



Anti-Bullying Policy

Applicable to:	Responsible Officer	Date Adopted	Date to be reviewed:
All Staff	AHT	August 2020	August 2022

Background

Providing a safe and happy learning environment is integral to achieving the wider objectives of school improvement: raising attainment, improving school attendance; promoting equality and diversity; and ensuring the well-being of all members of the school community. If a student feels safe at school, they are in a much better position to realise five positive outcomes: they can be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being.

Purpose

We aim to create an environment where students can grow and flourish without fear; each student has the right to be safe in and out of school and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable.

We aim:

- To ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied.
- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and during off- site activities, such as via cyber-bullying.
- To support everyone in actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To clarify for all students and staff that bullying is wholly and always unacceptable.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of students is paramount.
- To promote an environment where children feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or know about any bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in students
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care over those in their charge and the need to be alert to signs of bullying.

- To ensure that all staff are aware of procedures through regular training.
- To work with external agencies and companies (such as Humanutopia) to raise awareness of and tackle bullying.

In addition this policy sets out a range of proactive strategies, reactive strategies and intervention systems which are in place to:

- Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- Safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for them.
- Apply appropriate consequences to the student/s causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, in some cases through multi-agency support, and using Restorative Justice techniques where applicable.

Consultation Process

This policy was developed in consultation with relevant staff and governors and with reference to the model Anti-Bullying Policy from Oxfordshire City Council.

Relationship to other School Policies

The Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies:

- Single Equalities Policy
- Attitude to Learning Policy / Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- SEN Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Usage Policy [including e-safety]

Responsibilities

We consider that everyone within our school community has a part to play. In order to tackle the issue of bullying we recognise that we need a range of strategies to deal with it. A whole school approach is needed to educate students and staff to ensure that it is not tolerated, and that it is dealt with sensitively and consistently.

The Headteacher has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst students. The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity to discuss and review strategies.
- Determine the strategies and procedures;
- Discuss development of the strategies with the Senior Leadership Team;
- Ensure appropriate training is available;
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, volunteers, parents and students; and report to the governing body.

The Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion) will:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies.
- Keep the Headteacher informed of incidents.
- Refer and liaise with multi-agency working groups if necessary.
- Arrange relevant student training and determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.
- Ensure proper record keeping.

The Directors of Faculty will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice.
- Know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.
- Explore opportunities to raise awareness of Anti-Bullying through the curriculum where possible.

Tutors will:

- Be responsible for liaising with the Heads of Year and wider Student Support Teams regarding all incidents involving students in their tutor groups;
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution; and
- Promote Anti-Bullying through the tutorial programme where possible.
- Make initial contact with parents to notify them of events, where appropriate.

The Heads of Year and wider Student Support Team will:

- Take a lead in investigating reported incidents of bullying
- Take a lead in facilitating conflict resolution (Restorative Justice) conversations.
- Ensure appropriate record keeping of bullying incidents and have oversight of trends.
- Use the assembly programme to promote Anti-Bullying where possible.
- Liaise with external agencies where appropriate.
- Complete Bullying logs where necessary ensuring effective record keeping.
- Communicate issues and interventions with the parents of students involved.

All Staff and Volunteers will:

- Know and follow all relevant policies and procedures.
- Keep clear records of bullying on SIMS.
- Be aware and talk to students.
- Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity.
- Take action to reduce the risk of bullying at all times and in places where is most likely.

Governors will:

- Liaise with the Assistant Headteacher over all anti-bullying strategies, and be made aware of individual cases of bullying where appropriate
- Discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies and will discuss the Assistant Headteacher's reports on the working of this policy.
- Ensure that the school arrange for a regular programme of staff development, which will include child protection and anti-bullying strategies. This will include training for support staff as well as teachers.

In order to monitor the Policy's implementation and evaluate its impact on student outcomes, Governors will:

- Appoint a Named Governor.
- Approve relevant policies.
- Expect the school's SLT to alert them to any emerging problems and notable successes.
- Review the Policy every two years, or sooner if legislative changes dictate.

