Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission statement

An ever-evolving experience for ever-evolving learners.

At GEMS Jumeirah Primary School, we believe that everyone can achieve highly with equitable access to the right opportunities and support. As a World Class High Performance Learning school, we recognise and embrace the uniqueness of every child. We create an inclusive, nurturing environment, prioritising the psychological wellbeing of all, allowing children to feel happy, safe and confident. Children at JPS know that anything is possible for them and they aspire to be the best versions of themselves.

We meet the diverse needs of all children and their families to facilitate the best possible individual experience to ensure our learners excel beyond their potential flight path. Our bespoke, innovate curriculum is carefully designed and continually reviewed to:

* Guide learners in developing their values, behaviours and learner competencies to prepare them for success in an ever-evolving world
* Challenge learners and help them to discover their passions, talents and interests
* Provide leadership opportunities for all learners, allowing them to influence the direction of travel for key aspects of school

We are a diverse learning community, passionate about inspiring a love for learning in our children, staff and families. Our inclusive actions and behaviours are led by our core values of Kindness, Empathy, Respect, Hard Work and Resilience. This is clear through our acts of philanthropy and environmental sustainability. The JPS family is proud to lead the way in contributing positively to our local and wider community.

1. Introduction

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell an adult and be protected.

2. Purpose of policy

At Jumeirah Primary School, we are committed to the wellbeing of all our children and providing a caring, friendly and safe environment so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. The purpose of this Anti-Bullying policy is to nurture a school ethos where bullying is considered unacceptable and to promote a whole school community approach to prevent bullying.

3. Aims and objectives

- To enable all members of the school community to identify what bullying is
- To explore the different types of bullying and review physical and emotional impacts of bullying
- To equip all children with safe and acceptable methods of standing up for themselves in an assertive manner
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community with regard to awareness of and action taken if bullying occurs
- To provide a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying
- To produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur

4. Defining Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying.

Bullying is usually defined as a repeated, intentional act of aggressive behaviour, where one person or group uses power to harm, intimidate, or control another person.

It can be direct, in the form of physical or verbal, or indirect such as being ignored or not spoken to.
(Adapted from APA Dictionary of Psychology and Anti-Bullying Alliance)

The 4 main types of bullying we discuss are:
1. Physical bullying – hitting, pushing, tripping, or physically attacking
2. Verbal bullying – name-calling, insults, threats or verbal harassment
3. Cyberbullying - using digital platforms to harass, embarrass or target someone
4. Social bullying - spreading rumours, excluding someone or damaging someone's reputation or relationships

What is the difference between an 'unkind behaviour' and bullying?

Nature of the Behaviour	Frequency	Power Imbalance	Intent	Emotional Impact
Bullying: Bullying involves repeated and intentional harm. It's aggressive behaviour that can be physical, verbal, social, or even digital (cyberbullying). The goal is often to hurt, intimidate, or dominate the other person.	**Bullying:** Bullying is persistent and ongoing. It happens over time and creates a power imbalance. The victim typically feels helpless or afraid to stop it.	**Bullying:** There is a clear power imbalance in bullying. This could be physical strength, social influence, or even access to information that can harm someone. The bully exploits this imbalance.	**Bullying:** The intent behind bullying is often malicious. It is purposeful, and the bully knows they are causing harm or distress and may take satisfaction in it.	**Bullying:** The emotional toll of bullying is significant and long-lasting. Victims often feel anxious, depressed, isolated, and fearful.
Unkind Behaviour: Unkind behaviour may involve hurtful actions or words, but it is usually isolated and not part of a pattern. It might be due to poor judgment, frustration, or immaturity, without the intention to repeatedly harm or control someone.	**Unkind Behaviour:** Unkind behaviour is often a one-time incident or happens sporadically. While it can still be hurtful, it's not part of an ongoing campaign to hurt or exclude someone.	**Unkind Behaviour:** In unkind behaviour, power dynamics are usually not a factor. It can occur between equals and is often more about a lack of empathy or poor communication.	**Unkind Behaviour:** Unkindness may not come from a place of cruelty but rather from thoughtlessness, stress, or miscommunication. The child may not fully realise the impact of their words or actions.	**Unkind Behaviour:** Unkind acts can still hurt, but they are generally easier to recover from since they aren't repeated. Apologies or corrective actions are more likely to resolve the situation.

