

Achieving Success Together



# Mill Green School

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

INCLUDING HATE-CRIME & HARRASMENT

<b>Policy Status:</b>	<b>Non-Statutory</b>
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## Introduction

Article 2 of the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child refers to their rights being respected without discrimination, while Article 12 states that young people have the right to give their opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously. Article 19 refers to the right to be protected from being hurt either physically or mentally (emotionally). This policy sets out how bullying, harassment and hate-crime will be addressed at Mill Green, ensuring that the rights of the young people within the school community are paramount.

Mill Green School will promote the protection and development of students through a whole school approach and staff will have INSET training to ensure awareness of this important issue.

Mill Green School aims to deliver the education of bullying issues within the framework of Personal Development, Social and Health Education, SMSC, Cultural Capital, Anti-Bullying Week and the school policy for behaviour.

Students will be encouraged to report any incidents in the knowledge that the school will take immediate and positive response to their disclosure. We see parents and guardians as partners in the care and protection of students. We believe that it is important for all staff, students and parents to be aware of our Anti-bullying Policy to ensure that it continues to be a high-profile and focused area of school life, supporting the social and emotional development of learners who attend Mill Green.

## Policy Statement

The students at Mill Green school have a wide range of complex needs. As a school community we understand that bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and raise issues that are in themselves complicated to resolve. Not all students at Mill Green will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it or / and may be unable to express or communicate their aversion to and also be able to respond appropriately to incidents of bullying behaviours. Equally not all students would recognise that certain behaviours directed towards others may be undesirable or that they may be construed as bullying. We recognise the negative consequences of experiencing bullying can last well into adulthood. It is vital that a timely and well-planned response to bullying is implemented as this can have a positive effect on lessening the impact of those who experience it.

The following categories summarise the varying levels of understanding of our students:

- No understanding of the targeted behaviours and / or are a result of a sensory processing need. This level of understanding would apply to many students at Mill Green.
- Some capacity to understand right and wrong when they are at baseline and present with little or no inappropriate behaviours. However once triggered off baseline they may target and hurt others unintentionally with little understanding of the impact of the behaviours on others. This level of understanding would apply to some students at Mill Green.
- Targeted behaviour with intent to harm others. This would apply to a minority of students at Mill Green.

## Aims

- To promote the development of respect for oneself and others.
- To protect from aggression and mistreatment by raising awareness.
- To provide an environment where every student feels safe and valued at all times.
- To reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur by providing an appropriate supportive, caring and stimulating environment.
- To promote consistency of approach and create an environment where all types of bullying are considered unacceptable.
- To prepare students for adult life in a changing and challenging environment.

## Objectives

- To promote the physiological and psychological wellbeing of all students at Mill Green School.
- To give students accurate information about areas of support and guidance, both within and outside school.
- To provide support and a clear line of communication for students and parents.
- To raise the self-esteem of students and give them the confidence to seek advice.
- To encourage and develop positive parental support and involvement.

## The Need for Bullying Education

Media reports have highlighted awareness of bullying issues in schools. This is of course unacceptable behaviour and must be taken seriously at all times. Students and parents need to know that reports will be taken seriously and that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. We do not feel that Mill Green School experiences many incidences of bullying, but we believe that the whole school must be vigilant in maintaining this good record.

## Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance define bullying as “*the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online*”

Bullying can take many different forms. It may be short term or continuous over many years. It may be direct bullying or indirect through a third party. Bullies come in all shapes and sizes and do not conform to any particular stereotype, therefore they may be any age or gender.

Bullying can be:

<b>Emotional</b>	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures, spreading rumours, isolating people)
<b>Physical</b>	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, taking away belongings or any use of violence
<b>Verbal</b>	name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, making offensive comments
<b>Cyber</b>	All areas of internet, such as email, internet chat room and social media misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls, Misuse of technology, i.e. camera & video facilities to hurt an individual
<b>Racist</b>	occurs where bullying is motivated by racial, ethnic or cultural prejudice. Using racist language, directed at a person / persons
<b>Sexual</b>	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
<b>Homo / biphobic</b>	because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
<b>Transphobic</b>	bullying motivated by prejudice against people who are transgender
<b>Disablist</b>	bullying motivated by people with any form of disability
<b>Sexist</b>	bullying motivated against someone because of their gender

All bullying is aggression, either physical, verbal or psychological and is a “wilful desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone”. It is important to recognise however, that not all aggressive behaviour is intended as bullying and staff must take this into account when dealing with young people with complex needs, including complex social communication difficulties.

