Anti-Bullying Policy
For UG School

1. PURPOSE
1.1 **Introduction**
At UG School, we are dedicated to cultivating a safe, secure, and supportive environment where every member of our community feels valued, respected, and free from intimidation. This Anti-Bullying Policy outlines our unwavering commitment to preventing, identifying, and addressing all forms of bullying, ensuring a positive and inclusive experience for all students, staff, and visitors. We believe that bullying, in any form, has a detrimental impact on individual well-being and the overall school climate, and we are committed to taking prompt and effective action against it.
This policy aligns with our broader commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and it should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Behaviour Policy.
1.2 **Aims and Objectives**
Our aims are to:
 * Ensure that bullying is not tolerated and actively discouraged within our school community.
 * Educate all members of the school community about the nature and consequences of bullying.
 * Provide clear procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents effectively and sensitively.
 * Empower students to develop positive relationships and a strong sense of community.
 * Foster an open and communicative environment where concerns about bullying can be raised without fear.
 * Support all individuals affected by bullying, whether as victims, perpetrators, or witnesses.

2. DEFINITIONS
2.1 **What is Bullying?**
Bullying is defined as repeated, aggressive, and intentional behavior carried out by an individual or a group with the intent to hurt another person, physically or psychologically,

where there is an imbalance of power. Bullying can take many forms and may occur over a period of time or be isolated incidents.

Bullying can be:

 * Emotional: Being unfriendly, excluding, spreading rumours, ignoring, tormenting, or intimidating. This includes social exclusion, cyberbullying through emotional manipulation, or constant negative remarks.
 * Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, pinching, or any use of violence against a person or their belongings.
 * Verbal: Name-calling, teasing, taunting, insulting, threatening, making inappropriate comments, or spreading malicious gossip.
 * Sexual: Unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, or suggestive gestures.
 * Prejudicial: Bullying based on characteristics such as:
   * Homophobic, Biphobic, or Transphobic: Targeting individuals based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.
   * Racist/Xenophobic: Targeting individuals based on their ethnicity, nationality, cultural background, or language.
   * Religious: Targeting individuals based on their religious beliefs or lack thereof.
   * Ableist: Targeting individuals based on a disability or perceived special educational need.
   * Socio-economic: Targeting individuals based on their family's perceived socio-economic background.
   * Gender-based: Targeting individuals based on their gender or gender expression (sexism).
   * Any other characteristic that may lead to discrimination or marginalisation.
 * Cyberbullying: Bullying that takes place using electronic technology, including mobile phones, computers, and tablets. This can involve sending mean texts or emails, spreading rumours online, posting embarrassing photos or videos, or creating fake profiles. This extends to social media, gaming platforms, and any online interaction.

2.2 **How can bullying be recognised?**

Victims of bullying may:
 * Be reluctant to come to school.
 * Change their usual route or mode of travel to and from school.
 * Become withdrawn, anxious, or distressed.
 * Show changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
 * Have unexplained injuries or damaged belongings.
 * Experience a decline in academic performance.
 * Become more aggressive or disruptive.
 * Be less confident or suffer from low self-esteem.
 * Exhibit changes in their normal behaviour or personality.
 * Be reluctant to participate in usual activities.
 * Exhibit fear of specific individuals or groups.

These signs are indicative and do not definitively confirm bullying, but they warrant further investigation.

3. POLICY

3.1 Achieving Our Aim

UG School is committed to proactive prevention and effective intervention. All members of the school community – students, staff, and parents – have a crucial role in preventing and addressing bullying.

3.2 Prevention and Awareness-Raising:

We aim to prevent bullying by:
 * Promoting a positive and inclusive ethos: Encouraging respectful and empathetic interactions among all members of the school community.
 * Curriculum Integration: Incorporating anti-bullying education into the curriculum, particularly through PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education) and other relevant subjects, to develop students' social-emotional skills, empathy, and understanding of diversity.
 * Clear Communication: Ensuring all students, staff, and parents are aware of this policy and the procedures for reporting bullying.
 * Staff Vigilance: Encouraging staff to be vigilant and attentive to potential bullying incidents, both within classrooms and around the school premises.
 * Student Voice: Providing platforms for students to discuss bullying concerns openly and safely.
 * Parental Engagement: Collaborating with parents/guardians to support anti-bullying efforts both at home and at school.
 * Anti-Bullying Initiatives: Organising awareness campaigns, workshops, and activities (e.g., assemblies, drama, peer mentoring) to reinforce anti-bullying messages throughout the year.