Ways to Identify if Someone is Being Bullied
A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate:

Emotional and Behavioral Changes
- **Withdrawal or Isolation**: A victim may suddenly stop spending time with friends or participating in activities they once enjoyed. They might isolate themselves, avoid social situations, or seem detached from family and friends.
- **Mood Swings**: Sudden or frequent mood changes, such as increased sadness, irritability, or anger, could indicate emotional distress caused by bullying.
- **Anxiety or Fearfulness**: The person may seem nervous, jumpy, or overly anxious, especially when it's time to go to school, work, or other places where bullying could occur.
- **Loss of Confidence**: A decline in self-esteem or increased self-criticism, such as saying they feel "worthless" or "not good enough," may be a result of being bullied.
- **Changes in Social Habits**: The person may start avoiding friends or activities, seem reluctant to go to school or work, or take different routes to avoid certain people.

Physical Signs
- **Unexplained Injuries**: Frequent bruises, cuts, scrapes, or other injuries, especially if the person avoids explaining how they happened, could be the result of physical bullying.
- **Damage to Personal Belongings**: You may notice torn clothes, damaged books, or lost possessions, which can be a sign that someone is physically bullying them or intentionally damaging their things.
- **Changes in Eating Habits**: Bullying can lead to a change in appetite, either through overeating as a comfort or a loss of appetite due to stress or anxiety.

- **Frequent Health Complaints**: Bullying often leads to physical symptoms like headaches, stomachaches, or other stress-related illnesses, which may not have a clear medical cause.

Academic or Work-Related Changes
- **Decline in Performance**: A sudden drop in grades or work productivity can indicate that the person is distracted, anxious, or avoiding certain situations due to bullying.
- **Reluctance to Go to School or Work**: The person may express a strong desire to avoid school or work, asking to stay home more often or making excuses to skip. They might fake illness or show significant anxiety when it's time to leave.
- **Loss of Interest**: Lack of enthusiasm for school, work, or extracurricular activities, especially those they once enjoyed, can be a red flag.

Changes in Relationships
- **Loss of Friends**: Someone who is being bullied may suddenly stop spending time with certain friends, or their friendships may seem strained. They may start avoiding specific groups of people or social interactions.
- **Avoiding Social Situations**: Avoiding school, group activities, or online platforms where social interactions happen could be a sign they're trying to escape the environment where bullying is occurring.
- **Trouble Sleeping**: A victim of bullying may have difficulty sleeping, report having nightmares, or seem overly tired during the day. Sleep issues can be a sign of emotional distress caused by bullying.

Emotional and Mental Health Issues

Behavioral Red Flags in School or Online
- **Sudden Avoidance of Technology**: If the person is being cyberbullied, they may avoid social media, texting, or online games. They might seem anxious or upset after being online.
- **Change in Social Media Behavior**: On the flip side, they may seem obsessed with checking their devices, trying to monitor or stop the bullying. They might also delete social media accounts or drastically change their online presence.
- **Aggressive Behavior**: While most victims withdraw, some may act out or show increased aggression toward others, possibly reflecting what they are experiencing themselves.

Verbal Indicators
- **Talking about Feeling Unliked or Picked On**: The person may hint at their experience without directly saying they're being bullied, such as saying things like "no one likes me" or "people are always making fun of me."
- **Expressing Fear of Specific People**: They may say things like "I don't want to be around [a certain person]" or express anxiety when a specific name or group comes up.
- **Frequent Complaints about Teasing or Exclusion**: While the person may not label it as bullying, they might complain about being left out, called names, or teased regularly.

