



**FARNBOROUGH HILL**  
WHOLEHEARTEDLY

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### *Our Mission*

*Farnborough Hill welcomes all into our community, where we aim to live Christ's Gospel values joyfully and wholeheartedly, forming each individual to fulfil her potential and face the future with wisdom, strength and dignity.*

Farnborough Hill is dedicated to educating the whole person within a caring, Christian community where each individual is valued and where girls and staff are encouraged to respect and support each other. The School is committed to providing a safe and friendly environment for all pupils and staff so that teaching and learning can take place in a relaxed and secure environment.

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the guidance contained in **Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017)** and **Keeping Children Safe In Education (DfE, 2025)**, as well as advice offered by relevant organisations such as the NSPCC, Childline and CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- Behaviour Policy including Rewards and Sanctions
- Complaints Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- PSHEE Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (including Annex 2 – Child on Child Abuse Policy)
- SEND Policy
- Technology Acceptable Use Policy

### **Aims**

- To demonstrate our commitment to promoting the well-being of all members of the Farnborough Hill community by ensuring that bullying is prevented and/or dealt with effectively.
- To set out the responsibility of all members of the School community to create a climate in which bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- To create a positive and supportive culture of trust that staff and pupils work together to maintain.

Farnborough Hill will investigate and respond to all allegations of bullying taking place at school and on school visits/trips. The School cannot be held responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere, but its commitment to the welfare and conduct of its community means that it will respond to any information it receives about bullying outside school. Bullying incidents fall under the School's Child on Child Abuse Policy and will be handled according to this Policy, with due regard to Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and the *Behaviour Policy*. If appropriate, Children's Services and/or the police will be contacted.

Bullying exists in all walks of life, not just in schools or certain types of schools. Whilst we recognise that, at times, girls' behaviour can be thoughtless rather than deliberate, behaviour that constitutes bullying is wrong. It results in pain and distress to the victim and can directly affect other people. Bullying is not specifically a criminal offence; however, there are criminal laws that apply to harassment, threatening behaviour and theft. The School fully recognises that bullying can have serious consequences leading to issues such as long-term psychological damage, significant mental health difficulties and even suicide.

## **A Definition of Bullying**

There are a number of definitions of bullying. The School defines bullying as:

**Actions or words that are intended to hurt or humiliate another person, usually repeated over a period of time. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology.**

Similarly, the School also includes the following acronym in its definition of bullying:

**STOP – Several Times On Purpose**

## **Types of Bullying**

Bullying can include a number of different behaviours, either face-to-face, behind someone's back or online:

- Emotional: being actively unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other form of violence
- Racist, Religious and Cultural: taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually orientated comments
- Homophobic: attitudes or actions because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality
- Transphobic: attitudes or actions because of, of focusing on, the issue of gender identity
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: by Internet misuse through offensive website postings, email and instant messaging. Misuse of mobile phones, tablets or and other devices through text messaging, camera and video facilities. Misuse of online and mobile technology through inappropriate use of social media sites which causes distress or harm to other pupils (See Acceptable Use of Technology Policies)
- Property: wilful damage to, theft or hiding of another's property
- Disability/Special Educational Needs (SEN): name calling, innuendo, negative stereotyping or excluding from activity based on disability or learning difficulties
- Based on other differences eg if they are adopted, looked after or a carer
- Mocking or humiliating because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation)

## **Signs of Bullying**

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour such as:

- Displaying a change in behaviour, eg becoming shy, nervous or withdrawn, or showing uncharacteristic outbursts of emotion
- Feigning illness and/or taking unusual absences
- Changing their work pattern and/or having a lack of concentration
- Displaying a change in eating habits (such as under- or over-eating)
- Clinging to adults
- Arriving home with possessions missing or damaged
- Refusing to say what is wrong
- Demonstrating anxiety about checking computer messages, emails or texts
- Self-harming
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above situations

## **Our Commitment**

The curriculum at Farnborough Hill seeks to promote awareness of individual responsibilities. The PSHEE programme addresses bullying and related issues of assertiveness, self-esteem and maintaining friendships and mutual respect. Opportunities are taken during assemblies, tutorials and lessons to reinforce how people are different and the importance of avoiding prejudice.

