



ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

Mount St Joseph Document Control Table			
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Document History		
Version	Date	Notes on Revisions
	01.09.2020	Reviewed by SLT – no amendments
	01.09.2021	Reviewed by SLT – now includes reference to online/social media as well as verbal and physical bullying.
	1.09.2022	Reviewed by SLT – Head of Houses changed to HOY. Form tutor changed to PDT tutor. DFE definition of bullying included. Reference to protected characteristics added under basic principle. Number 16 added to guidelines. Out of school bullying added. Intervention added. Signs of bullying added. Friendship issues added.
	16.7.23	Post box included and student support email for reporting.

Basic Principle

Bullying and harassment are deliberately destructive and anti-Christian forms of behaviour which we will work to eradicate from our community; they erode self confidence and self-esteem and result in a fragmented community.

The School takes pride in being an inclusive community which seeks to maximise the potential of all students regardless of gender, ability, social class, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, culture, or background.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the school has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

What is bullying?

The DfE states that, 'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.'

1. Purposes

The purpose of this policy is:

- to respect the dignity of each member of the community
- to promote good working relationships between all students and to encourage all students to discuss with an adult if they are feeling unsafe.
- to encourage students to respect each other's property
- to enable all students to pursue the highest possible educational standards

2. Guidelines

At Mount St Joseph, the school community recognise:

1. Some children sometimes bully others. For the purposes of this policy statement the term is used to describe this unacceptable behaviour pattern. No child can be dismissed as simply 'a bully'.
2. Bullying can be verbal/ physical or online. Name calling, teasing and taunting, racial and sexual harassment, rude gestures, intimidation and extortion, use of social media to cause upset are all forms of bullying for which the teacher must be vigilant.

3. Students are encouraged to discuss bullying as part of the PSHE, RSE and Citizenship programmes. Heads of Year (HOY) also address anti-bullying through assemblies. Role-play may be a way of teaching students how to cope with bullying behaviour and of helping bullies to appreciate the feelings of their victims.
4. Students are encouraged to report any instances of bullying to any member of staff. Be Kind To My Mind ambassador donated a post-box to school so students can post any concerns or suggestions, this can also be done anonymously.
5. Students can also report via email – studentsupport@msj.bolton.sch.uk.
6. Copies of the school's anti-bullying policy (student version) are available in each classroom and discussed each term.
7. Questionnaires are sometimes used in sensitive situations to identify bullying behaviour.
8. The PDT tutor should make it clear to all students that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
9. All teachers should watch out for early signs of distress, isolation, deterioration of work, erratic attendance, seeking the company of adults. Such behaviour should be reported to the relevant pastoral care officer.
10. Every case of suspected bullying should be followed up to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible. This may include referral to outside agencies such as "Bully Free Zone".
11. Detailed evidence will be collected about an incident of bullying.
12. Do not bully the bully. This gives credibility to their behaviour.
13. All discussions are recorded on the CPOMS system by the pastoral care officer for serious incidents. A decision will be made about appropriate action in consultation with the Deputy Headteacher, Director of Community and Heads of Year.
14. The teacher dealing with the situation should require both the bully and the victim to record the events in writing.
15. The teachers should record in writing their discussions with both parties.

16. The support of parents should be sought. Both sets of parents will be informed of the incident and kept informed of the action taken and support offered. They may be asked to attend a meeting in school.
17. All information received from parents is followed up rigorously in cases where a child has felt unable to bring a matter to a teacher's attention. This means finding out as much information as possible in order that a situation can be dealt with fully and fairly. Parents are informed of what information has been found out and what action has been taken. A record of the incident will be made on CPOMS.
18. Persistent offenders should be referred to senior staff.

Friendship issues

On occasions students temporarily 'fall out' with each other and unpleasant comments or 'dirty looks' or keeping a child out of social groups may happen. In these cases, when staff are informed, both parties are to be interviewed separately and then, if agreed with the students, together in an attempt to reconcile and to make the child see why their behaviour is not acceptable. Ownership of the solution should be given to the students and a method of monitoring the situation using third parties should be agreed. The consequences of continuing to behave in an unacceptable way towards each other must then be made clear. Regular contact should be maintained over the next few weeks to monitor progress.

Out of School Bullying

In cases of bullying outside of school hours either on the way to or from school we employ the same procedures as for incidents within school in order to promote the good behaviour of our students. The responsibility for the behaviour of students in these circumstances, however, lies with their parents and students. The 'school's' powers are very limited in these situations and in some cases police involvement may be appropriate.

Signs of bullying

Both staff and parents are in a position to observe changes in the behaviour of a child, which may indicate that they are being subjected to bullying. The following is a list of signs to look out for (this list is not intended to be exhaustive):

- Damage to or losses of items of clothing, property, money, or schoolwork.
- Are there signs of physical injuries, e.g., cuts or bruises?
- Academic achievement is perceived to have changed in a negative way.
- Playing truant or a reluctance to travel to and/or attend school.
- Being aware of children who register but fail to go to lessons.
- An unhappy child who may not wish to go out at breaks or lunchtimes.
- A child who threatens to self-harm.

Other behaviour patterns demonstrated by the student e.g., is the student conspicuously loud or quiet; is their behaviour appropriate when engaged in normal classroom interaction; is there unexplained behaviour changes e.g., moody, tearful, temper, frightened, reluctant to talk to or sit with friends.

Intervention

Students who have been bullied will be supported by members of staff in the following ways:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support
- Taking measures to restore self-esteem and confidence
- Informing parents or guardians (with permission of student)

Students who have bullied will be helped by members of staff in the following ways:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the student

The following disciplinary steps may/can be taken:

- Parental/student interviews
- Detentions
- Internal exclusion
- Removal from a class
- Police contact
- Withholding participation in any school activity (e.g. trip, sports event)
- Official warnings to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Conclusion

Victims of bullies need their self-esteem raised through activities designed to improve their social skills. It is very important that every effort should be made to ensure that ALL children are integrated into the school community. Children who bully need to be involved in activities for which they can be rewarded to encourage acceptable behaviour patterns.

Counselling sessions aimed at raising the self-esteem and assertiveness of the victim may be arranged with the pastoral care officers. The parent and victim are contacted regularly to ensure that the problem has been resolved.

This document is freely available to the entire school community. Information about it will be made available via School Council, assemblies and PDT periods and via the school newsletter and prospectus.