

**Outcomes  
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Group.**

# **Anti Bullying Policy**

## Objectives of this policy

This policy outlines what Medway Green School will do to prevent and tackle bullying. Medway Green School is committed to an anti-bullying culture in which no bullying will be tolerated under any circumstances. All members of the school community have the right to learn, work and play in a secure and caring environment free from harm or harassment. They also have a responsibility to contribute by preventing and reporting bullying behaviour.

Further advice and guidance can be obtained from the DfE:

Behaviour and discipline in schools (January 2016)

Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2014); July 2017

Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying 2018

KCSIE September 2023

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018

Mental Health and Behaviour in schools (November 2018)

## Our school community

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis.
- Supports all staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensures that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that students feel safe to learn; that students abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns about bullying and deals promptly with complaints; parents/carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support other relevant organisations when appropriate.

## Definition

*Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. 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.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating. Since September 2014 a greater focus on how well school leaders tackle low-level disruption was included in Ofsted inspections.

## Cyber bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.<sup>1</sup> If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

### **Forms of bullying covered by this policy**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, beliefs, or culture
- Bullying related to LDD (learning difficulties or disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying) including the use of homophobic language
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying, including the use of transphobic language
- Cyber bullying
- Other prejudice based bullying not identified above

Other relevant forms of bullying:

#### **Physical**

Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, making a child/young person do something they don't want to do or stopping them from doing something they do want to do. Taking belongings, damaging someone's belongings.

#### **Emotional**

Being unfriendly, excluding and tormenting, sending malicious emails, or text messages, intimidating glances and body language.

#### **Verbal**

Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, insulting, blackmail and threats, making offensive remarks.

#### **Discriminatory**

Making offensive remarks and singling out for poor treatment based on someone's gender, race, gender re-assignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation – this may be unlawful (Equalities Act 2010).

#### **Hidden or indirect bullying**

Lying and spreading rumours, negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks, playing nasty jokes to embarrass or humiliate, mimicking unkindly, encouraging other to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's reputation.

#### **Signs to look for**

The list below is by no means exhaustive and there is a significant crossover with CP / Safeguarding.

- Falling out with previously good friends
- Being moody and bad tempered

- Being quiet and withdrawn
- Wanting to avoid leaving the house
- Aggression with brothers and sisters
- Doing less well at schoolwork, signs of struggling
- Unwilling to go to school or socialise
- Insomnia
- Anxiety
- Claiming to be unwell on a regular basis, particularly in the morning
- Coming home with cuts and bruises
- Self-harm/self-injurious behaviour
- Torn clothes
- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced

Staff have to be extra vigilant of young people's behaviour patterns as it can be difficult to separate out behaviour that stems from the young person's background and or attachment issues and behaviour that stems from being bullied. Staff should be particularly sensitive to sudden and or extreme changes.

#### **Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying**

The school community will:

- Have a named Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator who is Ben Price
- Listen and take time to talk to children and young people who disclose bullying, take what they say seriously and investigate the situation
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support and through the School Council
- Train all staff including Support staff, Administration and Facilities staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying, including recording and reporting incidents of bullying
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied

#### **Involvement of students**

We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying
- Obtain the views of school council
- Ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools
- Participate in National Anti-Bullying Week during the autumn term
- Pupils to annually complete a pupil survey which includes how they feel bullying is managed and supported at Medway Green School.
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites using various methods including links on our school intranet and website
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address any underlying issues they may have
- Pupils will identify peer anti bullying mentors through school council meetings when the student population is of sufficient size to appoint these roles effectively and appropriately.

### **Liaison with parents and carers**

We will:

- Ensure that all parents and carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying
- Report back to parents and carers regarding their concerns about bullying as quickly as possible
- Ensure all parents and carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, promoting this by its inclusion on the policy area of the school website
- Ensure all parents and carers know where to access independent advice about face to face and cyber-bullying, including the use of links on our school website
- Work with all parents and carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying
- We expect parents/carers to:
  - Inform the school of any suspected bullying, even if it does not involve their child
  - Encourage their child to report bullying to a member of staff using the 4Ws: Who, What, Where and When
  - Inform their child not to retaliate through violence in any situation
  - If their child has been accused of bullying, work in partnership with the school and listen to evidence

### **Links with other school policies and practices**

This Policy links with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Equalities policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Pastoral care
- Complaints policy
- E-safety/online safety policy
- The recording of racial incidents
- The teaching of Citizenship and PSHE Education, Sex and Relationships Education, ICT curriculum and Prevent duty

### **Continuous Professional Development**

Staff will be offered on-going training with direct delivery through specific safeguarding and E safety training as well as active involvement in PSHE lessons and participation in the National anti-bullying week. This will interlink with statutory safeguarding updates and will support Online safety and cyber bullying lessons being delivered to support the safer internet day and on-going support practice for staff and the pupils. This will form part of the school council meeting and on-going monitoring will be conducted by the anti-bullying coordinator and the anti-bullying peer mentors.

### **Bullying outside of school premises**

The school will work collaboratively with local residents, community wardens, police support officers, school transport providers and local businesses to prevent and respond to bullying outside of school. There is unlikely to be an issue in the immediate vicinity of the school as Wouldham is a semi isolated rural community. However, the school will work to support students and parents relating to bullying in their home communities.

### **Monitoring and review, policy into practice**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on: 1<sup>st</sup> term of each calendar year, unless statutory guidance dictates otherwise. The Headteacher will report to OFG on incidents of bullying and outcomes. Any issues identified through the monitoring of this policy will be incorporated into the school action plan. The Headteacher with lead responsibility of well-being and pastoral care, will be the named Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator who is responsible for how the school uses the guidance by the DfE.

## Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- Headteacher Ben Price to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy & is responsible for co-ordinating and strengthening the schools' approach to anti-bullying.
- The Headteacher, Teaching and Non-Teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly
- The Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community
- Students to abide by the policy
- Parents/carers to abide by the policy



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