

# **Yesoiday HaTorah Girls' Academy**

## **Anti - Bullying policy (Pupils)**

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Ratified Governors Meeting Summer Term 2019

Last Update May 2021 Next Review May 2022

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## Introduction

**We do not tolerate bullying of any kind (including against those defined by the Equalities Act 2010) at Yesoiday HaTorah Girls' Academy.**

**Any incident of apparent bullying is investigated.**

DfE guidance defines bullying as “actions that are meant to be hurtful and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct or indirect.”

At Yesoiday HaTorah Girls' Academy we are committed to working with staff, pupils, parents and carers to create and maintain a school community where all forms of bullying will not be tolerated, including when bullying is motivated by prejudice or negative attitudes towards any of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act 2010

The school's anti-bullying policy has been developed with due regard for our duties and obligations under existing legislation for the safeguarding and wellbeing of all our pupils and we will take all steps to ensure their safety.

## Aim of the policy

The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

## Definition: What Is Bullying?

There are many definitions of bullying. Most have three things in common:

- It consists of deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- It occurs repeatedly over a period of time.
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves due to an imbalance of power between individuals or a group and an individual.

Bullying can occur in many ways:

1. **Physical** – where the person being bullied is hit, kicked or when belongings are taken and/or damaged.
2. **Verbal** – which consists of name-calling, insulting, or general taunting, racist or sexist remarks.
3. **Indirect** – when malicious rumours or stories are spread.
4. **Social Alienation** – when someone is treated as an out-cast or the person is excluded from the social group.

5. **Cyberbullying** – when technology is used to inflict harm on another person, e.g. posting photos online, sending text messages, hacking into social networking sites.
6. **Intimidation** – using threats to frighten someone.

### **How can bullying be identified?**

By its nature, bullying tends to take place out of sight and earshot of teaching and other school staff.

**Perhaps the most important element in identifying bullying is the creation of a positive school culture in which bullying is not tolerated and any reporting of bullying is seen as a positive and valued act by pupils.**

However, there are possible signs of bullying that we require all school staff to be aware of and to which they should respond with enquiry. Some key signs may include:

- a reluctance to come to school / erratic attendance;
- a marked deterioration in a pupil's performance;
- a reluctance to go out to play;
- a reluctance to leave school at the normal time or walk home with other pupils;
- unlikely excuses for possessions damaged or destroyed;
- pupils who 'lose' items;
- pupils who appear isolated in the playground, during games, etc.;
- pupils who appear sad or quiet;
- pupils who display withdrawn, unforthcoming behaviour;
- pupils who feign illness or seek attention more than usual.

### **Preventing and responding to bullying incidents**

The school encourages a pro-active stance from all staff and provides a common definition of what bullying is. We have clear strategies in place for staff to use when supporting children who have been bullied or are bullying others.

The school aims to build a feeling of confidence in children and parents so that they know that all reports or suspicions of bullying will be investigated. The person being bullied might not report incidents, so the school needs to create a climate of trust where others feel comfortable to 'tell'. Our school provides many opportunities for children to communicate and aims to allow children to have many people available for them to open up to.

The school aims to equip children with the skills, attitudes and values that will prepare them for adult life in line with the traits that we believe our faith is bringing us to obtain. Children who exhibit bullying behaviour may carry it into adult life.

## **Prevention of bullying**

In order to avoid bullying the school aims to establish a positive approach to behaviour. Strategies may include:

- Setting rules, goals/targets
- Raising self esteem
- Helping children to recognise triggers and to avoid them
- Helping children to admit and acknowledge responsibility and to apologise
- Teaching social skills, e.g. in class, in the playground, in the dinner hall
- Planned activities e.g. team building, circle time, assemblies, 'Treasure hunt' and other life skills lessons
- Concentrating on behaviour rather than the child. (e.g. not labelling children as 'naughty' or 'a bully' or 'scape-goat')
- Encouraging the feeling of 'belonging' to a community and using peer group pressure to actively discourage bullying
- Celebrating all achievements
- Careful consideration of how adults in school talk to children
- Keeping up to date through professional training
- Working with parents, if necessary, to develop their understanding of bullying

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and "falling out". The Behaviour Team works with children who may encounter difficulties linked to friendships. This involves talking to children, providing SEMH sessions with a designated teacher running friendship groups and supporting peer mediation.

