

MEADOWCROFT SCHOOL POLICY

Anti-Bullying

MC 013

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1. Introduction

This policy has been developed using the DfE Guidance documents Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2013) and Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (July 2013) and is mindful of the Equality Act 2010.

Meadowcroft School believes that every young person has the right to live each day in school without fear. Bullying, threats, name-calling, racial or sexual harassment, interference with property and any other action designed to frighten, humiliate or embarrass are totally unacceptable. Bullying takes place to some extent in every school; it is unfortunately a part of our culture and can be seen in families, friendships and in the workplace. To acknowledge this is not to accept it. It is a way of affirming our responsibility to work together as a community to create an environment in which everyone feels accepted, valued and able to get on with the job of learning and growing.

For this reason we strive:

- To ensure that all members of the school community follow the agreed Code of Conduct
- To ensure that there is good order and that the school is well organised
- To ensure that adults who are responsible for supervising young people carry out their duties effectively
- To ensure that all members of our community treat one another with respect and value our Equality and Diversity Policy
- To promote learning about citizenship, rights and responsibility so that it is clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour which cannot and will not be tolerated
- To develop an effective School Council cycle so that young people are able to address issues affecting their welfare

Bullying causes pain. At the very least it causes distress and at worst it ruins lives. Its legacy lives on into adult life. Young people and staff must never ignore or accept bullying in any form. The credibility of this policy depends upon everyone in our community speaking out and then taking agreed action whenever bullying arises.

Meet the team

To ensure all bullying concerns are dealt with in a timely and effective manner school ensures that there is a bullying lead for each site. This made is clearly made visible throughout each site and pupils and staff are aware who they report any concerns to. The bullying leads for each site are as follows,

- **The Hub- BSC**
- **The Gallery- BSC**
- **The Works- BSC**

2. Code of Conduct

At Meadowcroft School we all:

- Do our best to value each other, our community and its surroundings
- Take time to listen to each other
- Aim to do our best
- Ask for help when we need it
- Keep ourselves and each other safe
- Work together to make every day positive

3. Equality and Diversity Statement

At Meadowcroft School we are committed to providing services and an environment for learning and developing which reflect the breadth and diversity of society. Throughout our work and relationships with referring agencies, parents, and young people and between staff we aim at all times to ensure there is no discrimination relating to age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or disability. All children and young people have a right to a broad and balanced range of experiences, both in terms of the school curriculum and the enhancement activities that reflect in a positive way the range of cultures and experiences of the whole community. Young people leaving Meadowcroft School should do so with an understanding and respect for all members of their community.

4. What is Bullying?

Forms of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, beliefs, or culture
- Bullying related to LDD (learning difficulties or disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying) including the use of homophobic language
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual and misogynistic bullying.
- Transphobic bullying, including the use of transphobic language
- Cyber bullying
- Other prejudice based bullying not identified or classified above can include:

Racist Bullying

Unfortunately racism runs deep in our society. Consequently, racist bullying is still an issue in schools. Racist bullying singles out people because of skin colour, race or ethnic background. Some children are bullied because they are Black, Middle Eastern, East Asian, Jewish, South Asian, or Latine. When racist bullying occurs, children are taunted by peers, called names, or excluded from the group because of hatred, fear, or lack of understanding. In some instances, racist bullying may cause children to be embarrassed about their skin colour or ethnic background. To counteract the messages of a racist bully, HFS and supporting staff will find ways to help students feel good about their race or their heritage. HFS will report all racist

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bullying. Though it may start as one incident, knowing that racist bullying often escalates into worse offenses any form of bullying will not be tolerated and all incidents will be reported and recorded.

Religious Bullying

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs, and etiquette of different faiths can lead to religious bullying. In general, bullies target others because they are different. As a result, students can be taunted and teased about their religious beliefs and this will not be tolerated at HFS. HFS staff will keep in mind that anyone can be bullied because of their religious beliefs. People also are bullied because they are Catholic or Mormon. Atheists can be bullied for not believing in God. Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh students especially get bullied because of mixes of antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, and xenophobia and therefore HFS will prioritise support and provide informed lessons to promote the HFS anti bullying culture and educate students so they develop equality type thinking and attitudes. Many times, religious bullying results because of preconceived ideas or a lack of understanding about the differences between religions. These differences can include everything from beliefs, fasting, and prayer practices to the type of clothing they wear. Bullies point to these differences as a reason to harass and target the victim.

