko Community's Behaviour for Learning Policy, staff will seek to enable the student to change their behaviour through the use of restorative justice and discussions about community needs, rights and responsibilities. Staff may involve parents.
If the person does not stop the bullying behaviour, s/he may be required to leave Gecko Community temporarily or permanently.

Guidance for Parents

Parents **must inform staff** if they suspect or know that there is a problem (in person or online) for their own child or for another child, whether as perpetrator or victim.
It is not always easy for a parent to know that their child is being bullied, but there are some indicators to look out for:
● changes to usual routine;
● unwillingness to attend;
● reluctance to travel on public transport;
● becoming withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;
● becoming aggressive, disruptive and/or unreasonable;
● starting to bully siblings and/or other children;
● not eating;
● claiming to feel ill on school mornings;

● having nightmares, crying themselves to sleep, bedwetting;
● personal possessions/clothes being damaged or going missing;
● asking for unusual amounts of money or stealing money;
● self-harming;
● running away from home;
● being afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
● nervous when a text message is received;
● unwilling to discuss behaviour.

These types of behaviour could indicate other problems but bullying should be considered and investigated.
Incidents reported by parents or students are taken seriously and followed up immediately. Staff will listen sympathetically; the victim's perception of what happened will not be dismissed. Victims will be reassured that they have acted correctly in reporting the incident, that the complaint is important and that something will be done. The person allegedly carrying out the behaviour will be spoken to and the facts of the incident established.
Parents and students should refer to Gecko Community's Complaints Policy if they feel that their concerns about bullying are not being addressed satisfactorily.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse, including cyber-bullying, physical abuse, sexual harassment and sexting.
If an individual or group of students persists in such behaviour, a Trustee may choose to remove them from Gecko Community temporarily or permanently. He/she will seek advice from statutory agencies, as appropriate, and make a referral if an incident meets the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
If there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm', a bullying incident is treated as a child protection concern and Gecko Community works with the statutory agencies in accordance with KCSiE, Sept 2026. If a child is considered to be in immediate danger, an immediate referral to children's social care and/or the police will be made. As required by statutory guidance (Working Together, 2026) the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that information is shared with all agencies and professionals involved with the child or family.

Gecko Community will always attempt to support both the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s). However, the requirement for every Gecko Community student to perceive him/herself to be safe - physically and emotionally - is paramount. Therefore, if any student is unable or unwilling to modify their behaviour and another student continues to feel unsafe, the rights of the community are deemed to override those of the perpetrator, who will thus not be allowed to remain within the community (see Gecko Community's Exclusion Policy).

Additional Sources of Guidance/Information
Outside agencies that can offer support include:
● Childline: 0800 1111
● NSPCC: 0800 800 5000
● Samaritans: 116123

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