Students:

To tackle bullying we need to establish an ethos of being an open school. All of our students have an important role in ensuring that our policy is effective, by reporting bullying incidents to members of staff. Students should support the school policy by not being bystanders when they see and hear incidents of bullying within the school environment, students are encouraged to become allies. All students must consider the wishes and feelings of other members of the school community in regard to their own behaviour with specific awareness of how bullying behaviour may adversely affect the emotional well-being of others. A major part of the strategy will consist of educating students in how to cope with bullying. Students will work proactively to promote an anti-bullying culture via contributions to the Student Leadership Team as well as specific support groups such as LGBTQ+ and Diversity.

- Students must know to whom they should go if they are being bullied or if they are concerned about another child.

Parents & Carers:

Parents/carers have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying behaviour to a

member of the school staff and allow the person investigating the incident the time to ensure it is a full and accurate investigation which ensures student safety remains uncompromised. The role of parents/carers in supporting their child to develop the range of social and emotional skills which minimise the chances of their child bullying cannot be underestimated and will significantly support the school in seeking to reduce incidents of bullying or preventing incidents of bullying. Parents should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive, active approach towards educating students on how to combat it. Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures.

Implementation

Definition of Terms

Bullying is considered to be behaviour that is repetitive, wilful or persistent, intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or a group. As a result there is an imbalance of power leaving the victim feeling defenceless.

(Anti-Bullying Alliance definition)

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

(Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies,

DfE, 2011, p. 4)

At John Mason School we recognise that there is no “hierarchy” of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. We understand that bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. We understand that all children have disagreements with each other and friends fall out for a time. This is not usually considered bullying.

Four main types of bullying can be identified:

Verbal Bullying

Verbal bullying is a **type of bullying** that takes place when the victim is threatened, called names and made to feel inferior. Verbal bullying usually focuses on a specific area, such as race, nationality, disability, sexuality, physical appearance or ability.

Physical Bullying

Physical **bullying** takes place when the victim is physically assaulted in the form of physical aggression leading to bruises, torn clothes, personal belongings being stolen/damaged or any other kind of physical injury.

Social Bullying

Social bullying is a **type of bullying** that takes place when someone is deliberately excluded from games and other group activities and treated like an outsider. Laughing and making fun of someone behind their backs, spreading mean stories, writing bad things and teasing the victim emotionally.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying targets its victims through networking sites, emails, chat rooms, instant messaging or even mobile phones. By texting the victim posting obscene pictures or unkind comments, the perpetrator succeeds in causing untold damage to the target as a number of people may be able to access this kind of information online.

Prejudice-related

For example, bullying or harassment that is sexuality based, gender based, sexist, sexual or transphobic, racist or discriminating against religion, Special Educational Needs, disabilities, health conditions or a person's home circumstances, such as being looked after, or caring for a family member. This includes actions or language that discriminates against people for any of these reasons, or other reasons relating to a person's identity.

Discriminatory Language

Discriminatory language not only undermines confidence and self-esteem of individuals, but reflects negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group, and in some cases is illegal. A culture where discriminatory language goes unchallenged is likely to be a culture where bullying is more prevalent.

Discriminatory language of any kind is not acceptable and will be challenged, whether verbal, written (including graffiti) or electronic. Education about diversity will be delivered through the curriculum, displays, assemblies and tolerance will be modelled by all staff. In particular we will not accept any derogatory language that is:

- Sexual or sexist
- Relating to special educational needs, disabilities or health conditions
- Gender based
- Sexuality related
- Transphobic
- Racist
- Relating to religion

- Classist
- Relating to a person's home circumstances

Sexual

For example inappropriate or unwanted physical contact, verbal comments or cyber messages of a sexual nature.

Bullying includes the above but is not limited to this. It also includes:

- Any form of behaviour which is the result of a specific strategy to make an individual feel miserable
- Organising others to do any of the above
- Excluding an individual in such a way that they are made to feel vulnerable and different in a negative way

We reject all of the above forms of bullying and will not tolerate them in our school community.

Signs & Symptoms - Signs that a child may be being bullied:

A child may indicate by their behaviour that they are being bullied. If your child, or a child for whom you are responsible, shows some of the following signs, bullying may be responsible and you might want to ask if someone is bullying or threatening them.