Physical bullying may be easily identifiable but emotional and psychological aggression is less visible. However, it is equally as painful to the victim.

Bullying can be a form of child on child abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

Any behaviour which is the illegitimate use of power to hurt others is bullying. This power of one student over another, or one member of staff over another, is not always easily recognisable, but it must be clear to all staff and students that the use of power in this way is totally unacceptable.

Indirect bullying may involve spreading malicious rumours or inciting another person to bully or exclude from any social group.

Bullying may be the result of differences based on appearance, race, religion, colour, gender, sexuality, disability or social status.

## Hate Crime and Harassment

This is behaviour that a victim or any other person thinks was caused by hatred of;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Identity
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation

A victim of hate crime does not have to be a member of a minority or someone who is generally considered to be vulnerable. For example, a person who is the friend of someone from a different ethnic group, a different sexual orientation or a disabled person may be discriminated against, threatened, harassed or victimised because of their association.

Hate crime can be actual or perceived and can include:

- Verbal abuse, threats, insults, nuisance telephone calls, name calling
- Physical assaults and violence, anything from pushing to serious attack
- Property damage - graffiti, vandalism, theft, damage to vehicles, arson
- Publishing and circulating materials such as leaflets that may incite hate crime

Hate crime attacks can be a combination of the above.

Any incident of an individual being targeted, intimidated or abused because of age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race or ethnicity, will be dealt with as detailed below, incidents of this nature can also be reported to Merseyside Police.

## Recognising Bullying

As already recognised, bullies do not conform to stereotypes but research has shown that there are some shared features. Therefore, there are often some features which could be apparent.

### **VICTIMS MAY:**

- Be nervous and anxious when in close proximity to other students.
- Find it difficult to make friends.
- Be an obvious loner.
- Suffer from low self esteem.
- Sometimes the victim will intentionally provoke the aggressor. This behaviour also needs to be modified.

### **BULLIES MAY:**

- Find it difficult to make friends
- May have been a victim of bullying themselves.
- Suffer from low esteem
- Have assertive aggression over which they have little control.
- Show little tolerance and empathy towards others.

- Lack guilt or remorse.
- Be hyperactive and disruptive
- Be within a conflict situation at home.

### Dealing with an Incident

**In all instances where bullying may be a factor, it is made clear that bullying in any form is unacceptable. It will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.**

- Be certain that you are clear of all the facts.
- Ensure you are not labelling someone 'a bully' unfairly.
- Always take the incident seriously and react immediately, reporting it to the phase leader, class teacher and where it is felt necessary to the Head teacher before entering/ recording it in the contact book. The contact book is monitored on a weekly basis by the safeguarding team. If a learner has been reported in the contact book more than once the safeguarding team will enter a record in the Bullying log, dependent on the nature incident and learners involved.
- Re-assure the victim and offer immediate help and support.
- Take appropriate action as quickly as possible - do not leave it to others to sort out.
- Make it very clear to the bully that you disapprove of their actions.
- Take appropriate action against the bully, dependent on each individual incident. Firstly there should be a verbal reprimand and separation from the victim.
- If the incident is of a physical nature it may be necessary to remove the perpetrator from contact with other students.
- After a 'cooling off' period it is necessary to establish anything significant which may have led up to the incident.
- Try to ensure that the bully realises that his / her actions were unacceptable.
- Record any incident in the contact book which is always to be kept at the main school office. Any other member of staff who is witness to the incident should also countersign the contact book.
- Ensure that the class teacher, Phase leader, appropriate staff and parents are informed of the incident and the immediate actions that have been taken.
- Remember that it is sometimes the case that bullies have also been victims themselves.
- A meeting with appropriate staff will plan strategies to eradicate the situation.

