

BANKS HOUSE SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Last Updated: 18/05/2023 - Next Review Due: 18/05/2024

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Important roles and named people

Throughout this policy, the following roles may be mentioned. It is important to know who these people are;

- Head of School
 - Dawn Wale (dawn.wale@cascade-care.com)
- Registered manager
 - Helen Baker (Helenbaker@cascade-care.com)

Rationale - School

At Banks House School we are committed to providing a safe and caring environment for all and we do not tolerate bullying of any kind. If bullying does occur, pupils should have confidence that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively especially as our pupils may not be able to communicate that they are being bullied or even recognise that they are being bullied. Staff need to be vigilant and use their knowledge of the individual pupils and the situation. This is particularly important given the diverse needs and disabilities of the pupils within school. Staff are trained in supporting each pupil with their communication and the Key Worker system ensures that adults develop a positive relationship with pupils to identify changes in behaviour and/or circumstances. The school has a range of specialist provision and resources to support pupils to communicate effectively. All staff have a duty to respond promptly and effectively.

All of the pupils at Banks House School have special educational needs and may present with additional disabilities, e.g. multiple learning difficulties, sensory, physical, medical need, Autism, challenging behaviour or any combination of these. Therefore, our approach to anti-bullying needs to take into consideration the impact of inappropriate behaviours on our physically and emotionally vulnerable pupils, whilst also recognising the influence of specific types of special needs on the behaviour of some children. While the school recognises this dilemma, it is also dedicated to combating both the rare cases of 'true bullying' that may occur and the possible, while unintentional, incidents that may make pupils feel threatened, unsafe or afraid. The school will act promptly and firmly to combat bullying and aspects of behaviours that may impact upon the emotional and well-being of all, whenever and wherever it occurs.

1. Policy

All students and staff have a right to feel confident that Banks House School is a safe and healthy environment to live and work in.

We at Banks House School, want to ensure that all students and staff remain safe from any type of bullying behaviour and have the opportunity to thrive and prosper, emotionally and socially within and outside the school environments.

Aims - The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure staff, pupils and parents understand the view that Banks House School takes on bullying
- Ensure pupils are able to learn in a caring and safe environment, without fear of bullying
- Ensure an anti-bullying culture and a safe and secure learning environment exist for all pupils
- Prevent incidents of bullying where possible, through the curriculum delivery, caring and supportive relationships between staff and pupils and vigilance from staff
- Ensure staff are alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly in accordance with the school policy
- Make sure staff, pupils, and parents are aware of the appropriate action to take if they consider themselves to be being bullied or have witnessed or suspect another pupil is being bullied

Banks House School has the student's best interests and outcomes at the heart of its culture.

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This will be achieved by working closely and collaboratively with Banks House home staff with regard to the school's and home's policies and procedures.

When bullying is encountered we will ensure that the procedures are in place to allow:

- Reporting of the incident;
- Having incidents of bullying properly recorded;
- Having concerns or incidents of bullying properly monitored;
- Ensuring appropriate action is taken in response to incidents of bullying and that is followed up.

This will ensure that people feel listened to and understand that their concerns have been and will be taken seriously. KCSIE (2022:7) states that "All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction."

Within Banks House School a culture of respect and dignity is agreed and promoted amongst all staff, students, and any visitors and a set of shared standards of what behaviour and language is acceptable across the school will be advocated.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour or actions of a person, a group of people or a whole organisation designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures);
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- **Homophobic** - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- **Cyberbullying** - e.g. using mobile phones or social networking sites to intimidate or bully others.

There needs to be an established culture where staff are continually monitoring all the students for signs that they may be being subtly bullied e.g. taking someone's food out of the fridge regularly without asking.

3. General/prevention

All Staff must be alert to the risk of bullying and should take all reasonable steps to prevent such behaviour. This includes:

- Implementing a clear culture within Banks House School that bullying is not acceptable;
- Undertaking risk assessments at point of referral and at appropriate stages thereafter in collaboration with Banks House home;
- Providing information and guidance to students, within the programmes of study;
- Providing clarity to children on acceptable behaviours;
- Drafting Individual Crisis Management Plans/contracts with relevant students in collaboration with Banks House home;
- Providing opportunities for students to explore issues of bullying e.g. writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying, role play;
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to them;

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- Making use of role-plays;
- Having discussions about anti-bullying and why it matters.

We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Everyone involved in looking after students shares responsibility for countering bullying and for creating a culture which positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying.

As part of this ethos, everyone must understand what bullying means and what measures should be taken within Banks House School to counter it.

Everyone should also be clear what measures they should take if they suspect bullying or it is reported to them or if they themselves feel they are being bullied.

In this respect, everyone should be alert to the fact that bullying may constitute Significant Harm and, if so, must be reported under the Referring Safeguarding Concerns Procedure.

