

Anti-Bullying Policy

Downe House Riyadh

A safe community. A clear response. No student carries bullying alone.

Applies to All students, staff and the wider DHR community

1. Purpose and DHR commitment

Downe House Riyadh is committed to a school culture in which every student is known, respected and able to learn without fear of bullying. We do not treat anti-bullying as a stand-alone campaign or a once-a-year message. It is part of how we teach relationships, how adults respond, how students are expected to behave and how we protect the wellbeing and dignity of every member of our community.

DHR educates boys and girls from Nursery to the end of Year 4 and girls only from Year 5 onwards. This policy therefore uses the term “student” throughout and uses gender-neutral language except where a phase-specific reference requires otherwise.

At DHR, reporting bullying is not “telling tales”. It is asking for help, protecting yourself or another student, and giving adults the opportunity to act.

2. What we mean by bullying

For DHR, bullying is behaviour that is:

- repeated or forms part of a pattern;
- intentional;
- causes physical or emotional harm; and
- involves a power imbalance, whether real or perceived.

Bullying can be verbal, physical, social/relational or online (cyberbullying). Online behaviour may take place outside school; where it affects the wellbeing or safety of a DHR student, disrupts school relationships or is brought into school, DHR may respond under this policy and the Student Behaviour Policy.

3. What bullying can look like

Bullying is not limited to obvious physical aggression. It may include:

- Physical bullying: hitting, pushing, damaging or taking belongings, intimidation or forcing another student to do something.
- Verbal bullying: repeated name-calling, insults, threats, mocking, discriminatory language or humiliating comments.
- Social or relational bullying: deliberate and repeated exclusion, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships, encouraging others to isolate someone, public humiliation or targeted group behaviour.
- Online bullying: abusive or humiliating messages, posts, images or videos; impersonation; exclusion from online groups; repeated unwanted contact; sharing private material; or encouraging others to join in online harm.
- Prejudice-related bullying: behaviour connected to an actual or perceived difference, including race, nationality, religion, sex, disability, SEND, appearance, family circumstances or another personal characteristic.

A single unkind act, disagreement or friendship difficulty is not automatically bullying. It may still be unacceptable and will still be addressed. Staff will look at the behaviour, intent, impact, repetition or pattern, and any imbalance of power before deciding how the concern should be managed.

4. Our principles when responding

- Every concern will be listened to and taken seriously.
- The immediate priority is the safety and wellbeing of the student experiencing or reporting the behaviour.
- Responsibility for bullying behaviour lies with the student displaying that behaviour. We will not ask a student what they did to “cause” themselves to be bullied.
- We will investigate fairly. A report is taken seriously, but a conclusion is reached after the available information has been considered.
- We will support both the student experiencing bullying and the student displaying bullying behaviour, without confusing support with a “no blame” approach.
- Parents will be involved at an appropriate stage and communication will be clear, proportionate and respectful of the privacy of other students.
- Restorative work may be used where it is safe, appropriate and wanted; it will not be used to pressure a student into reconciliation.
- Safeguarding takes priority over the staged process whenever there is a risk of harm.

5. Prevention: what this looks like at DHR

Our strongest anti-bullying work happens before an incident occurs. Prevention is built into daily school life through:

- clear expectations within the Student Behaviour Policy and consistent adult modelling;
- Learning for Life, tutor time, assemblies and age-appropriate teaching about friendships, boundaries, respectful disagreement, online behaviour and help-seeking;
- DHR’s DNA values, particularly Compassion, Communication, Collaboration and Resilience, which give students a shared language for how we treat one another;
- visible and active staff supervision at transition times, social spaces, the cafeteria, playgrounds, changing areas, sports and other points where peer dynamics can become less visible;
- student leadership and student voice, including opportunities for students to raise concerns and contribute to a positive culture;
- staff training so that low-level patterns, relational aggression, discriminatory behaviour and online harm are recognised early;
- appropriate pastoral, counselling and safeguarding support; and
- regular review of CPOMS information so that patterns across students, friendship groups, locations or times are not missed.

6. Recognising possible signs

There is no single sign that proves a student is being bullied. Staff and parents should, however, pay attention to changes such as reluctance to attend school, anxiety around particular lessons or social times, withdrawal, unexplained injuries or damaged belongings, changes in friendship groups, repeated loss of possessions, reduced confidence, changes in eating or sleep, a sudden drop in engagement or attainment, or unusual distress linked to a device or online activity.

These signs can have many causes. They should prompt curiosity, sensitive conversation and, where appropriate, further investigation rather than assumptions.