### Recording Incidents of Bullying

All incidents of bullying are recorded in the bullying log and on CPOMS, with an appropriate tag. This includes a record of interventions and outcomes for both the victim and the bully. Consequences are recorded in line with the school Behaviour Policy.

### Serious or Repeated Incidences

In cases of serious / repeated bullying the school will inform both sets of parents. The parents will then be invited to come to school to discuss the situation, and school should be able to offer constructive advice to either side. The school will keep a written record of any such meeting (CPOMS) and agreed strategies to be used. Any strategies employed should be reviewed regularly and altered accordingly.

Particular vigilance must be kept on the playground and in areas used at social times. Close supervision of students at break times and dinnertimes is essential, as is the close working relationship with lunchtime supervisors and bus escorts.

School will monitor the behaviour of the bully carefully to ensure that it has stopped.

## Bullying outside of School & Cyber Bullying

This policy relates to learner's behaviour when in school, or supervised by staff outside school i.e. when on school trips or at sports fixtures etc. However, 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.

Mill Green School supports and works in partnership with parents in their responsibility for supervising and keeping their child safe. This is provided through direct discussion, internet safety information distributed, School website and is also addressed throughout the curriculum and targeted sessions looking at internet safety; however, we realise that this is a fast-developing area and that we need to remain vigilant and be prepared to respond to incidents potentially against both learners and staff.

The DFE outlines the specific statutory power, held by headteachers, to discipline learners for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and the Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers the power to regulate learners conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff. This can relate to bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises and can be seen as of particular value when dealing with cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying can involve:

- Sending abusive or threatening e mail or text messages
- Posting malicious or abusive comments on a social media site
- Filming or passing on inappropriate material via mobile phones or other electronic devices

It should be noted that dealing with issues of bullying outside school or school time (when parents and carers are responsible for their own children's behaviour) poses problems for headteachers, and will only be considered where actions are continued or impact directly upon learning in school.

## Best Practice

Students and staff are encouraged and supported to speak out against bullies and bullying and not to see it as being a "tell-tale" whilst ensuring that no one is labelled a 'bully' unfairly.

Students and staff need to be confident in the knowledge that their reporting will lead to direct and immediate action.

Parents need to be reassured that Mill Green School actively discourages threatening and intimidating behaviour.

All staff will be provided with written guidance and appropriate training with regard to implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy with regard to their particular work setting.

Levels of supervision and staffing should be appropriate to ensure that opportunities for bullying are minimised.

At Mill Green we use various methods for helping students to prevent bullying, when appropriate these may include:

- A positive ethos throughout school (school vision, aims and objectives)
- Strategies within a Positive Behaviour Support Management Plan
- Developing & Signing a behaviour contract
- Practical activities about bullying
- Reading stories or watching theatre productions about bullying
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- Supporting National Anti Bullying Week annually

Education of bullying issues will form an integral part of the PD / PSHE curriculum and will be delivered through cross- curricular themes and activities & Anti-Bullying Week by the class teacher and external providers.

Staff training on bullying issues will be addressed via the Continuing Professional Development programme.

All staff have a responsibility to bring concerns about any form of bullying to the attention of the Headteacher.

## Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed by the Pastoral Manager on an bi-annual basis, or where there are changes to guidance or legislation.

## Further Reading:

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies in school. These include:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy
- Positive Handling / Care & Control Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Sex & Relationships Education Policy
- PSHEE & Citizenship Policy
- Staff Handbook
- LAC Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Community Cohesion Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Complaints and Representations Policy

## Legislation and Best Practice Guidance Documents:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified 1991)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies' (2017)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2011
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25

- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, Advice for Head Teachers and School Staff February (2014) DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (2016)
- Working together to safeguard children (2018)
- Mental Health and guidance in schools (2018)
- Searching, Screening, and confiscation: Advice for Head Teachers, staff and governing bodies (2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September (2022)
- DfE Behaviour in schools Advice for headteachers and school staff September 2022

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