TAUNTON
SCHOOL

PREP ANTI-BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING POLICY

Policy Lead – TPS Deputy Head Pastoral and DDSL

Last Review – September 2025

Review Schedule - Annually or following a change in legislation

MISSION STATEMENT

Taunton School, Staplegrove Road, Taunton, Somerset TA2 6AD
Telephone: 01823 703 703 **Email:** enquires@tauntonschool.co.uk
www.tauntonschool.co.uk

Taunton Prep and Pre-Prep Schools are diverse communities based upon mutual respect. The schools are committed to creating and sustaining a safe, positive and inclusive environment for all pupils, staff and parents/carers. We believe that all the members of our community have the right to be protected from bullying and abusive behaviour.

There is absolutely no place for bullying at Taunton Prep and Pre-Prep Schools. Both physical and emotional bullying have the potential to cause psychological damage and will not be tolerated.

Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions and it is available to download on the school's website or on request.

WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy was developed and is reviewed and monitored through consultation with the TPS Senior Management Team (SMT). It applies to all members of the school community:
Pupils
Teachers in TPS, TPPS, EYFS (both permanent and supply teachers, and specialist teachers e.g. for music, dance and drama)
Teaching Assistants in TPS, TPPS, EYFS
Learning Success Assistants
School counsellor/s
School medical staff
Office staff in TPS and TPPS
School librarian/s
Catering staff
Caretakers
Science and DT laboratory technicians
Parents/carers
School Governors

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

This policy aims to ensure that all those connected with the Schools are protected from bullying behaviour and pays due regard to the DfE advice 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (Oct 2014, updated 2017). The on-going and long-term aim of the policy is to reduce the number of pupils who experience bullying through increasing awareness of this behaviour, its causes and consequences in the pupils, staff, parents and carers who make up the school community, and to help pupils find and put into practice a series of solutions to the problem of bullying. The policy also aims to ensure that individual cases of bullying will be dealt with consistently and in a constructive and fair manner when they occur. Procedures for dealing with bullying are clearly set out so that all members of the school community know what they can expect from the school, and what the school expects of them, with regard to bullying.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is when one or more people physically, emotionally or psychologically hurt or cause harm to a person who is in a **weaker** position than him/her/them and so is less able to defend himself/herself. Bullying usually happens over a **period of time** and consists of a **series** of different incidents. Incidents which are short-lived will still be dealt with seriously but may not be considered as bullying.

Bullying may take place not only between pupils, but also in both directions between adults and pupils.
Different types of bullying include:
Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up, stealing/damaging someone's belongings, etc.
Verbal – name-calling, insulting a person's family, threats of physical violence, spreading rumours, constantly putting a person down.

Emotional / **Psychological** – excluding someone from a group, humiliation.
Racist / **Cultural** / **Religious**– insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived ethnic origin or faith, name-calling, graffiti, racially motivated violence.
Adoption / **Caring responsibilities** - teasing based on home life and background.
Sexual / **Sexist** / **Gender**– sexually insulting language/gestures, name-calling, graffiti, unwanted physical contact.
Homophobic – insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived sexuality, name-calling, graffiti, homophobic violence.
Special Educational Needs / **Disability** - insulting language/gestures based on a person's actual or perceived SEN or disability.
Electronic / **Cyber** – bullying by text message or email, bullying on the internet (through social media and through instant messaging services) and hate websites. See below.

Bullying is the abuse of power by one person over another. All of the types of behaviour listed above are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Taunton Prep and Pre-Prep Schools.

Cyber-Bullying

The Senior Deputy Headmaster is responsible for the IT Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), which is held as a separate document within the School's E-Safety policy. By logging on to the Taunton School Network, users agree to abide by this AUP.

It should be noted that misconduct of any kind outside school will be subject to school rules if the welfare of another pupil or the culture or reputation of the school are placed at risk. The school's role may therefore extend beyond the "school gates". Cyber-bullying or other E-Safety related incidents may therefore be subject to school sanctions even if they do not take place on the school systems.