LGBTQ+ Bullying

LGBTQ+ bullying refers to being physically or verbally harassed because of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. LGBTQ+ bullying also can include name - calling, sexual bullying, cyberbullying and in some cases misogynistic type attitudes. This type of bullying affects people in LGBTQ+ communities as well as those who are perceived to be.

HFS acknowledge and recognise that you do not have to be gay to experience LGBTQ+ bullying. In fact, sometimes students are taunted and called names simply because they act and express themselves in a gender non-conforming way. Meanwhile, other students are bullied for being lesbians, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Peer on peer abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- physical and sexual abuse
- sexual harassment and violence
- emotional harm
- on and offline bullying
- teenage relationship abuse

It can even include grooming children for sexual and criminal exploitation.

It's hard to say just how widespread a problem it is. But we know that there's extensive evidence of peer-on-peer abuse in the context of both sexual and criminal exploitation. In autumn last year, the NSPCC announced a 29% increase in children seeking help from Childline due to peer-on-peer sexual abuse.

Other relevant forms of bullying:

Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, making a child/young person do something they don't want to do or stopping them from doing something they do want to do. Taking belongings, damaging someone's belongings.

Emotional being unfriendly, excluding and tormenting, sending malicious emails, or text messages, intimidating glances and body language.

Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing, insulting, blackmail and threats, making offensive remarks.

Discriminatory making offensive remarks and singling out for poor treatment based on someone's sex, race, gender re-assignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation – this may be unlawful (Equalities Act 2010).

Hidden or indirect bullying lying and spreading rumors, negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks, playing nasty jokes to embarrass or humiliate, mimicking unkindly, encouraging other to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's reputation.

- Falling out with previously good friends
- Being moody and bad tempered
- Being quiet and withdrawn
- Wanting to avoid leaving the house
- Aggression with brothers and sisters
- Doing less well at schoolwork, signs of struggling
- Unwilling to go to school or socialise
- Insomnia
- Anxiety
- Claiming to be unwell on a regular basis, particularly in the morning
- Coming home with cuts and bruises
- Self-harm/self-injurious behaviour
- Torn clothes
- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced

Staff have to be extra vigilant of children/young people's behaviour patterns as it can be difficult to separate out behaviour that stems from the child/young person's background/attachment issues and behaviour that stems from being bullied.

5. Our Approach

We will:

- Establish and maintain a caring ethos so that bullying is less likely to occur
- Encourage discussion about bullying so that it does not become a hidden activity
- Listen to students when they talk about or report bullying
- Provide good adult role models, i.e. never misusing authority as power to humiliate or dominate

6. Prevention

Our best prospect of reducing or even eliminating bullying is through constantly expecting all members of the community to treat each other with respect and understanding in line with our Code of Conduct. As a staff we can do this best by example rather than preaching.

The role of staff in preventing bullying is important in three ways:

1. Staff behaviour sets the tone of the organisation's day-to-day life. Bullying is more likely to occur where staff adopt authoritarian or dominating styles. This gives young people the message that staff authority comes from her or his power rather than from legitimacy

2. Young people's self-esteem should be supported. A strong sense of self-worth helps build strong relationships, which in turn both reduce the likelihood of bullying and, if it does occur, reduces its harmful impact
3. Spotting signs that a young person might be the victim of bullying is important. There are many indicators of possible bullying – loss of, or damage to, possessions, physical injury, change in disposition, isolation from usual friends, tearfulness, deterioration of work and others. Verbal bullying should never be ignored.

Further prevention strategies employed by the organisation are as follows:

- Our code of conduct is published and regularly discussed
- We ensure young people's consultation and participation is formalised through School Council meetings
- Discussions take place informally and during circle times on the nature of bullying and particular incidents
- The school curriculum includes examples of the misuse of power and status
- We highlight and value examples of kind behavior, both in school and in the wider world, e.g. in the news, media, entertainment, etc.
- Increased supervision takes place in parts of the school where bullying may be more likely

7. Dealing with Incidents

Where prevention has failed and bullying has taken place we will deal with it carefully. We will not give way to anger however we may feel about what has happened and its effect on the victim.

Our two aims are:

- To protect the victim's self-esteem and self-confidence and to keep her or him safe
- To modify the attitude and behaviour of the perpetrator(s).