Ways to Identify if Someone is Bullying
A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is bullying. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate:

Aggressive or Dominating Behavior
- **Physical aggression**: A person who frequently pushes, hits, trips, or physically harms others may be bullying. This can also include more subtle physical dominance, like intimidating body language, blocking someone's path, or standing too close to make the other person feel uncomfortable.

- **Verbal aggression**: This includes name-calling, teasing, taunting, making sarcastic or mean comments, and spreading rumors. A bully often uses words to humiliate or belittle others, especially in front of a group to assert power.
- **Excluding others**: Bullies may deliberately exclude someone from social activities, teams, or conversations, aiming to make the victim feel left out, isolated, or rejected.
- **Manipulating friendships**: In social bullying, the person might try to control friendships by turning others against someone or influencing group dynamics to hurt or exclude the victim.

Pattern of Repeated Harmful Behavior
- **Ongoing targeting**: Bullying typically involves repetitive actions toward the same person or group over time. If you notice someone repeatedly picking on, mocking, or hurting another person, it may indicate bullying.

Power Imbalance
- **Taking advantage of a perceived weakness**: Bullies often target individuals they perceive as weaker—whether that's physically, socially, emotionally, or in terms of status. They exploit these imbalances to assert control and dominance.
- **Position of influence**: A bully might be someone with social power (popularity, physical size, or confidence) who uses their position to manipulate or mistreat others.

Lack of Empathy or Remorse
- **Disregard for others' feelings**: A bully often shows little empathy toward their victim. They might laugh or make fun of someone who is upset or in pain, showing no concern for the harm they cause.
- **Justifying their actions**: The person may defend their bullying by blaming the victim, saying things like, "They deserved it," or "I was just joking." They may not recognize or care about the negative impact of their behavior.
- **No guilt or regret**: Bullies rarely show remorse for their actions. Even when confronted, they may minimize the situation, show no desire to apologize, or continue the behavior.

Frequent Manipulation or Control
- **Coercion or threats**: Bullies often use threats to control others, including threats of physical harm, social exclusion, or embarrassment. This can occur both in person and online (cyberbullying).
- **Pressure to conform**: They may pressure others into doing things they don't want to do or force someone to follow their rules or demands, whether in school, social groups, or online settings.
- **Spreading rumors or lies**: Social bullies often manipulate others by spreading false stories, gossiping, or creating damaging narratives about someone to harm their reputation or relationships.

Targeting Vulnerable Individuals
- **Bullying weaker or different individuals**: Bullies often pick on those who stand out for any reason—whether it's because of physical appearance, disability, race, gender identity, or social awkwardness. They exploit these differences to assert dominance.
- **Choosing isolated victims**: Bullies tend to go after individuals who are more isolated or have fewer friends, as they may be less likely to receive support from others.

Enjoyment of Causing Pain or Discomfort
- **Glee from hurting others**: A person who enjoys watching others in discomfort or pain, or who seems to derive satisfaction from causing others to suffer, may be engaging in bullying. This can manifest in physical bullying, verbal harassment, or even online interactions (cyberbullying).
- **Encouraging others to join in**: A bully may try to rally others to laugh at or join in on teasing or attacking a victim. This is often done to amplify the humiliation or distress of the person being bullied.

Control Over Digital Platforms (Cyberbullying)
- **Harassment through social media**: A person who sends hurtful messages, posts damaging or humiliating content about someone online, or spreads rumors through text or social media might be engaging in cyberbullying.
- **Exclusion in digital spaces**: Bullies may create group chats, online forums, or social media groups specifically to exclude or ridicule someone. They may also use the internet to ostracize others publicly.