3.3 Raising Awareness and Providing Support

Awareness-raising initiatives will be provided for students and staff, which may include:
 * Assemblies and presentations
 * Classroom discussions and activities
 * Posters and information displays
 * School website resources
 * Specific training for staff on identifying and addressing bullying.

3.4 Responsibilities of Staff and Students

 * All Staff (Teaching and Non-Teaching):
   * Act as positive role models, demonstrating respectful and inclusive behaviour.
   * Actively supervise students and remain vigilant for signs of bullying.
   * Address bullying incidents promptly and sensitively, following school procedures.
   * Record all reported and observed bullying incidents in accordance with school policy.
   * Work collaboratively with colleagues, students, and parents to resolve bullying issues.
   * Participate in relevant professional development to enhance their understanding of bullying dynamics and effective interventions.
 * Students:
   * Treat all members of the school community with respect and kindness.
   * Refrain from any form of bullying behavior.
   * Report any bullying incidents they experience or witness to a trusted adult (teacher, Form Tutor, Head of Year, school counsellor).

* Support peers who are being bullied.
   * Understand that inaction can perpetuate bullying and that reporting is a sign of courage and care for the community.

3.5 Reporting Bullying Incidents

Any student who feels they are being bullied, or witnesses bullying, should report it immediately to a member of staff (e.g., Class Teacher/Form Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care, Head of School, School Counsellor). Parents/guardians who have concerns about bullying should contact the school directly.

All reports will be taken seriously and handled with discretion and sensitivity. Records of all bullying incidents are maintained to monitor trends and inform preventative strategies.

3.6 **Intervention and Support**

Upon receiving a report of bullying:
 * Immediate Action: Staff will intervene immediately to stop the bullying behaviour and ensure the safety of the individuals involved.
 * Investigation: A thorough and impartial investigation will be conducted to gather all relevant facts from all parties involved, including the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator(s), and witnesses.
 * Support for the Victim: The school will provide appropriate support to the victim, including pastoral care, counselling, and strategies to help them regain confidence and feel safe.
 * Intervention with the Perpetrator: The individual(s) responsible for bullying will be confronted with their behaviour. Disciplinary actions will be taken in line with the school's Behaviour Policy, ranging from warnings and restorative justice approaches to more severe sanctions, depending on the severity and persistence of the bullying. The aim is to help perpetrators understand the impact of their actions and learn more appropriate behaviours.
 * Communication: Parents/guardians of both the victim and the perpetrator(s) will be informed, and their cooperation will be sought to resolve the situation and provide necessary support. Confidentiality will be maintained where appropriate.
 * Monitoring: The situation will be monitored to ensure that the bullying does not recur and that all individuals involved are supported in moving forward positively.

3.7 **Retaliation**

Any form of retaliation against a student or staff member for reporting bullying or cooperating in an investigation is strictly forbidden and will be treated as a serious breach of this policy and dealt with accordingly.

3.8 **Cyberbullying**

Given the prevalence of digital communication, cyberbullying is taken as seriously as any other form of bullying. The school will educate students on safe online behaviour and digital citizenship, in line with our Online Safety Policy. Incidents of cyberbullying that occur on school devices, during school hours, or have a direct impact on the school environment or a member of the school community, will be investigated and addressed under this policy. In severe cases, or where the cyberbullying involves illegal activities, the school may involve external authorities (e.g., police).

4. RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES

This policy should be read in conjunction with, and is supported by, the following school policies:

 * Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 * Staff Code of Conduct
 * Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW
This policy will be reviewed annually the School Director to ensure its continued effectiveness and compliance with best practices and relevant legislation. The review will take into account feedback from students, staff, and parents, as well as incident data.
Date Approved: [26.12.2024]
Next Review Due By: [26.12.2024]