Where an incident of Bullying is believed to of occurred, staff will log this as suspected bullying through our online behavior system. One this has been logged the Bullying team along with the pastoral department will conduct an investigation to establish if the incident recorded is a case of Bullying. If it is indeed a case of Bullying, the original incident log is upgraded to a Bullying KPI. Head of safeguarding and the site specific FLO to be informed

8. Procedures and consequences

Every case is different. Professional judgment and experience help staff react in the best way. This means the actions below might be amended in the interests of individual students, but in essence what follows are our standard actions in response to bullying.

We:

Step 1- Mediation between victim and bully.

Talk with the victim – he or she must be given time and encouragement to talk, not just about the details of what happened, but also about feelings. He or she should feel supported, and an agreement made about meeting again

Talk with the perpetrator – although details will be needed, it is important not to get bogged down in detail when it is feelings which are at the heart of the issue. The student needs to be encouraged to consider and understand how the victim feels. It might be appropriate to talk about her or his personal relationships with others in general. In any case the perpetrator will be required to come to an agreement about how to behave in the future towards the victim and others.

Consider setting up a victim/bully meeting. This is only useful in some cases. It can help the victim recover from the incident and give the bully a better insight into the hurt he or she has caused. It can also help create a new relationship. It is wrong, however, to have a meeting if the victim is not ready for it. Pressure should not be put on the victim if he or he is nervous or worried about meeting with the bully face-to-face.

Step 2- Inform parents/carers

If the bullying continues parents of the perpetrator are to be informed. Alongside this the perpetrator will also face additional consequential action such as, the loss of break time and a 1 hour afterschool reparation session.

Step 3- Follow-up

Follow-up meetings with both the victim and the bully will be arranged to confirm that the problem has been solved. Where it has not, further work will be done

The involvement of other agencies where on-going support is needed either by the bully or the victim or when continued work is called for over a period of time, e.g. the young person's Social Worker, the organisation's Independent Visitor, the SAW, BES and SEN team. Stage 2 repeated.

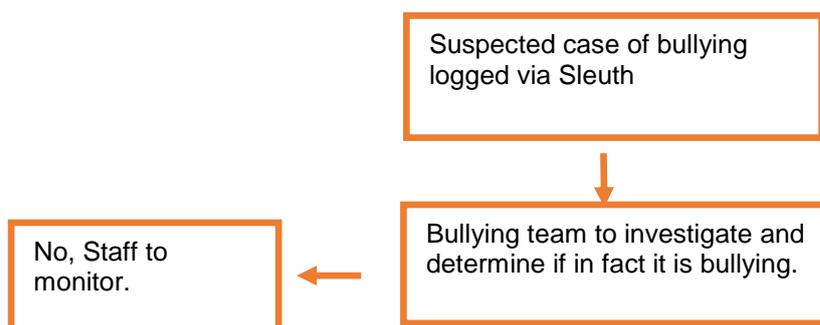
Step 4- Parental involvement

If steps 1-3 have failed, then parents from both victim and perpetrator will be invited in. An impact statement will be provided by the victim and a discussion will take place in how the school and perpetrators parents can support the perpetrator to cease.

