



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

At Meadows School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our young people so they can live and learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

This policy has been written with reference to the Dfe guidance on Preventing and tackling bullying and should be read in conjunction with the behaviour policy.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. (Please see Cyberbullying policy)

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Cyber - bullying via technology
- Sexual/sexist - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, ostracising children

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

- Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Young people who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
- We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All Directors, Managers, residential support workers, teachers, young people and social workers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All young people should know they can report any instances of bullying to their Designated Teacher or the pastoral co-ordinator if they feel they are being bullied.
- As a company we take bullying seriously. Young people should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a young person:

- Is frightened at any time
 - Does not want to take part in activities with others
 - Changes their usual routine
 - Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
 - Starts stammering
 - Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
 - Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
 - Feels ill in the morning
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- begins to do poorly in school work

- has clothes torn or property damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or young people
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to staff and SENCO
- SENCO will investigate all cases of suspected bullying.
- If a SENCO concludes that bullying has occurred then this will be reported to The Manager, and they will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, other authorities will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- Relevant support will be given to any student who is being bullied to ensure this stops immediately. Pupils will be offered therapeutic support.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour through therapeutic support and other restorative matters.

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, some form of sanction or exclusion from the other young person will be considered
- If possible, the young people will be reconciled
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be continuously monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use various methods for helping young people to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to them
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- lessons regarding internet safety

Support Agencies

Anti-bullying Alliance - the alliance brings together over 60 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying. Their website has a parent section with links to recommended organisations who can help with bullying issues

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Kidscape

www.kidscape.org.uk

02077303300

Childline - advice and stories from children who have survived bullying
08000 1111

Bullying on line
www.bullying.co.uk

Parentline Plus - advice and links for parents www.parentlineplus.org.uk
08088002222

Parents Against Bullying
01928 576152

Useful sources of information

Stonewall - the LGBT equality organization founded in 1989. Founding members include Sir Ian McKellen.
www.stonewall.org.uk.

Cyberbullying.org - one of the first websites set up in this area, for young people, providing advice around preventing and taking action against cyberbullying. A Canadian based site www.cyberbullying.org

Chatdanger - a website that informs about the potential dangers online (including bullying), and advice on how to stay safe while chatting www.chatdanger.com

Think U Know - the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), has produced a set of resources around internet safety for secondary schools www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Know IT All for Parents - a range of resources for primary and secondary schools by Childnet International. Has a sample family agreement www.childnet-int.org/kia/parents

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY SUPPLEMENT CYBER-BULLYING

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. Although here may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common.

1. Text messages —that are threatening or cause discomfort - also included here is "bluejacking" (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using "Bluetooth" wireless technology)
2. Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. Mobile phone calls — silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
4. Emails — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.
5. Chatroom bullying — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chatroom.
6. Instant messaging (IM) — unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Yahoo Chat - although there are others.
7. Bullying via websites — use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and online personal "own web space" sites such as Bebo (which works by signing on in school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and Myspace - although there are others.

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults.

Our pupils are taught how to:

- Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied.
- Report any problems with cyberbullying.
- If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.

We Have:

An in school/home agreement that includes clear messages regarding e-communications

1. Support for carers and pupils if cyberbullying occurs by: assessing the harm caused, identifying those involved, taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence.

At our school, we take this bullying as seriously as other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. We report and record all incidences and inform the necessary agencies.

Also See appendix (i)

Appendix (i)

"What to do if being attacked from Cyberspace?"

A guide for Young people

If you're being bullied by phone or the Internet

- Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or carer, or call an advice line.
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible.
- Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don't give out your personal details online - if you're in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to your carer or teacher as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.
- There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying.

Text/video messaging

You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number. To find out how to do this, visit www.wiredsafety.org.

- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider.
- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.
- Don't delete messages from cyberbullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.
- Text harassment is a crime. If the calls are simply annoying, tell a teacher, or carer. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

Phone calls

- If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off.
- Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you.
- Always tell someone else: a teacher, key worker, or carer. Get them to support you and monitor what's going on.
- Don't give out personal details such as your phone number to just anyone. And never leave your phone lying around. When you answer your phone, just say 'hello', not your name. If they ask you to confirm your phone number, ask what number they want and then tell them if they've got the right number or not.
- Use your voicemail to vet your calls. A lot of mobiles display the caller's number. See if you recognise it. If you don't, let it divert to voicemail instead of answering it. And don't leave your name on your voicemail greeting. You could get an adult to record your greeting. Their voice might stop the caller ringing again. Almost all calls nowadays can be traced.
- If the problem continues, think about changing your phone number.
- If you receive calls that scare or trouble you, make a note of the times and dates and report them to the police. If your mobile can record calls, take the recording too.

Emails

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails ('flames') – the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction.
- Keep the emails as evidence. And tell an adult about them.
- Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'. Replying simply confirms your email address as a real one.

Web bullying

- If the bullying is on a website, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying was face-to-face - even if you don't actually know the bully's identity.
- Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature. Your carer or teacher will help you do this.

Chat rooms and instant messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. And don't give out photos of yourself.
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you don't know. Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.
- Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying.
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.

Three steps to stay out of harm's way

1. Respect other people - online and off.
2. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm - and ignore them.
3. 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied? You're responsible for your own behaviour - make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES IN SCHOOL FOR REPORTING BULLYING

PATHWAYS OF HELP

Child is bullied

Step 1

Student personally approaches:

- Class Teacher
- Support Staff

Step 2

Student meets with designated class teacher
Discussion on the facts
Suggested ways forward
Short review time

If continues

Step 3

Designated adult
Discussion/Interview with all parties
Will use: suggested and agreed actions/strategies
Parents/carers informed
Short term review

Step 4

Senior member of staff

Directs to a variety of help strategies delivered by 'trained' personnel eg.

- Restorative justice
- Mediation/counselling
- Anger management training & self help
- Therapists/care staff
- Circle of friends

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