Exploitation of young and vulnerable people:

Concerns regarding county lines and/or Prevent are extremely unlikely given the presentation of the children at Banks House School. Regardless of this, all school staff and key stakeholders should be aware of these risks.

County Lines - this is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the U.K.

They are known to exploit children and vulnerable adults, particularly those with mental health or addiction problems to move and store drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

People exploited in this way can be exposed to physical, mental and sexual abuse and in some instances will be trafficked to places far from their home/school.

Many children and young adults often don't see themselves as victims or realise that they are being 'groomed' to become involved in criminality.

All staff at Banks House School should look out for any signs of 'County Line' activity, including:

- Talking about new, unfamiliar people;
- Change in student's mood and/or demeanour (secretive/withdrawn/emotional)
- Substance misuse
- Change in student's clothing attire; new unaffordable clothes and jewellery
- Disengagement from school
- An increase in anti-social behaviour in the local community
- Unexplained injuries

If staff have concerns they should report them to the Registered Manager at Banks House/The Head of School at Banks House School/Designated Safeguarding Lead who, in turn will investigate further and speak to the local police force by dialling 101 or in an emergency 999.

If a student has any concerns they can call Childline on 0800 1111 - this is a confidential service; alternatively they can speak to a service named 'Catch 22' - they work with children and young people of any age to help them out of situations that they are worried about, including 'County Lines'.

The Prevent Duty (KCSIE 2022, pp. 149)

All schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

The Prevent Duty should be seen as part of the schools' wider safeguarding obligations.

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The Designated Safeguarding Lead at Banks House School and the Head of School should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales with particular reference to paragraphs 57 - 76.

Educate Against Hate: a website giving government advice and trusted resources for schools to safeguard students from radicalisation, build resilience to all types of extremism and promote fundamental British values.

Channel: part of the Prevent strategy. The process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Banks House School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy Safeguarding Lead) should be aware of local procedures for making a Channel referral.

Child-on-child abuse: can take various forms and include serious bullying; children can abuse other children. This can include: cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, 'teenage relationship abuse', sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; upskirting, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude images, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Banks House School will uphold the Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent prejudice-based bullying; the protected characteristics been: Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, race, pregnancy & maternity, religion and/or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Banks House School will look at the culture of the whole school and consider:

- What Banks House School is required to do under the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Creating a school culture that reflects safety and inclusivity
- Providing information for external support: Equality Advisory & Support Service - 0808 800 0082 (also a website which offers BSL interpretation)

Banks House School recognises that 'Cyberbullying' is a form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones or tablets. Social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites and chat rooms such as 'Facebook' & 'Instagram' can be both positive and negative experiences and the vulnerable young people at Banks House School need to be aware of this through social stories and educational resources such as police information material dealing with 'Cyberbullying and online harassment.

Banks House School will be mindful of the different types of cyberbullying:

Harassment - the act of sending offensive, rude and insulting messages

Denigration - spreading false rumours and sharing photos of someone to ridicule and generate gossip

Cyber Stalking - repeatedly sending messages that are threatening or intimidating

Exclusion - social bullying, which is very common, when others intentionally leave someone out of a group

Hacking and Blackmail: gaining control of someone's computer device and using content to threaten them.

Getting Help

Support can be accessed through email: askus@familylives.org.uk or telephone on: 0808 800 2222; National Bullying Helpline: 0300 3230169 - open Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm.

4. Risk assessment and planning

4.1 Homes Strategies

Banks House have their own Strategies set down in the Statement of Purpose.

Banks House School has an anti-bullying policy which is adhered to continually.

4.2 Individual Plans for Children

As part of the assessment and planning process, the Registered Manager and Head of School for Banks House School must ensure that a Risk Assessment is conducted on each student to ascertain whether s/he may be a victim or perpetrator of bullying.

If there is any risk, it should be addressed in the student's Placement Plan with details of the strategies that must be adopted to prevent or reduce bullying.

In the absence of such a plan/strategy, the following must apply.

5. Managing Bullying for children & Young People

If staff have any concerns, they must discuss them with colleagues and the Registered Manager/Head of School for Banks House School, who should take what actions are necessary to reduce or prevent it.

It may be appropriate to convene a meeting, preferably with the young person/people concerned, to discuss strategies to prevent or reduce bullying. This may include the following:

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise;
2. In serious cases (see Section 6, Notifications, Recording and Review), some form of sanction or exclusion from the other young person will be considered;
3. If possible, the young people will be reconciled;
4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be continuously monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

If the bullying is persistent the student's social worker should be consulted and it may be necessary to conduct a Placement Planning Meetings or a Strategy Discussion in line with Child Protection Referral Procedures. The senior teacher within Banks House School will follow through an in-house investigation and act in the best interests of each child.