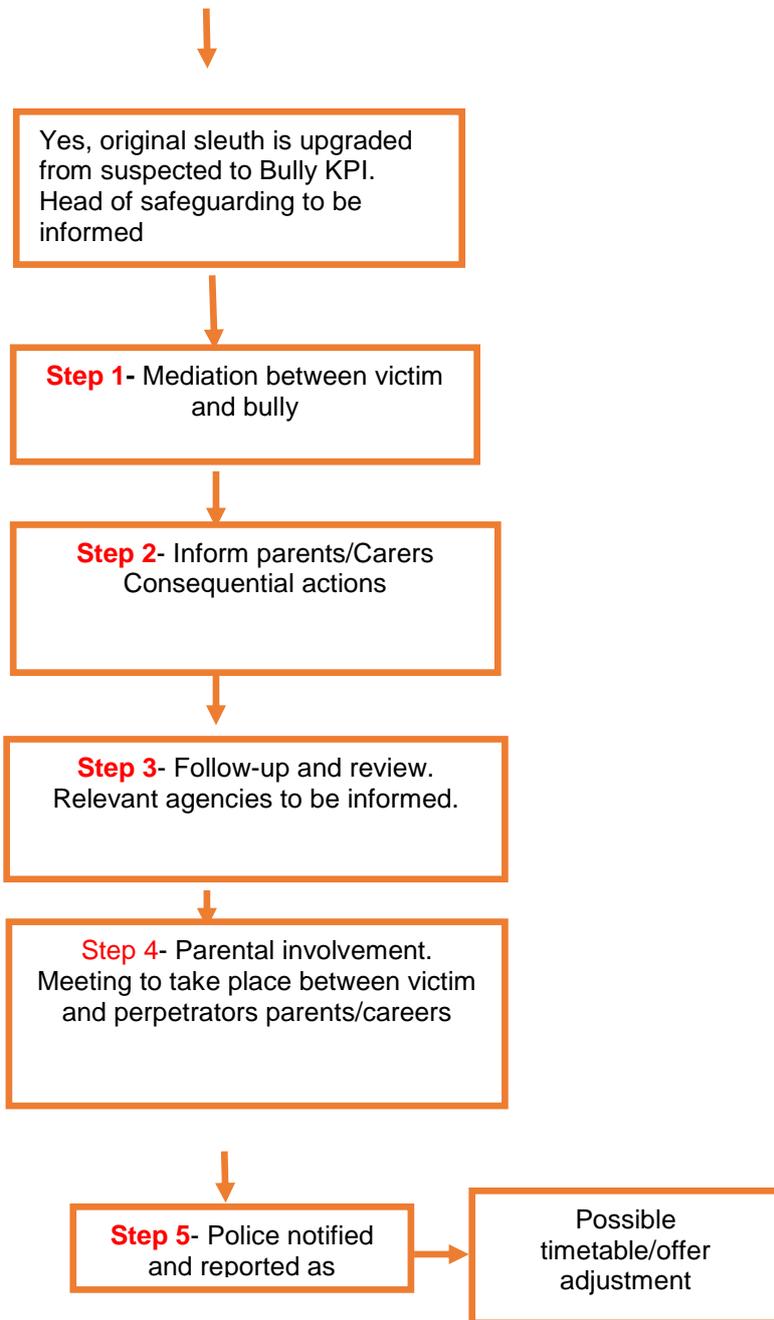
Step 5- Police

If the abuse continues, the school will have no choice but to inform the police under 'Harassment', At this point it may be suitable for the perpetrator to be placed on home education until a full police investigation has taken place

Bullying intervention flow diagram



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9. Key Messages

9.1 What can you do if you are Being Bullied?

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong
- Be proud of who you are.
- Be assertive. Say "no", walk confidently away. Fighting back will make things worse
- Tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support
- If you need to you can talk to a member of the School Council who will help you to understand the problem and bring it to an appropriate adult

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- All staff will take you seriously and will aim to deal with bullies in a way which will address the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

9.2 If you know someone is Being Bullied

- Take action
- Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own. Encourage the victim to tell an adult
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

9.3 Help and Support Will Be Given as is Appropriate to Both the Victim and the Bully

We support the victim:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a trusted adult
- By informing their parents/carers
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it
- By taking appropriate steps to prevent further bullying

We offer the bully support and challenge in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened to discover why they became involved
- By informing the bullies' parents/carers
- By continuing to work with the bullies to change their behaviour patterns and to challenge prejudiced attitudes as far as possible
- By using restorative justice techniques to resolve the conflict where possible

10. Performance Standards

- All staff and pupils will have an understanding of what bullying is
- All staff and pupils will know what the bullying policy states and should follow procedures when incidents are reported
- All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated and monitored
- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school
- If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to TELL and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively

11. Bullying by Staff

- If a member of staff commits “deliberately hurtful behaviour to pupils repeated over a time”, i.e. bullying this will be treated as an allegation of professional abuse and will be reported to the LA LADO and investigated using the Child Protection/Allegation of Professional Abuse Procedures
- All staff are encouraged to report such behaviour to the Designated Safeguarding of Children Officer
- ‘Bullying in the Workplace’ is the subject of a separate policy document.

12. Partnerships

In order to ensure ‘Best practice’ at Meadowcroft School we have signed up with the Anti-bullying alliance. The alliance is unique coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve a vision to: stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

The ABA has three key areas of work,

- Supporting learning and sharing best practice through membership.
- Raising awareness of bullying through Anti-Bullying Week and other coordinated, shared campaigns.
- Delivering programme work at a national and local level to help stop bullying and bring lasting change to children's lives;

By working with the Anti bullying alliance, Meadowcroft ensures that we adopt the most effective and current strategies to dealing with bullying in schools. The ABA is provides advice and support for our team when dealing with situations.