Student access to internet sites is filtered and logged in case of any unacceptable use. Any attempt to bypass security will be treated very seriously. The school monitors all use of the ICT systems, including e-mail and mobile device connection through the Taunton School Wi-Fi Network. Students using the network in unacceptable ways will be subject to an appropriate school sanction, most likely to be at least a Headmaster's Detention and parents to be informed. Offenders will also come under the general discipline procedures of the school.

Pupils are educated in the responsible use of technology through the Computer Studies and PSHEE curriculums. PTA lectures from experts in the field of online safety are sourced on an occasional basis for the benefit of parents, and links to informative and responsible websites are provided through safeguarding updates in the weekly newsletter, The Courier.

Online safety forms part of the statutory child protection training undertaken by all staff. All users should channel any concerns for online safety through the Deputy Head Pastoral or Senior Deputy Head.

Taunton School uses NTFS file permissions and Active Directory Groups to secure documents and file locations to appropriate staff and student groups. Staff cannot access student data (such as the My Documents area or E-mail) without approval from a senior member of staff within the student's school or access a member of staff's information without approval from the HR department.

Student and Staff data held within our MIS system is restricted so that only appropriate members of staff can view data.

How we prevent bullying at Taunton Prep and Pre-Prep Schools:

1) Fortnightly pastoral meetings, weekly briefings and and weekly SMT meetings in TPS and TPPS afford all staff the opportunity to raise awareness of potential bullying issues with the PHOY's, Deputy Head Pastoral, Senior Deputy Headmaster and Head of Pre-Prep. All are also readily contactable in person or via e-mail. Form Tutors have regular contact with their tutees and can reflect upon any changes in behaviour as an early warning system to identify potential bullying. Staff are asked to **report and record any concerns they have /notice, on the same day the concern arises.**

2) In TPS: The *Behaviour, Sanctions and Pastoral Care Policy* highlight the various levels of sanctions available to respond to bullying. This would be Level 3 at the very least, in addition to the actions described later in this policy.

3) In TPPS: The Behaviour Management Policy will be adhered to – using sanctions and actions that are age and stage appropriate.

4) In TPS: We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school's policy on bullying and celebrate Anti-Bullying Week. Our PSHEE and SMSC programmes are structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other. Our ethos is, "speak up and speak out", if something is wrong. It specifically tells pupils whom they should inform if they are being bullied, or are worried that another pupil is being bullied, and this information is reinforced by posters throughout the school.

5) In TPPS: We use appropriate language, books, puppets and props, circle time models and The Big Bag of worries to support disclosure.

6) A strong pastoral system, based around small Form / Tutor Groups, routinely deliver messages reinforcing positive behaviour.

7) Assemblies and the School's regular newsletter, The Courier, recognise and celebrate diversity.

8) In TPS: All our pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place. All forms from Y3-6 have a "worry monster "in the form room. There are also 3 chatterboxes in TPS where pupils can post concerns anonymously (one is in the Boarding house)

9) In TPPS: Pre- Prep has a posting box or a bag etc. for worries. Children can use role play, books and puppets.

10) Every member of staff is trained on how to respond to such allegations as part of their INSET / induction training.

11) In TPS: All reported incidents are recorded on ISAMS and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents and keep records to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted and to enable patterns to be identified. The Deputy Head Pastoral reviews all bullying incidents on a weekly basis to maintain a holistic picture of different aspects of school life; academic, boarding, sport, break times. The Deputy Head Pastoral is responsible for maintaining the bullying log.

12) In TPPS: The Head of TPPS has a Behaviour Management Log. The TPPS Behaviour Management Policy is strictly adhered to. Zero tolerance approach and incidents are dealt with in partnership with parents, the child and staff. PSHEE – lessons are used effectively to tackle, bigger misconceptions, incidents etc. Internet safety is delivered as an integral part of ICT and parents are actively encouraged in workshops.

13) In TPS: Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. There are areas of the playground, such as the quiet area outside the staff room, that are appropriate for more vulnerable groups. Staff are trained to be alert to inappropriate behaviour or pupils of concern.

14) In TPPS: Children can engage in group block play, den building, role-play, ball games. Positive behaviour and resources are planned to encourage positive participation and interaction. All staff are strategically placed in zoned areas.