The behaviour lead is Mrs Frankenhuis. In addition, Mrs N Sher acts as the external anti-bullying officer, in the event of an issue being raised. A "concern box" scheme is also operated for pupils who may not wish to verbalise difficulties.

## **Recording and reporting bullying**

Bullying may be reported by a child, a parent or carer, or a member of staff. In some cases, a child may admit to a member of staff that they have bullied another child. All reported incidents of bullying must be investigated and taken seriously by the behavioural lead. The following action should result:

- Discussion takes place in a quiet, safe place without distraction, as soon as possible. It is preferable that the teacher who receives the initial report is the one who pursues it in the first instance.

No pre-judgement should be made. It is important to listen. The teacher should be as objective as possible to ensure fairness. Questions may not be prejudged by assumptions.

- Establish the whole story, including other children who may have been involved. To ensure accuracy, brief notes should be taken at the time using the language/words used by the child verbatim.
- Talk to all pupils who are involved, including any bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying.
- Avoid allocation of blame but discuss responsibility and actions needed.
- Establish the long-term needs of all the children involved in an incident and put in place positive strategies. The behavioural lead may become involved and will support victims of bullying and those who take part in bullying; often social / emotional support is required.
- Inform parents of all children involved of actions taken and ask for support. Offer further information for dealing with bullying.
- Seek professional advice if appropriate.
- Complete an incident form and monitor the situation to ensure successful outcome for all those involved. (see Appendix 1) This will be the responsibility of the staff member reporting the incident. The behavioural lead must be given the completed copy of the report form and s/he will share it with the Head Teacher.
- The Head teacher and other appropriate members of staff will monitor the situation closely afterwards. Records of bullying are kept during the child's stay at the school.
- The school will act firmly and promptly where bullying is identified. The range of sanctions may include; discussions with parents and pupils, referral to senior staff, withdrawal of favoured activities, or exclusion.
- In extreme cases, the Head Teacher may consider exclusion from school as a sanction. The Head Teacher may contact external services.
- If the bullying includes racist abuse the Head Teacher must be informed and the incident will be recorded in the racial incident file.

- The Governors will receive regular updates from the Head Teacher through the Head Teacher's termly report to governors. The Chair of Governors will be informed of any serious incidents of bullying.

## **Involving Parents**

Parents need clear information about the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures and how incidents will be dealt with. A copy of this policy, and the Behaviour Management Policy, may be sent to those involved so that no confusion occurs as to the process.

Parents have a crucial role to play by discouraging their children from using bullying type behaviour and also by being vigilant for the signs of bullying.

Parents should inform the school whenever they have concerns about their child's well-being and should contact the Class Teacher, in the first instance, then the Behaviour Lead if their concerns are ongoing. The Behaviour Lead will inform senior staff and the Head Teacher.

Following an incident of bullying, parents and staff should agree a timetable so that adequate time is given to the school to investigate and deal with any problems effectively and so that parents know by when they can expect a response. It is so important that the facts are established first, allowing a considered judgement to be made.

Parents are entitled to have a copy of the protocol of any meeting that took place in relation to their concern and a copy of the action plan.

Parents of the alleged bully/bullies need to be involved in positive ways to help resolve the problems. Parents of both the bully and the victim, will also be reassured that if they continue to have concerns, or if the problems re-occur, they can return to the school at any time and discuss their concerns with staff.

## **Monitoring and review**

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's bullying incident file where incidents are recorded and by discussion with the Head Teacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of pupils, places or groups. They look for racist bullying or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.