Frequent Conflicts with Peers or Authority
- **Conflict with peers**: Someone who frequently gets into arguments, fights, or confrontations with others, especially when they are the instigator, may be bullying. These conflicts often involve aggression or hostility directed at peers.
- **Disrespect for authority figures**: Bullies may also show disrespect for teachers, supervisors, or other authority figures by disregarding rules, undermining authority, or challenging discipline when their behavior is addressed.

Attention-Seeking or Control-Seeking Behavior
- **Seeking attention**: A bully might engage in harmful behavior to gain attention, either from peers or adults. They may show off in front of others by belittling someone or causing a scene.
- **Desire for control**: Bullies often like to be in control of social situations. They may try to dominate conversations, decide who is included or excluded, or dictate how others behave.

5. Prevention

We will raise awareness of what bullying is, the roles and responsibilities of those involved and strategies the children can use if they feel they are being bullied. This will be communicated through:

- Phase assemblies (Yr 1/2; Yr 3/4; Yr 5/6)
- Whole school awareness weeks
- Wellbeing Lessons
- Class Circle Time
- Parent *SafeGuardian* workshops
- Group/individual discussions

6. Roles and responsibilities

The role of Children
- Children are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. A daily check-in using Zones of Regulation in KS1 and *Upstrive* in KS2 provides children with a safe platform to share concerns.
- Children must report any incidents that they witness.
- Children are encouraged to stand up assertively and safely to a bully and are provided with a range of strategies on how to do this, whether they are being bullied or are a bystander.

The role of Parents
- Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's Class Teacher immediately who will record the concern and monitor the situation, reporting back to Parents as often as needed for two weeks to feedback on action they are taking. After two weeks, Parents and Class Teacher come to a mutual agreement about seeking support from the Wellbeing Team and Head of Year.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school and use the internet wisely.

The role of the Teaching Staff
- All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it.
- Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If a member of staff other than the Class Teacher witnesses or is informed of an act of bullying, they will refer it to the Class Teacher who then logs the concern on Guard, the school's safeguarding platform, and investigates following school policy.
- If any bullying takes place between members of a class, the Teacher will deal with the issue immediately. Class Teachers may choose to deal with incidents through whole class circle time or discussion with the children involved as appropriate. If incidents continue, Class Teacher to inform Parents; Head of Year and Senior Leadership Team and refer to the Wellbeing Team.
- Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc. within the formal curriculum, to help children understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.
- Class Teachers to be accountable for dealing with situations with the support of their Head of Year and other relevant staff.
- All members of staff ensure they are aware of the policy so that they are equipped to identify bullying and to follow the procedures.

The role of the Wellbeing Team
- The Wellbeing Team ensure that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- Carry out Parent workshops to inform Parents of the school policy and increase understanding of bullying.
- Support children (victim and bully) through circle time and/or individual/group discussions as necessary to deal with any incidents of bullying.
- Keep Principal, Vice Principal and Deputy Principal/DSL and other relevant staff informed.

The role of the Head of Year
- Ensure time is allocated at the beginning of every team meeting to discuss any vulnerable children or incidents that the team should be aware of that may have occurred throughout the week.
- Are aware of any incidents of bullying relevant to their year group and keep the Wellbeing Team and other relevant staff informed.
- Ensure the Class Teacher is the first point of call and support, as required.
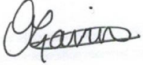
The role of the Principal
- It is the responsibility of the Principal to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.
- The Principal sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.
- If bullying continues after the involvement of the Wellbeing Team and Head of Year, the children involved will be called with their parents to have a meeting with the Principal.

7. Equal Opportunities

The school recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse school community which includes people from differing backgrounds, with different skills and abilities. The school will take positive steps to create school culture through its governing body, managers and other employees, in which people can feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and tolerance, irrespective of their individual differences. This commitment extends to the whole school community and others connected with it. The school is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to the promotion of good relations between all.

8. Monitoring and review

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the JPS teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation.

Signed

Head of Counselling

Signed

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Signed

CEO Principal