15) We provide leadership training to those Year 8s in positions of responsibility which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and vulnerable pupils. Pupils in Y7 and in Y6, are also Playground Leaders/Champions.

16) We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.

17) CEOPS website is used to deliver internet safety lessons at an age-appropriate level through PSHEE lessons in Years 3 – 8 and also information is sent to parents.

How we handle bullying at Taunton Prep and Pre-Prep Schools:

1) In TPS: When bullying is reported it will be taken seriously and details (including the action taken) will be recorded on the School's MIS under Event Type: Child on Child abuse – Bullying - Perpetrator or Victim.

2) In TPPS: Behaviours in TPPS are logged on ISAMS and emails to parents.

3) Staff will work with the young person who is being bullied to help them feel safe and find responses to bullying that work. This may include sensitive interviews with their Form Tutor, PHOY or the Deputy Head and immediate action will centre on protecting them from further harm.

4) In TPS: Staff will work with the young person or people who are bullying to change the bullying behaviour. The various sanctions that might be deployed are outlined in the School's Behaviour Policy.

5) In TPPS: We use Eva Hoffman – Learning Adventure materials and adhere to our TPPS/Behaviour Management Policy.

6) Wherever possible, staff will work with the parents/carers of any pupil who is being bullied to support and encourage that pupil in finding solutions to the bullying.

7) Wherever possible, staff will work with the parents/carers of any pupil who is bullying to support and encourage that pupil to acknowledge their responsibility for their actions, to recognise the harm they have caused and to find alternatives to the bullying behaviour.

8) A staff member will meet regularly with the victim of any bullying once preventative measures are in place to ensure their effectiveness.

9) Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer considerable harm through bullying, the school will treat the issue as a child protection concern. If necessary, staff will involve outside agencies in supporting pupils who are experiencing bullying or who are bullying. The decision on where this threshold has been crossed lies with the SMT and in particular the DDSL for the Prep School in consultation with the DSL and Local Children's Safeguarding Board.

10) In TPS: Suspending, then excluding pupils from School is a last resort. If particularly serious victimisation, abuse and intimidation, or physical bullying against any other person belonging to the school community is reported, those pupils who carried out the bullying may be suspended from school activities while it is investigated, and solutions are sought. If the solutions have no effect, or if the bullying was so severe that it would be harmful to the rest of the school community to allow the suspended pupil to return to the school, he/she may have to be excluded permanently, in line with Local Authority guidelines.

11) In TPPS: Suspension/exclusion is called "Thinking Days" and Reflection. We recognise that it might be of value and a "Time Out" necessity to suspend a child.

Expectations of all in the TPS and TPPS Community:

Here are the things that every member of the school community can expect from the school and the things that are expected from each member:

All pupils

All of us find ourselves in vulnerable positions sometimes, e.g. when we start a new school/job/subject, if we are having problems at home, etc. As part of the school community, children have a responsibility to help combat bullying by supporting other pupils when they are vulnerable. They must never gang up against another pupil in a vulnerable position but instead should try to help him/her feel less vulnerable. They must never join in with making fun of them; "If you laugh at it, you are part of it."

Here's what children should do if they are being bullied or know that *any* other pupil is being bullied, either in school or out:

1) Let a member of staff know about the bullying. They can do this in lots of different ways:

b) Tell a peer supporter, who can advise them how to tell staff and support them in doing so, or tell them for the child if he/she is unable to do so.

c) Find a quiet moment to speak to a member of staff. Members of staff are teachers, teaching assistants, learning success assistants, counsellors, matrons and medical staff, office staff, and librarians. After class can be a good time to approach teachers. Children can always pretend that you need help with some work if they are worried that other pupils might hear them ask the teacher for a private word.C hildren also have access t the School's Independent Person.

2) When children let staff know about bullying, they can expect what they say to be taken seriously and that action will be taken to stop the bullying behaviour. If they choose to tell a member of staff about bullying in person, staff will not name them when they investigate the bullying unless they are forced to because of Child Protection laws, but they will let them know that they have acted on their report.

3) If children are ever worried for their own or another pupil's physical safety (including if you are afraid that a pupil may harm himself/herself), **they must not hesitate to tell a member of staff** so that they can take immediate action to keep the pupil safe with the help of other staff at the school, parents/carers and the police and ambulance service if necessary.