See: **Referring Safeguarding Concerns Policy**

If the Head of School or senior teacher is unavailable, staff may take what immediate actions are necessary to reduce or prevent bullying from occurring and then inform the Head of School or Senior Teacher as soon as practicable.

6. Notifications, recording and review

6.1 Minor or Non Persistent Bullying

Where bullying is not persistent it should be notified to the Registered Manager / Head of School of Banks House School at the first opportunity; the manager will decide whether to inform the child's social worker or the School Advisory Board (SAB) to decide what further actions to take.

6.2 Persistent or Serious Bullying

Persistent bullying must be notified immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the relevant child's Social Worker and the School Advisory Board within 1 working day - consultation and consideration should be given to whether a Child Protection Referral should be made, if so please refer to our Child Protection Policy for further guidance.

The Registered Manager and School Advisory Board for Banks House School should also be notified and consideration given to whether the incident is a Notifiable Event.

6.3 Recording and Review

All incidents of bullying must be recorded using the 'Concerns Tab' via the school's portal, using the subcategory 'bullying concern'.

An Incident Report must also be completed (where it is possible the specific category of bullying e.g. verbal/physical/cyberbullying should be identified and highlighted in the incident report so that different incidents of bullying can be monitored as required).

The child's Placement Plan: Star Plan, should be reviewed with a view to incorporating strategies to reduce or prevent future incidents.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for reviewing the incidence and nature of bullying in the school as part of regular monitoring.

7. Procedure for staff experiencing bullying

Initially the affected member of staff may feel it is possible to address the issue informally with the perpetrator with a view to resolving matters.

Sometimes it may be the case that the perpetrator is unaware that their conduct is having such an effect and may be genuinely upset that they have caused offence. The affected member of staff should explain to the perpetrator that their conduct is unwelcome, makes them uncomfortable and ask that they avoid such behaviour in the future.

Following a formal complaint, the Head of School or another nominated person will undertake an impartial and objective investigation into the allegations raised. Following an investigation, the Head of School will invite the member of staff to a meeting to discuss the outcome of the investigation within 7 working days of receiving the complaint. The member of staff has a right to be accompanied at this meeting by a fellow colleague or Trade Union representative.

Where the Head of School considers that an offence has occurred prompt action will be taken to resolve the issue.

Where the harasser or bully is a fellow employee, the Head of School will look to deal with the potential misconduct or gross misconduct offence under the disciplinary procedure. However, the outcome of the disciplinary process is a matter for the manager to determine. The aggrieved cannot dictate what action is to be taken.

The Head of School may explore, in certain cases, the feasibility of mediation between the harasser and the aggrieved. This may be accompanied by additional training for the harasser, either internally or externally. All staff are encouraged to consider engaging in mediation where it is offered as a solution, although the Head of School recognises that mediation will not always be appropriate.

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Where the unwanted behaviour has stemmed from a third party, the Head of School will look to clarify the behaviour expected of their representatives or in very serious cases, ban them from our premises and/or terminate the contract with them.

Please note that any employee who deliberately provides false information or acts in bad faith as part of the investigation process will be subject to action under the disciplinary procedure.

A decision will be communicated in writing to the member of staff within 7 working days of the appeal hearing. Following this there will be no further right of appeal.

BRITISH VALUES: Promotion of British values is an integral part of life at Banks House School. We believe that the promotion of such values should be inherent in teaching and learning as well as in the wider community. We fundamentally believe that the promotion of British Values is an essential strategy in preventing radicalisation. This document should therefore be read in conjunction with our Radicalisation Policy and Practice document. Examples of the promotion of British values within Citizenship are:

Rule of Law • In citizenship, young people are taught about laws, for example, legal ages for smoking, sexual activity, film censorship, marriage and driving. A significant focus is also placed on pupils understanding crime and punishment in relation to rule of law.

• National and International Days are observed (for example, National Anti-Bullying week and internet safety day) and specialist sessions developed to raise awareness of issues relating to rule of the law

Democracy • At Banks House School we actively seek to promote an understanding of democracy. This is done through a range of opportunities offered to individuals within the context of citizenship including, opportunities to hold elections and vote

Individual Liberty • Pupils are taught to understand their personal rights and freedoms, and they should be advised on how to exercise these safely

• Topics such as anti-homophobia, equal rights and e-safety are taught to promote individual liberty in a safe and appropriate context. Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith • Pupils are encouraged to further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation for and respect for their own and other cultures • Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate respect for other people when learning

The Head of School monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. They also report to the School Advisory Board on the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

This policy has been assessed for its impact on those with "protected characteristics" (Equality Act, 2010), as part of our commitment to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It is our opinion that this policy is fair and does not prioritise or disadvantage any student or staff member.