7. Reporting a concern

Students and parents can report bullying concerns to a trusted adult, including a Class Teacher or Form Tutor, Head of Year (HoY), Phase or Key Stage Lead, a member of the Safeguarding Team or Senior Leadership Team, or via the Student Concern/Bullying Reporting Form. The reporting form can also be accessed using the QR code displayed around school and on the Parent Portal App.

All allegations and incidents will be taken seriously and recorded on CPOMS. Serious or repeated incidents will be escalated to the relevant Head of School. Where there is a safeguarding concern or risk of harm, the DSL/DDSL will be informed immediately.

Students do not need to decide whether something “counts” as bullying before they speak to an adult. Tell us what is happening; it is our responsibility to listen, investigate and decide the appropriate response.

8. Safeguarding override

At any stage, where a bullying concern raises a safeguarding concern or there is reason to believe that a student may be at risk of harm, the matter must be referred immediately to the DSL/DDSL and the school's safeguarding procedures followed. Staff must not wait for the bullying investigation or escalation process to be completed before making a safeguarding referral.

Any disclosure or indication of self-harm, suicidal thoughts, abuse, exploitation, serious threat or immediate risk must be treated as a safeguarding matter and referred immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy. Detailed guidance on these matters sits within safeguarding procedures rather than this Anti-Bullying Policy.

9. How DHR responds to a report

The member of staff receiving the concern should respond calmly, listen carefully and avoid promising an outcome before the concern has been investigated. Staff will:

- ensure that the student who has reported or experienced the behaviour feels safe, listened to and supported;
- record the concern and relevant actions on CPOMS;
- collect accounts from the students involved and relevant witnesses, normally separately and using the Student Statement: Tell, Explain, Describe (TED) form where appropriate;
- preserve relevant online evidence such as screenshots, messages, dates and times where cyberbullying is alleged;
- consider whether the behaviour meets the DHR definition of bullying or should be addressed under another part of the Student Behaviour Policy;
- agree immediate safety and support measures for the student experiencing the behaviour;
- communicate with parents in line with the seriousness and stage of the concern; and
- monitor after action has been taken so that the school knows whether the behaviour has stopped.

Information will be treated sensitively and shared only with those who need to know in order to investigate the concern, provide appropriate support and keep students safe. Staff must not promise anonymity or absolute confidentiality. Where information needs to be shared, this will be explained to the student in an age-appropriate and reassuring way wherever possible.

10. DHR bullying escalation process

The staged process below is designed to create consistency, clear parent communication and an escalating response where behaviour continues. It is not a barrier to professional judgement: serious incidents may move immediately to a later stage, and safeguarding concerns override the process entirely.

Stage	Lead	DHR response
Stage 1 Statements, parent contact and monitoring	Secondary: HoY Primary: Class Teacher / Phase Lead	Collect statements and relevant evidence; record on CPOMS; contact the parents of the student displaying the behaviour; explain the concern and expected improvement; put monitoring in place and explain the next step if the behaviour continues.
Stage 2 Formal parent meeting	Secondary: HoY + Form Tutor Primary: Phase Lead + Class Teacher	Update evidence and CPOMS; hold a formal meeting with the student and parent(s); review previous intervention; agree clear expectations and support. Counselling or restorative support may be offered where appropriate and safe. Continue monitoring and make the next escalation point clear.
Stage 3 Senior leadership meeting	Secondary: Head of Secondary + KSL + Wellbeing Lead Primary: Head of Primary + relevant Phase Lead + Wellbeing Lead	Review the pattern, evidence and previous interventions with the student and parent(s). In Secondary, the student completes the Anti-Bullying Behaviour Agreement. In Primary, an age-appropriate written behaviour/support plan may be used. Set a review date and monitoring period.
Stage 4 Further incident following formal agreement	Relevant Head of School / SLT	Escalate in accordance with the Student Behaviour Policy. Further disciplinary action may follow. Parents are contacted and the safety/support arrangements for the student experiencing the behaviour are reviewed.

11. Supporting the student experiencing bullying

Support will be individual and proportionate. It may include a named trusted adult, regular check-ins, adjustments to transitions or social times, counselling, support with online safety, friendship or peer support, and communication with home. The aim is to restore safety, confidence and full participation in school life.

Staff may identify additional support from which the student could benefit, while making clear that responsibility for bullying behaviour lies with the person displaying that behaviour. Support must never imply that the targeted student caused the bullying or is responsible for preventing another student's behaviour.

The school will continue to monitor the situation after the immediate incident has been addressed. A case is not considered resolved simply because a sanction has been issued.

