



## Anti-Bullying Policy

*This policy is inclusive of all pupils in the school including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage*

**Reviewed: April 2024**

**Reviewed by: J Hamilton-Smith**

The DfE advice on the prevention of bullying is contained in **Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)** and forms the basis for the way that Moulsford Preparatory school deals with bullying.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL**

The main aim is to prevent bullying of any kind. To achieve this we look to raise levels of consciousness and understanding so that everyone in the school community, including Governors, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, pupils and parents feel responsible for combating the root causes of bullying and understand that it is unacceptable in all forms. The school operates a visible and proactive approach towards the prevention of bullying with a number of initiatives used to this effect. Victims are protected and supported and those engaged in bullying are encouraged to change their attitudes and beliefs about bullying, as well as their actual behaviour.

### **WHAT DO THE STAFF AND PUPILS DO TO PREVENT BULLYING?**

All the staff are involved in carrying out the main aim of the school referred to at the start of this policy. The standard of behaviour and the school rules are reinforced constantly during school assemblies and, more particularly, during Form times in the week, when certain aspects of the LFL education programme are covered. This specifically involves living together and consideration for other's well-being. Every member of staff reinforces the idea that speaking up early will help to prevent any bullying before it occurs.

A reward system of House Points encourages good social behaviour and kindness to others. House Points are awarded with a House Point ticket which is then handed in to the Head of House who uploads these on the Isams system. For those who demonstrate a consistent and/or outstanding level of good behaviour a Golden House Point may be awarded. The Headteacher will present the recipient of a Golden House Point with a certificate in assembly and this individual's contribution will be recognised in front of the whole school. At the end of the academic year, all of those pupils who have received a Golden House Point will be rewarded with a trip of their choice.

Since 2006 an **Anti-Bullying Charter** has been adopted by the whole school as an agreed code of conduct for all. Following Anti-Bullying Week this charter has been annually updated by the pupils. Every pupil at Moulsford made a contribution to this charter and it is on display in every classroom as well as the school website so that it may be supported by Parents. During Anti-Bullying Week, we have visiting speakers or workshops from the likes of **The Power of One** company and **The Education Group** (Virtual Reality), **The Boy in the Photograph (Rob Higgs)**. All pupils in the prep school undertake a Safety and Wellbeing Survey which highlights any areas of concern to focus on where needed. Parents also receive a **Weekly Newsletter (The Weekly Roundup)** which keeps them updated on what the pupils

have been doing during the school week. It is hoped that through a strong link between staff, pupils and parents any behaviour that could lead to bullying will be quickly discouraged and acted upon.

A strong sense of community is vital if bullying is to be prevented. The school provides a **buddy system** between pupils in Year 7 and new pupils in Year 3 as a way of promoting positive relationships across the age groups at Moultsford. The Year 7 pupils enjoy the responsibility of showing the new pupils around the school and imparting various tips, learnt over many years at Moultsford. The Year 3 pupils are given the opportunity to get to know an older pupil so that they are perceived as less threatening and they have some peer support during their first weeks at Moultsford and, it is hoped, beyond. Helping to break down the barriers of age brings the school closer together and is another device to prevent any form of bullying. Issues are discussed during formal (Form time, LFL) and informal meetings (break, before and after school). Form Heads will use various methods to enhance the ideas of community and responsibility as well as other issues that may arise from these meetings.

If we expect high standards of behaviour from the pupils it is vital that they feel involved and valued in the running of their school. Therefore the **School Council** is held at least twice a term. Each form elects a representative with one of the Year 8 pupils selected to be the chairman. All pupils have the opportunity to give ideas to their form rep. Who will then feedback these issues during council meetings, overseen by the Assistant Head Pastoral. These issues will be discussed and a short list taken to the Headteacher by the council and the Assistant Head Pastoral. Although not all wishes can be granted, the Headteacher will discuss all of the issues and will give reasons for his decisions. The minutes will be circulated to the Council members and then throughout the school.

Through a desire to be more environmentally friendly, the School Council wished to introduce **Eco Prefects**. These elected representatives would work towards reducing waste and increasing recycling as well as other initiatives to reduce the school carbon footprint. This once again provides the pupils with responsibility and further enhances the positive, community driven approach towards caring for Moultsford as a school.

Our policy for **break times** has also helped to prevent potential incidents which may lead to bullying. Whilst pupils are encouraged to have some time outside on the Astroturf, or the playground, provision has been made for pupils to go to the school library to read, talk with friends or play chess. There is also a quiet garden area with seating beside the astro for pupils to sit, chat or read during break times. This allows them to remove themselves from potentially distressing situations which can potentially lead on to more serious behaviour. Pupils are always encouraged to discuss any problems they may be having with someone they trust.

The school does however recognize that bullying in whatever form, does exist at Moultsford and therefore the following procedures outline how it is addressed and dealt with.

## **HOW CAN BULLYING BE DEFINED?**

OFSTED defines bullying as 'aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over time, which intentionally hurts or harms.' Bullying can also cover such behaviour which has the effect of hurting or harming. Perpetrators and victims may include adults as well as children. Bullying may take a

number of different forms, the principal ones being verbal and cyber bullying, physical and manipulative. Perception of the situation by the victim may be distorted, but the experience is very painful and difficult to defend against. Bullying often focuses on individual differences. In this respect it undermines the school's work in promoting tolerance and understanding in the community. Bullying may seize upon aspects of physical shape or appearance, or focus on parental, cultural or ethnically based lifestyles. It may dwell upon race, religion or nationality. Sexual bullying may involve homophobia, or focus on alleged sexual attractiveness or lack of it. Types of bullying may also include racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, special educational needs and disability and cyber (social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email). Bullying may also be because a child is adopted or is a carer. Research suggests that a large number of incidents of intimidating behaviour such as name-calling or 'dirty looks' actually take place in classrooms when the teacher is present. This emphasises the need for constant awareness and vigilance by the staff. Signs of bullying may include: fear of lessons; a request to change study, dormitory or class; deterioration of academic work; books, clothes or other possessions missing, damaged or destroyed, unexplained physical injuries; sitting or eating alone; being late for lessons; a refusal to say what is wrong. Serious psychological damage may be caused by bullying and this is recognised within the policy.

