



## LEAD-FORTE GATE COLLEGE Anti-Bullying Policy

2022-2023 Academic year

### **Our Belief Statement**

Lead-Forte gate Schools (LFGS) community is committed to the creation of a safe and caring environment for all students, which promotes love and respect for all. We are also committed to the elimination of bullying through the positive involvement and ongoing education of students, parents and staff.

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

### **Bullying is an anti-social behavior and affects everyone; it is unacceptable!**

It is the belief of the LFGS community that students are not inherently bullies but rather that bullying is a learned behavior and the behaviors of the bully, the bullied, and the bystanders can be changed.

If bullying does occur, pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This policy therefore outlines what Lead-Forte Gate Schools will do to prevent bullying, and the disciplinary processes that will be used to address any incident of bullying, whilst still leaving the dignity of all students intact.

### **Our definition of bullying**

Bullying can be defined as a behavior that is intended to cause, or should be known to cause people to feel uncomfortable or threatened. Bullying is an action that hurts, frightens, upsets, or demeans someone else. It can be committed by a group or a single individual and may involve repeated and systematic harassment and attacks or a single incident of inappropriate conduct designed to harass or intimidate a victim. Bullying can take many forms, none of which are acceptable.

Bullying may be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender or because a child is adopted or has special needs. It might be motivated by actual differences between pupils, or perceived differences.

### **What bullying is not:**

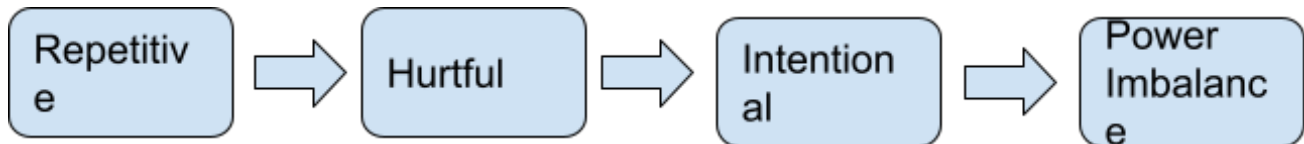
It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of misunderstanding or disagreement between two people or a group of friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick joke is played on someone.



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Bullying is essentially:

*“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”*



**The main types of bullying can include:**

1. VERBAL – Name-calling/putdowns, Insults, Gossip/rumors, Racist comments, Sexist comments, Teasing/taunting, Threatening/extortion, etc.
2. PHYSICAL – Hitting Kicking Spitting Pushing Inappropriate gestures/touching Tripping, etc.
3. RELATIONAL – Manipulating friendships, Exclusion, Intimidation, Written notes, Harassment, etc.
4. CYBER BULLYING – Email, Social networking, Instant messaging, Text messaging, Cell phone communication, Internet blogs, Stealing Chat rooms, etc.

**Some of the signs and symptoms that bullying might be occurring to a student.**

The student:

1. Is frightened when walking to or from school
2. Doesn't want to go on the school bus (begs to be driven to school)
3. Changes to his/her usual routine
4. Is unwilling to go to school
5. Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
6. Starts stuttering/stammering
7. Attempts or threatens to run away or harm himself or herself
8. Cries a lot
9. Has nightmares
10. Feels ill in the morning
11. School work begins to suffer
12. Arrives from school with damaged clothes or books
13. Keeps losing his/her possession
14. Asks for money or steals money to pay someone
15. Comes home hungry after lunch is stolen
16. Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
17. Is bullying other children or siblings
18. Stops eating
19. Is frightened to say what is wrong
20. Gives improbable excuses for any of the above



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### More serious signs may include:

- Self harm:- attempt or threaten to commit suicide

It is important to note that the above signs could be indicating that there are more serious safeguarding concerns, which is why it is so important that concerns are reported and discussed as appropriate.

**Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to Safeguarding Officers.**

### Signs that a child may be bullying:

Given the short and long term consequences not only for victims but for the bullies as well, it is important to keep an eye out for signs that a child may be bullying others; a child who bullies may exhibit some of the following behaviours:

- Frequent name – calling
- Regular bragging
- A need to always get their own way
- Spending a lot of time with younger or less powerful children
- A lack of empathy for others
- A defiant or hostile attitude (easily takes offence)
- Has inexplicable amounts of extra money/food/new products.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the appropriate person.

### Responsibilities of Members of Lead-Forte gate Schools Community

We consider that everyone within our school community has a part to play. In order to tackle the issue of bullying we recognise that we need a range of strategies to deal with it. A whole school approach is needed to educate students and staff to ensure that it is not tolerated, and that it is dealt with sensitively and consistently.

Through a high profile **Anti-Bullying Week** to coincide with national events, assemblies, tutor times, lessons and through regular discussions at Parent and Student Forums we will do all we reasonably can to keep the commitment to reducing instances of bullying.

We will also seek to prevent bullying by requiring students to read our **LFGS code of conduct**, which sets out how everyone in the school community is expected to behave; within the school premises, in the hostel and outside the school premises. All members of staff are also expected to read the staff code of conduct, alongside the general code of conduct.



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Some of our Anti-Bullying strategies include:

- Regular promotion of anti-bullying in assemblies
- Use of CCTV within the school grounds to help with the prevention of bullying
- A duty rota for staff so they patrol key areas before school, during break, lunchtime, after school, and in the hostel
- Termly questionnaires to obtain students views on how safe they feel in school
- Self-esteem and confidence building workshops for students, including Life-skills training
- Anti-bullying training for Pastoral staff
- [Helpline@lead-fortegatecollege.com](mailto:Helpline@lead-fortegatecollege.com), which is a special email address to report any incidents of bullying.
- One to one counselling from a trained safeguarding team member available every lunchtime
- Strong teacher-student relationships so students feel comfortable in reporting any issues
- Information leaflet for students and parents about E-safety

### Responsibilities of Students

1. It is important not to be a by-stander. All students have the responsibility to **report** any bullying incident to a trusted member of staff as soon as it happens.
2. Students who wish to report anonymously can do so by sending an email to [helpline@lead-fortegatecollege.com](mailto:helpline@lead-fortegatecollege.com) or via the following link: [www.lead-fortegatecollege.com/helpline](http://www.lead-fortegatecollege.com/helpline)
3. All students must consider the wishes and feelings of other members of the school community in regard to their own behaviour, with specific awareness of how bullying may adversely affect the emotional wellbeing of others.
4. Students will work proactively to promote an anti-bullying culture via contributions to the Student Leadership Team, Student Representative council (SRC) and hostel representatives.
5. Students must know to whom they should go if they are being bullied or if they are concerned about another person. These individuals include;
  - A trusted member of staff
  - Your class teacher/year tutor
  - The hostel coordinator
  - A member of the management staff
  - The Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL) or assistant Designated safeguarding Lead
  - The Principal / Headteacher

### Responsibilities of Staff (including adult volunteers)

Staff and Adult Volunteers shall:

1. Act as role models, provide a safe and secure environment for all students free from bullying.



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2. Be alert for students who appear upset or hurt. Take action immediately and look out for students who are often isolated or at the receiving end of recurrent jokes by their peer groups or seniors.
3. Watch out for any signs of bruising or other marks on students which are not easily accounted for.
4. Act upon, respond, attend to and follow up on any incidents of bullying that are reported to them or come to their attention through other indirect means.

### Responsibilities of By-Standers

#### Do the Right Thing

1. Don't be a silent witness. You would want someone to have your back if you were the one getting bullied.
2. Don't watch and laugh. That's even worse than doing nothing.
3. If it's too hard to speak out, send an anonymous note to the **helpline** platform
4. Be assertive, not aggressive. Fighting doesn't help anyone.
5. Invite the person being targeted to leave the situation with you
6. Encourage the target to get help from someone, like a counselor, teacher, or other adult who can help.

### Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians

If a parent or guardian has any concerns about their child, they should speak to the class teacher immediately. If a parent thinks bullying is the issue, the matter will be referred to the Principal or Headteacher. The Principal/Headteacher is always informed of any bullying concerns at Lead-Forte Gate Schools, and monitors the situation carefully. The following points should be noted:

1. If a parent feels unable to talk to the class teacher, they can make an appointment to speak directly with the Principal/Headteacher.
2. The school will work with both the student and the parents to ensure that any bullying is stopped and that support is given where needed.
3. Parents should not confront the bully or their parents. This can complicate the situation and distress the pupil.
4. The school will deal directly with all students involved and their parents directly. Parents will be kept informed of any actions the school is taking.
5. If parents feel that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately they should follow the schools complaints policy.



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### Reporting

Whether you are the bullied or the bystander, you must notify a trusted member of staff of bullying situations as soon as possible. If you are unsure of who to talk to, contact one of the adults listed below. You are encouraged to talk to the primary contact person first as they are closest to the situation and can have the most immediate effect. If the primary contact person is not available, or if you are unsatisfied with the outcome of the incident, you should contact one of the people in the secondary contact list.

LOCATION	PRIMARY CONTACT	SECONDARY CONTACT
On the bus	Bus driver/Any other staff on the bus	Fellow students/Anti-bullying ambassador School counselor Parents/Guardians Designated safeguarding lead Principals/Head-teacher and other management staff
In the Hallway	Hallway /Duty supervisor	
In the classroom	Classroom teacher/Subject Teacher	
School grounds	Outside duty supervisor	
School activities, Trips, Sports	Activity Supervisor/ Staff on duty	
Cyberbullying	School counselor/ Designated safeguarding lead	
After school/ Hostel	Parent/Houseparent/school counselor	

### Responding to Bullying

The following steps will be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

1. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
2. LFGC will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
3. The Principal/Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
4. The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.



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5. LFGC will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate, and will ensure parents/guardians are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
6. Sanctions (as identified within the LFGC behaviour policy and Code of conduct) and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
7. If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police in the case of a criminal offence being committed, or the Lagos state ministry of education, where child protection issues may occur.
8. Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), LFGS will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
9. A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

### **Aftercare for the victim**

We understand that this may be a distressing time for the person involved, or others who may have witnessed a bullying incident. We are therefore committed to ensuring that the victim feels safe in the school environment, alongside any other student who may have reported the issue. We will therefore take the following steps:

1. Once the facts have been established and the bully has been punished for their actions, the victim and bully meet with the teacher or safeguarding officer who is dealing with the incident and an apology is sought from the bully together with a promise and written undertaking not to repeat the behaviour.
2. The victim's parents are contacted and asked to come into school to talk about the incident and the follow up by school.
3. The victim or whistleblower is reassured that they have done the right thing by speaking up and reporting the incident. They are also reassured that the bully is being closely monitored
4. The victim is referred to the school counselor for support in cases where the incident may have caused some emotional distress to them.
5. The relationship between the victim and the bully is closely monitored to ensure that the behavior is not repeated
6. The victim is monitored to ensure that they do not become that target of other bullying behavior from other students.



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7. If the problem is causing major trauma or distress to the victim, LFGC will seek help from external agencies( Eg Lagos state ministry of education, educational psychologist, child services etc.)
8. The school counseling/safeguarding team will follow up with 1-1 sessions as appropriate with the victim to talk about the strategies to take if bullying occurs again, how to avoid potential bullying situations, and how to be more assertive and confident.

### **Appendix**

This policy takes due regard of the following resources:

Lagos State Safeguarding and Child protection Policy, 2016

Department for Education: Keeping children safe in education

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE 2014 “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools.” (Reference: DFE-00094-2014)

Equality Act 2010

Anti-Bullying Alliance, UK





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