

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The school supports a zero tolerance towards bullying. In developing this policy, the school has made reference to the Department for Education's advice 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017), 'Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies' (2014) and advice taken from the most recent version of the Independent Schools Inspectorate Regulations. This document is available in written format upon request and a copy can also be located on the school's website.

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1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The school community ethos is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. The school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every pupil can develop his/her full potential. The school expects its pupils to treat members of staff and fellow pupils with courtesy and co-operation so that everyone can learn in a relaxed yet orderly atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

The school prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role to play in supporting the school to maintain high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they cooperate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of the school's standard terms and conditions.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. The school treats all pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.

2 DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is defined as the intentional hurting of another pupil or group, physically or emotionally, over a period of time. This can often be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on the grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences. It may also occur through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email).

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are cultural, religious, racial, sexist or homophobic or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. It conflicts sharply with the school's social and moral principles.

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3 TYPES OF BULLYING

Verbal

This can include name-calling, teasing, use of sarcasm and spreading rumours.

Physical

This can include pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, fighting and any violence.

Relational

This can include emotional bullying such as being unfriendly, deliberately excluding a child from a friendship group, tormenting, threatening, making racial taunts and gestures.

Cyber-bullying

This is defined as: 'the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, mobile phone, pager, text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal websites and defamatory online personal polling websites, to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.' Cyber-bullying can involve social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Spotify, Music.ly, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, emails and mobile phones, SMS messages and cameras.

4 CYBER-BULLYING – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

With increasing availability to children of electronic devices that give unrestricted access to the Internet, the school supports pupils by making them aware of the potential dangers that may occur through these media. The preventative measures employed by the school include:

- Educating all pupils to adhere to the charter for the safe use of the Internet. Certain sites are blocked by the school's filtering system and the CTS Department monitors pupils' use.
- Use of sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the Internet.
- All pupils are issued with their own personal school email address from class 9 upwards. Access to sites such as 'Hotmail' and 'Facebook' are not allowed.
- The school refers to DfE guidance on cyber-bullying and promotes the following resources to pupils:
 - www.digizen.org/cyberbullying
 - www.thinkuknow.co.uk
 - Childline run by the NSPCC.
 - Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOPs) www.ceop.police.uk
- For all children, aged 5 and upwards, the school holds an annual Internet safety week as well as reinforcement during CTS and PSHEE lessons.
- Children are made aware of SMART rules (SMART posters placed around the school):
 - Safe on the Internet.
 - Meet – don't meet with strangers.
 - Accepting – opening emails from people they don't know.
 - Reliable – how to recognise a reliable source of information.
 - Tell – a teacher, parent or other person they trust if they encounter something that worries them.
- The CTS room has a permanent display of Internet safety guidelines and the teacher draws children's attention to this regularly.
- Children have access to laptops but children are supervised by a teacher at all times when using them or any other IT equipment.

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- The school also offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in PSHEE and CTS lessons, which covers how to stay safe online, blocking and removing contacts from 'buddy' lists and guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- An annual internet safety presentation for parents and staff.
- Pupils' mobile phones or other electronic devices are not permitted in school.
- Children are taught about what is appropriate and inappropriate use of the Internet and are taught about how to identify potential risks that could be posed by adults or other children, who use the Internet to bully, groom or seek to harm or radicalise others.

5 SIGNS OF BULLYING

The school is alert to any possible signs of bullying by monitoring any changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied including:

- Unwillingness to attend school.
- Displays of excessive anxiety.
- Becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoiled by others.
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged.
- Changes to established habits (for example, giving up music lessons, changes to accent or vocabulary).
- Diminished levels of self-confidence.
- Frequent complaints of illnesses such as stomach pains and headaches.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class.
- Choosing the company of adults.
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- Difficulty in sleeping.
- Experiencing nightmares.
- A desire to move places in class.
- Talking of suicide or running away.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

6 THE IMPACT OF BULLYING

Bullying can affect everyone, including those who are bullied, those who bully others and those who witness bullying. Bullying is linked to many negative outcomes including mental health issues, substance abuse, long-term psychological damage and suicide.

Children who are bullied can experience negative physical, school and mental health issues, experience anxiety, depression and changes to sleep patterns and loss of activities they used to enjoy, decreased academic achievement and problems of attendance and behaviour at school. These issues may persist into adulthood. Children who bully others can also engage in other risky and violent behaviours and these can persist into adulthood. Bystanders who witness bullying can also experience problems, such as mental health issues, depression, problems with attendance at school and anxiety.

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7 PREVENTATIVE MEASURES – ANTI-BULLYING

The school takes the following preventative measures:

- The school uses appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying.
- The PSHEE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other.
- Other lessons, such as English, religious education and teambuilding highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- British Values are referenced on all lesson plans and included as fundamental in all teaching and learning.
- Our BMPS STAR charter promotes integrity and citizenship qualities essential to countering bullying within the school.
- Children are taught that they can raise any bullying concerns that occur either inside or outside school or concerns about cyber-bullying, to any member of staff.
- There is a strong and experienced pastoral team of senior managers who support the Head and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- The pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- In the Preparatory Department, there is advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites connecting to external specialists such as Childline.
- All pupils have access to a phone helpline, enabling them to call for private support.
- The school reserves the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.
- The school welcomes feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.
- A copy of this policy is available on the school's website as means to communicate to parents, the school's approach to anti-bullying. By understanding the preventative measures employed in the school, parents are encouraged to discuss and reinforce the principles of anti-bullying with their child and what to do if the child may be a bystander to bullying activities.

8 STAFF TRAINING

As part of our induction training, new staff are asked to familiarise themselves with our Anti-Bullying Policy and are asked to remain vigilant at all times in places such as toilets, playground, changing areas, mini-buses and other out-of-sight areas.

Staff are provided with training on recognising possible signs of bullying, their responsibilities and the procedures to follow where they identify that bullying may be occurring or where bullying is reported to them.

During visits to the school, Governors are encouraged to discuss/raise awareness with staff, pupils and parents any aspect of anti-bullying.

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9 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

All pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place either inside or outside school and this includes cyber-bullying.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are followed:

- The member of staff to whom the bullying was reported or who first discovers the situation will inform a member of the pastoral team as soon as possible.
- All reported bullying incidents are recorded in the school's Anti-Bullying File. The school will monitor reported incidents to identify any patterns of bullying that may be emerging.
- The 'victim' will be interviewed on his/her own, separately from the perpetrator and asked to write an account of events. The child will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
- The alleged 'bully', together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events. They will be advised about why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour and appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be applied, according to the seriousness of the incident.
- The incident report should be recorded in the Anti-Bullying File.
- All form tutors will be informed. In the case of notable incidents, the Head will be informed.
- The parents/guardians of all parties will be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought for school actions taken to remedy the situation.
- The school recognises that suitable support is needed both for pupils who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- *Please refer to the separate document: Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy.*
- The school will record bullying events on the Anti-Bullying Log. The Anti-Bullying Log will be monitored and reviewed regularly to enable patterns to be identified and to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's approach.
- A serious bullying incident will be treated as a safeguarding concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.
- In serious cases and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the social services. However, it is the school's policy to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.
- Persistent bullying may ultimately involve exclusion or expulsion.

The Anti-Bullying Policy has been reviewed on 31 August 2018 and will be reviewed on or before 31 August 2019.