## **TYPES OF BULLYING**

### **Child on Child Abuse**

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and is subject to the same child protection procedures.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is a 'method' of bullying, rather than a 'type' of bullying. It includes bullying via text message, via instant-messenger services and social network sites, via email, and via images or videos posted on the Internet or spread via mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the previously discussed types of bullying, i.e. Technology can be used to bully for reasons of race, religion, sexuality, disability, and may be characterised by:

- Name calling
- Making use of written notes, e-mails, mobile telephone messages or social networking websites
- Including threats of physical violence.
- Sexting

### **Verbal**

- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, a focus on a disability

### **Prejudice Based Bullying**

Prejudice based bullying is repeated hurtful behaviour that exploits or abuses someone based on their actual or supposed membership of a vulnerable group or their support for such a group. Staff should be therefore be vigilant around bullying that could be:

### **Racist**

This includes bullying that is motivated by a prejudice against or in favour of a specific racial identity. It may

also involve behaviour which seeks to define racial identity on the basis of colour or physical appearance, assuming someone is of specific race because of how they look or their name.

### **Sexual**

Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comment.

### **Homophobic/Biphobic/Transphobic**

Abusive comments focussing on sexuality.

### **Cultural**

Abusive comments relating to cultural background, place of birth or accent.

### **Religious**

Abusive comments concerning religious beliefs and religious practices.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

A focus on those who receive Learning Support, have learning difficulties or a physical disability.

## **WHAT ACTIVITIES COUNT AS BULLYING?**

- Words or actions intended to hurt
- Bullying can be physical – hitting, kicking, punching, pinching or any action intended to hurt.
- Bullies can use words to tease about someone's shape, colour, looks, intelligence, or skills.
- Bullies can use words to hurt by shouting or threatening.
- Bullies exclude people and encourage others to do the same; they leave people out of games, refuse to share a book or a seat, or lend a pencil.
- Deliberately ignoring someone can be termed bullying.

## **HOW DO BULLIES ACT?**

- Sometimes alone, sometimes in groups.
- Bullies often get others to do their bullying for them, they have the ideas but don't want to be caught bullying.
- They come in all shapes and sizes, all ages, pupils, girls, men and women.
- Bullies are not always obvious; sometimes they appear to be popular.
- Bullies like having power over people.

## **HOW DOES MOULSFORD ADDRESS BULLYING?**

When the new pupils arrive at the school, the Assistant Head Pastoral addresses the whole year group and explains the school rules and what living in a community involves. This includes encouraging others, not always putting oneself first, and identifying areas that could make one of their fellow pupils unhappy. Moulsford aims to develop and maintain a culture in which any form of bullying is considered to be unacceptable so that instances are the exception and not the norm. As well as the many initiatives that take place throughout the year, the school also recognises national Anti-Bullying Week during November and the Monday of that week is Odd Socks Day, which is actively supported by the school, and allows the school to come together to discuss, understand and challenge bullying at every level.

## **DISCOVERING BULLYING**

Bullying can be discovered by members of staff or by information gathered from parents, other pupils or by the victim. This may be done through discussion in form time and in LFL, the use of the worries box and through informal discussion at lunch and in boarding time.

## **BOARDING**

The whole school Anti-Bullying Policy forms part of the Boarding policy document and is provided not only to parents of boarders but is available and known to staff and boarders, including junior and recently appointed staff;

Regular conversations with boarding pupils ensure that pupils do not identify bullying as a problem in the school. Staff are mindful that boarders do not have the opportunity to go home during the week and so may need extra support compared to their peers who are day pupils.

Pupils who are being bullied are suitably supported through the network of Boarding tutors and external support from the School Counsellor. Advice and contact details Child Line (0800 1111) are available on the boarding notice board and all boarders have access to a private telephone. Pupils who may bully others are also given suitable help and guidance as highlighted below.

## **WHAT PUNISHMENTS ARE AVAILABLE TO BULLIES?**

**See Promoting Good Behaviour Policy**

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

All incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS and will be scrutinised on a regular basis to look for patterns in bullying behaviour. These incidents are discussed at staff meetings, and Heads of Years meetings, and any patterns are identified and targeted for action.

Incidents outside of school, especially those associated with cyberbullying are also recorded in order to evaluate the effectiveness of our procedures.

## **STAFF AWARENESS OF THE POLICY AND TRAINING**

This document forms part of the staff handbook and all new members of staff receive a copy on appointment. The Assistant Head Pastoral is responsible for reviewing the whole school policy on bullying and leading appropriate staff training to ensure that staff understand the principles of this policy, legal responsibilities, action required to resolve and prevent problems and sources of support.

The school takes part in National Anti-Bullying Week during November of each year and during this time the staff take an active role in activities.

***In creating the Bullying Prevention Policy, regard was given to the DCSF Guidance Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti Bullying Work in schools and updated in accordance with DfE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017.***



# Anti-Bullying Charter

**Verbal:** name calling, teasing,  
constantly annoying.

**Physical:** hitting, kicking, pushing.

**Cyber:** use of digital technologies or  
mobile devices to target another  
child.

### What can we do?

**Tell** a teacher, a friend, anyone you  
trust.

**Report** bullying whenever you see it.

Don't be a bystander because:

**You have the Power of One!**

United

Against

Bullying

