



## Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

### Policy Statement

The Haberdashers' Monmouth Schools are committed to providing a friendly, caring environment for all our pupils and staff. We are committed to every person and our ethos is positive and inclusive. Bullying, in any form, is contrary to our principles and will not be tolerated. All members of the community have the right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. We take responsibility for helping pupils understand what bullying is and the harm it can do. If bullying does occur then all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with effectively.

### Key Principles

- No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- Everyone has the right to work and to learn in an environment free from intimidation and fear, and to be treated with respect.
- Everyone in the school community has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.
- The needs of the victim are paramount.
- The school will not tolerate bullying behaviour.
- Individuals who feel that they have been bullied will be listened to and supported.
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.
- The School will act swiftly and decisively.
- The School will monitor incidences of bullying.
- Bullies, as well as victims, have the right to support from the school and will be counselled to improve their behaviour

### What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time, where someone deliberately intimidates, makes unhappy, humiliates or harasses another. Bullying can include active or passive aggression which causes embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms; physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of pupils. Bullying includes discriminatory activity of any form based on race, religion, culture, sex/sexuality, gender identity, special educational needs or disability.

### Bullying can be:

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil.
- Interfering with another pupil's property by stealing, hiding or damaging it.
- Using offensive names when addressing another person.
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family.
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil.
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity.
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.
- Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person.

**Sub-categories include:**

<b>Emotional</b>	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, mimicking, hiding/destroying possessions.
<b>Physical</b>	Pushing, kicking, poking, flicking or any use of violence
<b>Racist</b>	Race-based discrimination
<b>Sexist</b>	Gender-based discrimination
<b>Homophobic</b>	Discrimination focused upon sexual preferences
<b>Verbal</b>	Spreading rumours, name calling, teasing, sarcasm, stirring, mocking
<b>Cyber</b>	All areas of internet, such as email and social media misuse. Mobile threats by text and calls. Misuse of associated technology such as cameras and video.
<b>Indirect</b>	Spreading nasty stories about someone, being made a subject of malicious rumours, being excluded from social groups, being unfriendly, spiteful looks
<b>Disability</b>	Children with special needs or disabilities are far more likely to be victims of bullying
<b>Lifestyle</b>	Mocking, belittling or judging someone based on their lifestyle choices (including their dress, diet, home-life, political opinions etc)

**Banter**

Banter is defined as “the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks” in the Oxford English Dictionary. All members of the school community should exercise caution in using banter; a remark that is intended to be playful and friendly may not necessarily be taken that way by its intended recipient. Banter can easily become bullying and if there are reasonable grounds to assume that the recipient would find a remark offensive or upsetting then it will be regarded as bullying. Banter should never contain language which is related to perceived ability, race, religion, sexuality, appearance or family circumstances.

**Objectives**

- All members of the School community should have an understanding of bullying.
- The ethos of the School should instil mutual respect and decent behaviour.
- Every pupil should know to whom they can talk about bullying incidents.
- Clear procedures for reporting bullying should be understood and followed.

**Prevention**

The best prevention is a proactive course, which is pursued among other ways through the PSHE curriculum, the example set by pupils and staff of the School in their interactions with each other, and by references to the subject at School and House/Year Group Assemblies or tutor/form meetings.

Staff should be in the lookout for potential victims of bullying and areas and times when bullying might occur.

**In addition:**

- The school’s policy on anti-bullying is highlighted to all pupils and parents in the welcome information on joining school. Bullying is also used as a regular theme in school assemblies and as part of the PSHE programme.
- All new pupils will be given “Anti-bullying information”.
- The school undertakes a regular “safe school survey” to monitor the progress of this policy.
- Form tutors are encouraged to remind their form of the school policy during tutor periods.
- Staff undertake appropriate INSET training and receive regular updates from SMT.
- Staff are on duty before school, during break times and at lunchtimes.
- MG have introduced the ‘Girls on Board’ approach to empowering girls to resolve friendship issues.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied:

- Is frightened of travelling to and from school
- Does not want to go to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”
- Starts stammering
- Has money continually “lost”
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong
- Stops eating
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous or jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility.

### **Procedures and Support in School**

- Pupils should report bullying incidents to staff. Pupils are reminded that there is a range of people to whom they can turn in the first instance: Housemasters/Heads of Years/Houseparents, Tutors, Teachers, the Chaplain, the Nurses in the Medical Centre and Senior Managers, Peer Mentors and Senior Prefects.
- Incidents will be recorded by staff and the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head/Senior Deputy Head (MPS) will be informed. A central record of all bullying incidents is kept in each school.
- Each alleged incident will be investigated by an appropriate pastoral member of staff.
- Parents should be informed (unless a member of SMT decides otherwise) and will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, the Police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying must immediately stop.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully/bullies change their behaviour and to discover the reasons for it.
- The bully will offer an apology and other appropriate consequences may take place, as advised by the Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head/Senior Deputy Head (MPS).
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- The pupils will be reconciled, if possible. This should always be attempted, preferably with a face-to-face meeting in the presence of a member of staff, unless there are good reasons not to hold this meeting.
- Counselling will be offered in school or details of outside counsellors made available to parents if needed.
- Staff will always take reports of bullying seriously and discuss the matter with the victim in confidence.
- Full support will be offered to re-build the victim’s confidence and staff will work collaboratively and communicate with discretion in order to achieve this.