Pupils who are being bullied

If pupils are being bullied, they can expect that:

1) They will be listened to and taken seriously.

2) Action will be taken to help them and stop the bullying.

3) They will be involved in the process of deciding what action to take to help stop the bullying and any worries that they may have will be listened to and respected.

4) They will be given the opportunity to talk about the way that the bullying has made them feel and to find strategies to deal with these feelings and to understand and cope with bullying behaviour. This means:

a) Their Form Tutor, Pastoral Head of Year and the Deputy Head Pastoral, will be told about your situation so that they can help to support you.
b) They will be given the chance to work with them to find strategies to deal with bullying and to talk about any feelings and worries that you may have.
c) They will be offered the chance to talk with staff from other agencies as well, e.g. the school counsellor.
d) Their Form Tutor will ask to let their parent(s)/carer(s) know what is going on, and to offer them the chance to help support the child as well.
e) They will have regular meetings with a member of staff to make sure that the action taken to stop the bullying is really working and that they are happy with how things are going.

5) If a child is ever in fear for their physical safety, staff will take immediate action to keep them safe with the help of their colleagues at the school, parents/carers and outside agencies like the police and ambulance service if necessary.

Pupils who are bullying

Bullying behaviour has no place at Taunton Prep and Pre-Prep School. Pupils who are involved in bullying can expect that:

1) Their bullying behaviour **will** be challenged.

2) They will be treated fairly.

3) They will be given the opportunity to change their behaviour and will be encouraged and supported in doing so. This means:

a) They will be expected to work with staff to look at the reasons why they have been bullying and to find and put into practice other ways of behaving.
b) They will be offered the chance to work with staff from other agencies who can help them to stop bullying, e.g. the school counsellor.
c) Their Form Tutor will let their parent(s)/carer(s) know what is going on, and will offer them the chance to help support the bully in changing their behaviour.

4) They will have regular meetings with staff to review their behaviour. If they don't work at changing their behaviour then staff will have to take more serious action, e.g. suspending them from school activities. Our priority is to make this school a safe and positive place for the whole school community. If pupils take part in a serious campaign of victimisation, abuse and intimidation, or episode of physical bullying against any other person belonging to the school community, they may be suspended from coming to school whilst the behaviour is investigated. In very serious cases you may be excluded.

Staff

All staff can expect to be properly trained and supported in dealing with bullying.

All staff will be expected to:

1) Promote an environment that is constructive and safe for all pupils through their own teaching practice and actions.

2) Follow the procedures set out in this policy when they are dealing with bullying.

3) Where necessary, work in co-operation with colleagues, pupils, parents/carers, staff from other organisations in

the local community and the school's board of governors to combat bullying.

Parents/Carers

All parents and carers can expect to be kept informed of the school's anti-bullying work through the school website. If parents/carers wish to contact the School about a bullying issue, they may do so through their child's Form Tutor /PHOY, Deputy Head Pastoral or Head of TPPS and discuss any concerns they may have.
4) Wherever necessary, the school will put them in contact with outside agencies (e.g. counselling services, etc.) that can help to support them and their child in addressing his/her experience of being bullied.

If a child is bullying another pupil, their parents and carers can expect that:

1) They and their child will be listened to.
2) Their child will be treated fairly.
3) Their child will be expected to change his/her bullying behaviour and will be supported and encouraged in doing so by staff.
4) Wherever necessary, the school will put them in contact with outside agencies that can help to support them and their child in addressing his/her bullying behaviour.

If parents/carers have any concerns that another child who attends the school (e.g. a friend of your child) may be experiencing bullying, they should not turn a blind eye but mention this to a member of staff.
If parents/carers wish to make a complaint about the school's handling of a bullying issue, please refer to the *Whole School Complaints Policy*.

Governors

School Governors can expect to be kept up to date on the progress of the school's anti-bullying work, if appropriate, through the Headmaster's annual report.

School Governors will be expected to:

1) Give feedback, where applicable, on the monitoring and evaluation of the anti-bullying policy and practices in the school.
2) Publicly support the school's anti-bullying message.