Parents are invited to attend pastoral evenings where topics such as self-esteem, changing friendships, building resilience, cyber-bullying and other relevant issues are outlined by specialist agencies and discussed.

All pupils are made aware of their responsibility to combat bullying in *Bullying: A Charter of Pupil Responsibilities*, which is included in the School e-Planner:

### ***Bullying: A Charter of Pupil Responsibilities***

*Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else, and in doing so have power over that individual or group. This is unacceptable behaviour. If you suspect that someone is being bullied or is in distress, take action by informing a member of staff or Sixth Form immediately. Farnborough Hill will not tolerate bullying.*

*Farnborough Hill expects and encourages you:*

- *not to tolerate any form of bullying*
- *to work with others to stop bullying*
- *to inform a member of staff of any form of bullying*
- *not to be afraid to report any incidents of bullying, even when you are a bystander. If you do nothing, in effect you are supporting bullying*
- *not to put up with bullies in your group of friends*
- *to have the confidence to tell an adult if you yourself are subjected to bullying*

In accordance with the School's Christian ethos, we encourage in all members of our school community a sense of caring and kindness for one another and respect for others.

### **Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying**

Bullying can negatively impact the wider school community. Other children who witness bullying may be distressed to see the effect upon the victim(s). It can also be the case that pupils who are not aggressive by nature may be drawn into taunting a victim by group pressure.

1. Pupils are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying at the earliest opportunity. They might report incidents to a teacher, eg their Form Tutor, Assistant Head/Head of Year or other member of staff eg the School Nurse or Chaplain, or an older pupil. If an incident of bullying is reported to an older pupil, then this information should be shared with the relevant Head of Year or the Deputy Head – Pastoral, who will then liaise with appropriate parties.
2. If a member of staff is concerned about a pupil and believes that they may be either the victim or perpetrator of bullying, they should make their concerns known to the pupil's Assistant Head/Head of Year.
3. The Head of Year will deal as sensitively as possible with the situation, keeping in mind the fact that certain actions may make the situation worse for the pupil(s) in question.
4. Normally, the Head of Year will investigate the allegation by speaking with the victim and the alleged bully, both of whom may be asked to give a written record of the incident where appropriate. The Assistant Head of Year will support the Head of Year, and as appropriate will be involved in interviews, decisions and further actions.
5. The parties involved should be made aware that a written record of the incident will also be made by the reporting member of staff and copies given to the Head of Year and Deputy Head – Pastoral. These are kept as permanent records in the Allegations of Bullying Log.
6. There will be recognition that some incidents are more minor and may be friendship difficulties rather than deliberate bullying. These can usually be dealt with and resolved in a lower-key manner during which the views of both parties are taken into account, relationships restored and the matter resolved.
7. If unacceptable behaviour has taken place the person identified as bullying will receive an appropriate sanction. The Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year will then continue to monitor the pupils involved, keeping evidence as appropriate.