## Incident Management

An investigation will be conducted by an appropriate person. This could include:

Sixth Form: Director of Sixth Form; Heads of Years; Director of Boarding;

Housemasters/Houseparent

MB: Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral); Director of Boarding; Housemasters

MG: Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral); Heads of Years; Director of Boarding; Houseparents

MPS : Head; Deputy Head; Director of Boarding; Houseparents

The following procedure will be followed. Every case will be different and the procedures will need to be tailored to suit the individual circumstances and age of the children involved.

1. Investigation: Interviews followed by written statements, if appropriate, from the victim, the alleged bully and any third parties should be taken, being careful not to single out anyone publicly. The investigator will ensure that all parties are treated with sympathy, respect and understanding. They should be offered the opportunity to have a pupil or staff advocate with them. If a parent insists on being an advocate then all other parties must have the same opportunity.
2. The incident will be recorded and placed on the student's file and in a specific 'Bullying File'/MyConcern. The victim needs to be consulted as to what would help them before a course of action is decided. Some victims may only want to be supported from a distance or only require someone to listen. Other responses may include:
  - Immediate action to stop the incident and secure pupil safety/wellbeing
  - Reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
  - Strategies to prevent further incidents
  - Sympathy
  - Counselling
  - Action over use of technologies
  - Assertiveness training
  - Extra supervision/monitoring
  - Peer mentoring
  - Informing parents
  - Adult mediation between the perpetrator and victim
  - Specific sessions in the PSHE programme
3. Once a course of action has been agreed this should be recorded on the pupils file and parents informed if appropriate. Ongoing support should be given to the victim. The Deputy Heads (Pastoral) (Senior Schools) or Head Deputy (MPS) should be fully appraised and consulted.
4. There should be a follow up to check that recurrence has not taken place. Regular review updates will be agreed.

The school will respond to bullying incidents in an appropriate way. The perpetrators will be supported to enable them to behave in a more acceptable way. When sanctions are felt to be necessary the following options will be considered:

- Detention or Saturday Detention (at the Deputy Head's discretion)
- Removal from class
- Counselling
- Mediation between the victim and perpetrator
- Exclusion or suspension.

Parents will always be informed, in writing. The police are increasingly likely to be involved in cyber-bullying and instances of illegal activity, including harassment.

The school is committed to supporting both the recipient and perpetrator.

### Strategies for Pupils

Research has shown that girls bully in more subtle ways to boys i.e., excluding a person from a friendship group. The pupil may not recognise their actions as bullying or intimidation. Look at ways in which you can help prevent bullying in your class and in school.

- Are you trying hard to work co-operatively with everyone else in your class, including those who are not your close friends?
- If you accidentally offend or upset someone do something about it – be big enough to say sorry.
- Include new pupils in your group.
- Try to get to know all people in your class and appreciate their good qualities.
- Seek help if you know someone is being bullied.
- Encourage each other to not get involved in unpleasant behaviour.
- Get help to deal with a situation before it gets out of hand.
- Never join in bullying or encourage it in anyway.
- Don't accept name calling.
- Express your disapproval when you see someone doing something unkind.
- Treat others as you would like them to treat you.
- Share any problems by telling someone – your parents, a teacher, your friends, an older student, matron.
- Remember the school will investigate claims of bullying in a sensitive way.
- Support those who experience bullying.
- Help eliminate bullying by reporting incidents you see.
- Value people's individuality.

### Advice for Parents

- Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with the School at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with the School to deal with the issues
- Fall-outs and changes of friendship groupings are not uncommon, however, efforts should be made to ensure this does not result in individuals becoming isolated
- It is important that you do not advise your son/daughter to fight back. It will usually make matters worse. Parents should advise their son/daughter to seek help from a member of staff, prefect or friend.
- Make sure your son/daughter is aware of the school policy concerning bullying, and that they should not be afraid to ask for help.
- If you have a complaint regarding the action by the School to a bullying incident please refer to the Complaints Procedure.

### Help Organisations:

Family Lives (formerly Parent Line Plus) [Parenting and Family Support - Family Lives \(Parentline Plus\) | Family Lives](#) or [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

KIDSCAPE [Help With Bullying \(kidscape.org.uk\)](http://kidscape.org.uk)

Childline – 0800 1111 and [Childline | Childline](#)



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## **Appendix 1 – Intimidation of teachers by Parents/third parties**

Teacher-directed harassment and bullying will not be tolerated. With the increase of email communication, social network interaction and the ever-present nature of town gossip, feelings of personal affront can be taken to the masses with ease and quickly become libelous if left unchecked.

### **Examples**

In extreme cases, teachers are contacted by parents daily, are subject to continual unannounced visits and are expected to treat the parent's child differently from their peers. A parent who persistently questions the teacher's curriculum and assignment choices, marking technique, teaching/coaching ability or even character and qualifications might be considered to be harassing that teacher. He/she may have unrealistic expectations of the child and school's performance or may be sharing unfair opinions with a wide audience.

### **The Schools' Position**

The Heads and Deputy Heads will not accept their staff to be made to feel unduly pressurised or threatened under any circumstances. Staff should feel confident that they will have the support of the school in any situation where they feel bullied or harassed. If a member of staff makes an accusation of bullying/harassment against a parent, the Head/Deputy Head will request a meeting with the parent to discuss any relevant issues. If the issue cannot be resolved at this point the Head will report to the Governors.

The teacher may be advised by the school to contact their union to discuss any issues with them.

In extreme cases, the school reserves the right to take legal action against a parent whose behaviour is threatening and exclude their child from the school.