

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' (October 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 child can develop his/her full potential. The school expects its children to treat members of staff and fellow children with courtesy and co-operation so that everyone can learn in a relaxed yet orderly atmosphere. All children 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 children 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 child 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 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.

4 SIGNS OF BULLYING

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

- Unwillingness to attend to school.
- Displays of excessive anxiety.
- Becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged.
- Changes to established habits.
- Diminished levels of self confidence.
- Frequent complaints of illnesses such as stomach pains and headaches.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance.
- Choosing the company of adults.
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- Difficulty in sleeping.
- Experiencing nightmares.

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.

5 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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6 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 children 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 and activities highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by showing and explaining to children how to work and play alongside each other respectfully and to support them in developing positive social skills.
- There is a strong and experienced team of staff who support Matron and are trained in handling any incidents.
- Staff are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- 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.

7 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 and the older children and parents any aspect of anti-bullying.

8 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

All children are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place or become upset by the actions of other children.

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 control the situation and reassure and support the children involved.
- Matron or the deputies will be informed.
- The children involved will be offered support to understand acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. All room leaders will be informed. In the case of notable incidents, the Head will be informed.
- For matters deemed more serious, 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.

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- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place to enable patterns to be identified and to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's approach.
- Persistent bullying may ultimately involve exclusion or expulsion.

The Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures have been reviewed on 31 August 2018. They will be reviewed, on or before 31 August 2019.