



**MERCHANT
TAYLORS'
SCHOOLS**

For Boys and Girls
aged 4 to 18 years

Anti-Bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY MTGS/MTPS (INCLUDING EYFS)

(i) AIMS

Merchant Taylors' Schools aim to provide a safe and caring environment in which each of its pupils feels secure; an environment where pupils can express themselves freely, form relationships and learn at their own pace. The School acknowledges the seriousness of bullying.

We are aware that bullying is prevalent in all aspects of life not only in schools and that no school can claim with absolute confidence that 'there is no bullying here'. We believe that there are few bullies at MTS, but we aim through policy and action to respond positively and effectively to any incidents, however trivial they may seem.

We see it as the responsibility of the Governors, all staff, whether teaching or support, as well as pupils and parents to ensure that our school has an ethos which encourages pupils to achieve their maximum potential both academically and socially.

In addition, all staff will be aware of and take into consideration the different needs of pupils challenged by issues such as Special Educational needs, mobility and mental health.

(ii) DEFINITIONS

Any behaviour which is threatening or makes an individual or group feel unhappy, uncomfortable or intimidated in school is clearly not acceptable.

Such behaviour may be regarded as bullying. There are many definitions of bullying, but most have 3 things in common:

It is deliberately hurtful behaviour

It is repeated often over a long period of time

It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can be:

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| • Emotional/
Psychological | Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) |
| • Physical | pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence |
| • Verbal | name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing |

And be in the form of:

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| • Racial, religious
or cultural | taunts, graffiti, gestures, insulting remarks on racial, religious or cultural grounds |
| • Sexual | unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments |
| • Sexist | focussing on an individual's gender |
| • Homophobic /
Transgender | focussing on an individual's sexuality |
| • Disability related/SEN | focussing on an individual's disability or educational difficulty |
| • Familial | relating to a child who is adopted, fostered or a carer |
| • Verbal | name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing |
| • Cyber technology | social media, websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email |

misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities.

Please refer to ICT Acceptable Use Policy which sets out clearly both users' obligations in using these facilities, and the ICT departments' responsibility and authority in taking action to safeguard them.

(iii) THE CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING MAY BE VERY SERIOUS:

Victims of bullying may experience many immediate mental or physical health-related consequences and suffer from anxiety disorders and depression which can continue into adulthood. Pupils who bully others also experience many short term and long term consequences of their bullying behaviour and may also become depressed as a result of their actions.

Criminal law:

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986 and the school will seek assistance from the police if they feel an offence has been committed. A further offence of intentionally causing harassment was introduced by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

Safeguarding children and young people:

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school will report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the school may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

(iv) PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW:

For pupils:

If you feel bullied by another person either inside or outside the classroom (e.g. by cyber-bullying)

- Tell the person that you do not like what he/she is doing
- Never allow the bullying to carry on – it is not your fault
- Try to remain calm and clear when talking to the bully
- Always tell your Form Tutor, Class teacher or another teacher as soon as you can
- Tell your parent or the person who looks after you what happened
- Try to get witnesses and make a note of what, where and when it happened, or keep a copy of texts, emails or images, if appropriate
- Use helplines / online advice

CHILDLINE: 0800 1111 www.ChildLine.org.uk

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) www.ceop.police.uk

If you see another person being bullied:

- Stop the bullying if you can or find an adult - a teacher or a Sixth Former
- If you see it happening out of school (e.g. cyber-bullying) tell your Form Tutor or another teacher as soon as possible
- Tell your parent or the person who looks after you what happened
- If it is happening on the school bus tell the Dr Bush or your Form Tutors; Mrs Jones, Mrs Wadsworth or Mr Lawell.
- MTPS pupils should tell Miss Lynan, Mrs Cooney, Mrs Saunders or their Class teacher.
- Make a note of your concerns and post it in the Suggestions and Concerns Boxes

GUIDELINES TO STAFF WHEN DEALING WITH BULLYING

1. Listen to the pupils
Encourage them to speak freely
Assure them that their allegations will be dealt with in confidence initially but that you may need to consult the appropriate member of staff, eg. Form Tutor, Head of Year, Group Tutor or Deputy Head.
Assure them that we will consult with them at all stages of the investigation and that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
Assure them that the school takes any allegation about bullying seriously and that appropriate action will be taken
Encourage them to involve their parents
2. The appropriate member of staff should undertake a full investigation of the allegations to verify what has been going on.
3. **Procedures to follow:** The school will embark upon the following action, where appropriate.
 - i. Interview the pupils involved and get written reports.
 - ii Complete a Meeting Notes form indicating bullying has taken place. A bullying log is completed termly.
 - iii. Contact the parents of the pupils involved to discuss the school's action plan and keep accurate records of how the school has responded.
 - iv. In many cases a conciliatory approach may be useful, in which the person dealing with the incident attempts to improve the situation by encouraging those involved in bullying to empathise with the victim.
 - v. The pupils should be seen on a regular basis to discuss how things are going, so that they can realise that the situation is still being monitored.
 - vi It may be appropriate to break up the group dynamics of a gang of pupils known to be bullying e.g. by keeping them in at lunchtime and break times if that is when they are a threat to others. This may also apply to a single pupil.
 - vii Sanctions such as Main School or Group Tutor's detention may be applied but exclusion as a response to severe and persistent bullying should only be used sparingly and as a last resort.

In all incidents of bullying the school will offer support to both the victim and the bully. The pupils who are known to be bullying may have a low self-esteem and may be having problems in their life that are making them feel bad as well. **It must be recognised that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection**

concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

PREVENTION

This policy should be used in conjunction with the anti-bullying notices prominently displayed throughout the school, where advice and guidelines is given to the pupils on identifying and then responding to incidents of bullying.

Staff and pupils should be vigilant for the signs of possible bullying:

- Items of clothing, School property etc. damaged or lost more often than one would consider normal.
 - Frequent injuries to the student, consistent with hitting, punching, kicking etc.
 - The student becomes withdrawn and is reluctant to say why. Evidence of a pupil being called names, being the subject of rumours or being excluded from group activities at break.
 - Frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches.
 - Regular absenteeism, unaccustomed excuses.
 - Falling off in work, effort and performance.
 - Taken individually none of the above may be due to bullying but a combination of some of these signs could be a reason to suspect it.
- (i) Staff are on duty at all times when pupils are not in class and patrol the site, particularly the areas where bullying might occur. They are reminded regularly about the need for vigilance at SIMs and receive awareness training at INSET so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems.
- (ii) The School's Behaviour Policy aims to promote good behaviour within the School community and sets out the Code of Conduct which pupils are obliged to honour. It also indicates a range of sanctions which may be imposed in the event of pupils' misbehaviour. Cases of severe and persistent bullying may lead to serious sanctions.
- (iii) Bullying is one of the topics listed in our SMSC programme and in our PSHE programme for Years 2, 3, 4, 7 and Year 8 and each form has one periods of PSHE per week with their form tutor / PSHE tutor. Whole School and Year Group assemblies are used to raise awareness on the issue, including cyber-bullying and the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL). The PSHE year files, PSHE library contain numerous exercises and programmes on the following:friendship, self-esteem, decision-making and assertiveness. Anti-Bullying Week is held annually.
- (iv) MTGS and MTPS have operate a No Mobile Phone Policy for pupils. Pupils are expected to hand their phone in at the beginning of each day and collect it at the end of the day.
- (v) An Anti-Bullying survey is conducted in which the School Council work to produce appropriate questions.

Reviewed January 2019