

Anti-Bullying policy

Approved by: Governors

Approved on: September 2019

STA Contact: Headteacher

Revision due: September 2021

1. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the wilful desire to hurt, threaten, frighten or humiliate a student. This involves the illegitimate use of power to physically or verbally threaten or abuse another student or use actual violence. Bullying is usually repetitive and persistent and can take place face to face, through third parties or via other means such as text messages and e-mails (cyber bullying). We will respond to any incidents of bullying which are reported to us by students on their way to and from school.

2. Statutory duties of school

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools also have a duty to 'safeguard' and promote the welfare of pupils (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004). Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by pupils ('Safe to Learn' DCSF 2007), (Coalition Government documents and law-equality Act 2010, Education Act 2011) and (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, July 2017)

3. What does bullying look like, feel like, sound like?

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it
- Happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident
- Involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

It can be:

- Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
- Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive/personal remarks
- Relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Cyber, e.g. e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM)
- Indirect, e.g. graffiti, defacing of property, class, disability, homophobic, racist or sexist material.
- Baiting

4. Who bullies?

Anyone has the capacity to bully. There are no completely reliable predisposition diagnoses. However, those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying in an attempt to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not. This puts equal opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all anti-bullying work in schools.

5. Who is bullied?

Anyone can be bullied – young person, parent/carer/guardian, staff member or volunteer. People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour.

Frequently the perceived difference comes from assigning an individual to a group. Such bullying would then be designated as class, disability, homophobic, racist, religious or sexist. People can be assigned or be a member of more than one group.

6. Raising Awareness

Bullying will be addressed as part of the Citizenship/Health Education programme. Specific mention will be made of racist and homophobic bullying this will be reinforced through assemblies. An annual survey of all students takes place each summer term to monitor the extent of the problem and identify trends. This is carried out by the MLB team who report their findings to the governing body. The school runs a number of Social Skills Groups for selected students and the issue of bullying will be addressed as part of these programmes. Bullying can be the result of prejudice – racial, religious, homophobia and against students with special needs. Staff should always be prepared to challenge such

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prejudices both overtly and as part of their day to day teaching. Peer support will also be set up to help a student when it is considered appropriate. A brief summary of the school's anti bullying policy is included in the information booklet for new parents.

7. Communication to Staff

All students are encouraged to come forward if they are suffering from bullying. A number of the low ability sets have LSAs attached to them who will monitor the behaviour of the group and any incidents of bullying.

8. Student Voice

The Make Learning Better Team contributes to the review of the Equal Opportunities Policy and completes the annual Anti-Bullying Survey of all students in the school.

9. Managing Bullying Incidents

Bullying can be of a low level, but persistent. All members of staff should be sensitive to the signs that a student is being bullied. These could include damage to property, a student who is isolated in school, a fall in educational attainment, frequent absences, etc. If a member of staff witnesses any acts of bullying, or suspects that a student they teach is a victim of bullying, the matter should not be ignored or treated lightly but either investigated or reported to the Head of Year for investigation. All suspected incidents of bullying should be recorded on a sims for relevant staff to address. A separate record of homophobic and racist incidents is kept on a log and incidents of this nature are reported to the local authority each term. The issue will be discussed as part of the ECT programme and in Pastoral Team Meetings at least once a year.

Support staff should report their concerns to an appropriate member of the staff, depending on the seriousness of their concerns. This could be to the appropriate form tutor or Head of Year. Teaching staff should follow up the incident using the procedures outlined for dealing with disciplinary matters in the school conduct and consequences policy. It may be useful for a victim to write down what they have experienced. The Heads of Year will monitor any incidents that occur and follow these up as appropriate. The Senior Assistant Head – Culture and Character will be included on the circulation list for any reports of bullying so that the rates of incidents can be monitored and ensure incidents are followed up appropriately.

When a member of staff deals with an incident of bullying, they should record the incident on the standard contact form. If they feel that it is of a more serious or persistent nature, they should ensure that the appropriate Head of Year is involved. In the most serious cases, the Heads of Year will ensure the Senior Assistant Head – Culture and Character is requested to become involved. This may include the use of the schools Learning Mentor to facilitate a course of restorative justice between the students involved.

When a member of staff responds to any incident of bullying the intended outcomes should be: -

- Keeping the person being bullied safe
- Reassuring the person being bullied that it is not their fault and they do not deserve this
- Challenging the behaviour of the perpetrator and making them aware of the impact of their behaviour as well as trying to establish why they bully
- Appropriate use of consequences in line with the school's conduct and consequences policy
- Effective communication with parents
- Regular monitoring of victim and perpetrator

The Head of Year should ensure that the parents of the perpetrator are informed of what has happened

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Group or 1 to 1 work to explain the negative effects of bullying to the perpetrators and their cohort
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises
- Confiscation of mobile phones
- Suspension
- Internal suspension (12 to 5 provision)

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- Expulsion

If any incident is serious enough to warrant a suspension from school, the head teacher will make the final decision.

10. Parents

Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure.

Where a pupil is involved in bullying others outside school, i.e. in the street or through the use of internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing their child's behaviour, for example, restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone. In more extreme cases of Cyber Bullying the school will recommend the involvement of the Police.

Referral of the family to external support agencies will be made where appropriate.

11. Seeking Support

When it is appropriate, Heads of Year will make use of outside agencies that have expertise in anti-bullying, including the police, the Find it Out Centre and the school nurse. In some cases, it may be appropriate to initiate and to coordinate multi agency support. Advice and contact information can be found at the following site and this can be given to parents: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/school-attendance-and-behaviour/bullying/>

12. Staff

The bullying of staff by students, other members of staff or by parents will not be tolerated. If a member of staff considers they are a victim of such bullying they should report it immediately to their line manager or the head teacher, who would take appropriate action.

13. Consultation and Review

This policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2021 in consultation with the staff, students and governors.