12. Responding to the student displaying bullying behaviour

DHR's response is both corrective and educational. The student will be expected to understand the impact of the behaviour, stop it, repair harm where appropriate and demonstrate sustained change. Depending on age, seriousness, frequency and previous intervention, actions may include:

- a clear verbal correction and re-teaching of expectations;

- parent contact and formal meetings;
- pastoral or counselling support to address underlying needs without excusing the behaviour;
- restorative work where safe and appropriate;
- loss of privileges or other consequences under the Student Behaviour Policy;
- an Anti-Bullying Behaviour Agreement at Stage 3 in Secondary;
- suspension or other serious disciplinary action for significant or persistent behaviour, in line with the Student Behaviour Policy.

The school will not rely on forced apologies as evidence that a matter is resolved. What matters is that the behaviour stops, the student understands the impact, agreed actions are followed and safety is restored.

13. The Anti-Bullying Behaviour Agreement

The DHR Anti-Bullying Behaviour Agreement is used at Stage 3 in Secondary following continued bullying behaviour and previous intervention. It records the pattern of concern, what must change, the student's commitments, support and actions, monitoring arrangements and a review date. The completed agreement is uploaded to CPOMS.

The agreement makes expectations explicit: the student commits to stop the behaviour, treat others respectfully in person and online, avoid encouraging others to cause harm or exclusion, seek adult support when conflict arises, and follow the support and expectations agreed in the meeting.

14. Cyberbullying and online behaviour

Cyberbullying can amplify harm because content can be shared quickly, reach a large audience, follow a student beyond the school day and remain accessible. Students may also become involved by forwarding, liking, reposting, commenting on or sharing humiliating content. Participation in this way can contribute to the bullying even where the student did not create the original material.

Students should:

- not reply or retaliate in anger;
- save evidence, including screenshots, messages, dates and times;
- block or report accounts where appropriate;
- not forward, repost or share harmful material;
- tell a trusted adult or member of staff promptly; and
- remember that online conduct outside school may still require school action where it affects a DHR student or the school community.

Where an online incident may involve a criminal offence, safeguarding risk or serious threat, the school will follow safeguarding procedures and may advise or involve the relevant external authorities as appropriate.

15. The role of students: from bystander to upstander

A strong community depends on students not normalising unkindness or exclusion. Students are expected to avoid joining in, laughing at, forwarding or amplifying harmful behaviour. Where it is safe to do so, they should support the student affected and report the concern to a trusted adult. Students should not put themselves at risk or attempt to investigate the matter themselves.

16. The role of parents

Parents are important partners in resolving bullying concerns. We ask parents to report concerns promptly, share relevant evidence, avoid direct confrontation with another student or family, and allow the school to

investigate fairly. The school will communicate what it can about actions relating to a parent's own child, but it cannot disclose confidential information or disciplinary details relating to another student.

Where a parent remains concerned that bullying is continuing, they should contact the relevant Class Teacher/Form Tutor, HoY/Phase or Key Stage Lead, and then the relevant Head of School so that monitoring and escalation can be reviewed.

17. Recording, monitoring and review

Bullying concerns, evidence, actions, parent communication and review points are recorded on CPOMS in accordance with school procedures. Relevant pastoral and safeguarding leaders will review patterns and repeated concerns so that the school can identify where additional supervision, curriculum work, group intervention or wider action is needed.

This policy will be reviewed annually, and sooner if school practice, safeguarding requirements or related DHR policies change. The effectiveness of the policy will be considered through incident patterns, student voice, parent feedback, pastoral and safeguarding review, and evidence that repeated behaviour is being reduced and resolved.

18. Quick guide for students

If something is happening to you or someone else: TELL. You do not need to have all the evidence, and you do not need to decide whether it is bullying before you speak.

- Tell a trusted adult in school or use the Student Concern/Bullying Reporting Form.
- Explain what has happened, who was involved, when and where it happened, and whether it has happened before.
- Describe the impact on you or the other student.
- For online concerns, save evidence and do not forward harmful content.
- Keep telling us if the behaviour continues. Reporting again is important because it tells us that the first action has not yet been enough.

Appendix A: Stage 3 Anti-Bullying Behaviour Agreement – required content

The separate DHR Anti-Bullying Behaviour Agreement should be used as the working form. It contains:

- student and meeting details;
- behaviour of concern and previous intervention;
- the behaviour that must stop and the behaviour expected from now on;
- student commitments;
- support and actions agreed;
- monitoring and review arrangements;
- student declaration and signatures/acknowledgements; and
- record-keeping instruction for upload to CPOMS.

Policy history

Previous review	June 2025
Current review	September 2026
Next review	September 2027
Policy owner	Principal

