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# Policy on the Prevention of Bullying

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## 1. Objectives of this Policy

- That all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- That all governors and teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- That all pupils and parents will know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- That pupils and parents will be assured that as a school we take bullying seriously and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- That everyone understands that bullying will not be tolerated at Manor House School.

## 2. Defining bullying

Bullying is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as: *“Using strength or power to hurt or coerce others by intimidation”*. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber** All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology (e.g. camera & video facilities)

Members of staff and other employees may become victims of bullying by the actions of other members of staff, parents or pupils.

## 3. Recognising bullying

Bullies tend to be assertive and aggressive. However, this is not always the case as bullying can also happen in subtle, insidious ways. Bullies also tend to be lacking in empathy or guilt. It is important to note that bullies may themselves be victims, or feel socially inadequate in other ways.

It is sometimes difficult to spot victims of bullying, as they can be skilled at putting a brave face on their suffering. However, some common signs may be:

- Poor work
- Feigned illness
- Attention-seeking behaviour towards adults
- Bed-wetting
- An unwillingness to socialise during free time



#### **4. Raising awareness of staff**

All staff receive regular updates and training on bullying and child protection.

#### **5. Raising awareness of pupils**

The School works to minimise the incidence of bullying by raising awareness amongst the children in assemblies through discussion, video, role play, prayers etc. and through the curriculum e.g. in PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education), English and other lessons, and through discussion in form groups.

Parents also have a role to play and we ask for their support in our approach. Please see the notes below.

#### **6. If you believe your child (or any other) is being bullied**

Let your child's form teacher know about your concerns as soon as you can. The School's response to possible bullying will then be initiated. Please be patient, though: the teacher and his/her colleagues will need to follow up and ensure there is a proper understanding of what is happening. The form teacher or a senior colleague will keep in touch with you during this process.

Be supportive of your child and please avoid over-reacting towards the possible bully. The school needs to be able to get to the root of the problem. This requires the co-operation of all parties.

All incidents that are identified as being bullying are recorded using the school's Bullying Reporting Sheet (available online with this Policy).

#### **7. If your child is accused of bullying**

Such an accusation may come as a tremendous shock to you. You are likely to feel very defensive about the situation and it may seem highly unlikely that your son or daughter could be bullying another child.

Please be patient. The School will try to unravel what is going on and, if it seems likely that your child has adopted bullying behaviour, we will try to establish what has caused this. The form tutor and/ or senior colleagues will work with you and your child to address the causes and to improve behaviour.

It would be unusual for a child to not respond to the support and guidance given. Most children can learn how to make proper friendships and how to avoid hurting others. They will put events behind them.

However, in a very rare case where the level of bullying is severe, the level of sanction applied by the School must take account of this – bullying has no place at Manor House.

#### **8. Anti-bullying procedures followed by the school**

1. Pupils are urged to share their problems with other pupils and preferably report bullying incidents to staff.



2. Silence is a bully's best friend so we are a "telling school". We encourage children to speak up for themselves and, very importantly, for their friends. Recent research into bullying has shown that when a bystander intervenes to question the bully's behaviour, the bullying stops at once in over 80% of cases.
3. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and strategies put in place to get the bullying stopped quickly. One member of staff will be responsible for co-ordinating the approach. This will normally be a child's form tutor, guided by one of the Assistant Head teachers.
4. The process of dealing with the bullying will include talking to the perpetrator about his or her behaviour; explaining why it was unacceptable and the reasons it has had the consequences it has; and explaining what will happen should the bullying recur.
5. If felt appropriate, sanctions may be applied, especially in the case of a repeat offence.
6. If felt appropriate, the situation may be sensitively discussed with other pupils, especially if it is felt their behaviour, active or passive, intentional or unintentional, augmented the effect of the bully's actions.
7. All cases of bullying will be recorded by staff in the Incident File kept in the Headmaster's Office. The record will include the type or types of bullying identified.
8. In serious cases, parents will be informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
9. An attempt will be made to help the bully (or bullies) change their behaviour.

## **9. A note on cyber-bullying**

Cyberbullying has been defined to mean the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Bebo and Myspace, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

There are a number of factors which set cyberbullying apart from other forms. These include the activity extending off the school site sometimes into the victim's home, the rapid spread of information and images, the opportunity amongst young people to encourage that spread, perhaps without understanding the seriousness of what they are doing, a perception of anonymity by the perpetrator, etc. For this reason the school has in place these additional safeguards:

- Use of the internet is closely supervised and restrictions apply. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system.
- The school offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHE lessons, which covers blocking and removing contacts from "buddy" lists.
- The school offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.



- Children are not permitted to have mobile phones in school.

## 10. Other related policies

- Complaints policy
- Child Protection policy
- Rewards and Sanctions policy
- Safeguarding Children policy

## 11. Every Child Matters

This Policy is fundamental to our Safeguarding procedures, supporting the Every Child Matters outcomes and delivering our School vision and values:

Our vision is to nurture children who are...

- *Confident yet humble in knowing they can and will succeed*
- *Resilient when faced with challenges and setbacks*
- *Happy in the world as it is while able to see the world as it should be*
- *Creative, open-minded and sensitive to the needs of others*  
*...allowed to be children.*

### ***Our Values:***

- *We treat others as we like to be treated and we do all we can to make ourselves and others happy*
- *We have high, positive expectations and always do our best*
- *We are honest and do the right thing even when it's difficult*
- *We take responsibility for our own thoughts, words and actions*
- *We all understand and support each other because we know how we feel affects how well we learn*
- *We believe children's intelligence comes in many forms and that our school environment supports and reinforces independence and creativity*
- *We promote independence in learning and celebrate achievement because we are all teachers and we are all learners*
- *We feel proud to be part of our school family and work together to achieve our goals - The school works because the team works.*