8. The Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year will monitor the victim's emotional well-being, ensuring that she is given continuing positive support and assistance to develop assertiveness and other positive strategies.
9. The person found to have demonstrated bullying behaviour will also be given whatever support she needs to change her conduct. This will include support for their emotional well-being if appropriate, as well as education and clarification about all the behaviours which constitute bullying.
10. Where appropriate a restorative justice approach will be taken when dealing with instances of bullying. The Head of Year/Deputy Head – Pastoral may facilitate a meeting between the victim and the person doing the bullying, if this is deemed by the staff to be helpful. In some circumstances the School Counsellor will be asked to assist with this meeting.
11. Parents are expected to bring any concerns about bullying to the attention of the School. They will also be informed by the Head of Year or other member of staff, for example the Deputy Head – Pastoral, of any incidents of bullying involving their daughters as victims or perpetrators.
12. Parents will be kept informed at regular points during any bullying investigation. Once staff have concluded whether or not bullying has taken place (by considering all the evidence and comparing it against the School's definition of bullying) parents will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible. Where bullying is found not to have occurred, the School's decision will be fully explained to parents.
13. For serious or persistent acts of bullying, the matter will be referred to the Headmistress who will determine appropriate sanctions. In serious cases, temporary or permanent exclusion will be considered. The Headmistress will always be kept informed of any bullying allegations.
14. Throughout any investigation and resulting action the rights and dignity of all those involved will be respected and reassurance and continuing support will be given.
15. All incidents must be carefully recorded in writing. All documentation must be signed (or be in e-format) and dated; it must then be stored by the Deputy Head – Pastoral in the Allegations of Bullying Log and copied to the Headmistress.
16. The effectiveness of the approach taken will be reviewed by the Pastoral team, in liaison with parents and pupils, in an effort to prevent any future reoccurrence.
17. All recorded incidents will be followed up with those involved at a later date to ensure the situation was successfully resolved.
18. If parents are dissatisfied with the way an allegation of bullying has been dealt with, they are able to communicate their concern or complaint to the School (see *Complaints Policy*).

## **Training**

Staff receive anti-bullying updates and Heads/Assistant Heads of Year attend training when and as appropriate. Updated information and guidance is cascaded to colleagues so that the principles of the School policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known and so that sources of support can be accessed to help both resolve and prevent problems. Incidents of bullying, however minor, are identified as early as possible and shared with relevant staff directly or via email so that action to stop and/or prevent it (eg review of seating plans, close monitoring) is taken quickly.

Pupils receive PSHEE and IT-based training on internet safety and using e-technologies in acceptable, responsible ways.

This Policy is reviewed annually by the Deputy Head – Pastoral, Assistant Heads and Heads of Year. The School Council also discusses the contents of the policy.

The next review is due in September 2026.

## Annex I: Planner anti-bullying documents

### Farnborough Hill Anti-Bullying Charter

At Farnborough Hill, we work together to create our caring Christian community. Everyone has both the right to feel comfortable and happy at school and the responsibility to behave in a manner which ensure the happiness and comfort of others.

**As a School, we are committed to not only dealing with bullying but to do all that we can to prevent it happening in the first place.**

Bullying is defined as actions or words that are intended to hurt or humiliate another person, usually repeated over a period of time. It may occur directly or through the use of technology.

#### What bullying is

- verbal taunts, teasing, name-calling over a period of time to your face, behind your back or online
- deliberately leaving people out
- attempting to damage someone's friendships and/or reputation
- physical or emotional intimidation, or deliberate physical contact
- taking and/or hiding personal belongings

#### What bullying isn't

- having an argument
- not getting on with someone
- accidental physical contact
- being bossy
- not including everyone at all times
- changing friendship groups or deciding to spend time with other pupils

All pupils should feel free from the threat of bullying and have the right to feel safe and secure. Pupils should know where to go and whom to speak to if bullying does occur.

Any behaviour that makes you feel uncomfortable needs to be acknowledged and dealt with. There will always be someone to listen to you if you need to talk.

#### Pupils' Rights and Responsibilities at Farnborough Hill

As a pupil at Farnborough Hill, I accept that my role as a member of the community relies as much on my behaviour as it does on that of others.

I acknowledge that we all have the right:

- to go about our daily business in peace and safety
- to be an individual, and be proud of being unique and different
- not to be bullied
- to say no to anything we think is wrong
- to protect ourselves by ignoring others or walking away
- to tell a member of staff if someone is making us unhappy without being accused of 'snitching', and to be assured of confidentiality to avoid repercussions

It is, therefore, both our individual and our collective responsibility:

- not to gossip about others, including not repeating gossip and trying our best to stop gossip if we hear it
- not to treat others in a way which makes them unhappy
- not to put up with any form of bullying
- to work with others to stop bullying
- to inform a member of staff of any form of bullying
- not to put up with bullies or bullying behaviour in groups of friends

# How does Farnborough Hill tackle bullying?