Children may:

- Be frightened of walking to and from school
- Change their usual route
- Not want to travel to school alone
- Beg you to drive them to school
- Be unwilling to go to school - feign illness
- Begin truanting
- Begin doing poorly in their school work
- Come home regularly with clothes or books damaged
- Come home starving (bully taking dinner money?)
- Become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence
- Become distressed and anxious
- Cry themselves to sleep, have nightmares
- Have their possessions go missing
- Ask for money or start stealing (to pay the bully?)
- Continually 'lose' their pocket money
- Refuse to talk about what's wrong
- Have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches

- Begin to bully other children, siblings
- Become aggressive and unreasonable
- Give improbable excuses for any of the above
- Become withdrawn or shy
- Become moody or agitated
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Stops taking part in activities they once enjoyed

More serious signs may include:

- Self harm:- attempt or threaten to commit suicide

It is important to note that the above signs could be indicating that there are more serious safeguarding concerns, which is why it is so important that concerns are reported and discussed as appropriate.

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to Safeguarding Officers.

Signs that a child *may be* bullying:

Given the short – and long – term consequences not only for victims but for the bullies as well, it is important to keep an eye out for signs that a child may be bullying others; a child who bullies may exhibit some of the following behaviours:

- Frequent name – calling
- Regular bragging
- A need to always get their own way
- Spending a lot of time with younger or less powerful children
- A lack of empathy for others
- A defiant or hostile attitude (easily takes offence)
- Has inexplicable amounts of extra money/food/new products.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the appropriate person.

Dealing with incidents

A response to deal with incidents of bullying will be graduated; however where students do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, tougher action will be taken to deal with persistent and targeted bullying. Sanctions are determined by the nature of the bullying on a case by case basis and might include:

- Writing a letter of apology
- Removal from the group (in class);
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Provision of a ‘safe place’
- Peer support / Meeting our Peer Behaviour Panel

- Restorative Justice
- Withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
- Isolation
- Parental contact
- Anti-bullying contracts
- Referral to the community police for intervention.
- Liaison with other schools, agencies and community groups.
- Fixed term and permanent exclusion from school. An exclusion would only be considered in a case of extreme and continuing severe behaviour, bullying, sexual harassment etc. The Headteacher will notify the Chair of Governors of any exclusion, even for a short period, that results from such behaviour.
- A programme of education where it is evident that the perpetrators' attack was of a discriminatory nature.

The school will ensure the policy is available for stakeholders internally via the staff-shared drive and externally via the website.

The policy will be a live document and will be used on a regular basis by the Governors, Headteacher and SLT.

The school will always consider the need for reasonable adjustments for all students with disabilities and statements of special education needs where appropriate, with specialist consideration for students on then SEN Code of Practice.

Bullying outside school premises

Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and may be acted upon. The school should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority, of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member. Whilst John Mason School staff will endeavour to do all they can reasonably do to act on bullying incidents off school site, it should be noted that ultimate responsibility lies with the parent or guardian. This is especially true of cyberbullying, where there is often very little tangible evidence to be used as a basis for dealing with such incidents. In this case, John Mason School staff should offer advice on next steps. Our overwhelming priority is to support the student/s and ensure safety to the best of our ability whilst in school.

Through a high profile *Anti-Bullying Week* to coincide with national events, assemblies, tutor times, lessons and through regular discussions at Parent and Student Forums we will do all we reasonably can to keep the commitment to reducing

instances of bullying.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team will consider reports of bullying to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled, with a view to improving the school's strategies. These reports will also enable patterns to be identified.

The school will review this policy in a two year cycle and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Governors will oversee the internal audit arrangements; providing the appropriate level of support and challenge to ensure that the agreed practice and procedure have been implemented through:

- Scrutiny of all reporting information requested and received
- Identification of any associated risks, trends, underlying or contributory factors
- Assessing any opportunities for change to enhance existing practice and achievement of the school's vision
- Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of policy and practice in line with the agreed policy review schedule or as necessary.

Further related information

Bullying incidents with safeguarding concerns, or that are related to students on the Child Protection Plan, or who are Children in Care must be discussed with the Senior Child Protection Officer.

Appendix

This policy takes due regard of the following documents:

Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE 2014

“Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools.” (Reference: DFE-00094-2014)

Equality Act 2010

The Independent School Standard Regulations

2010 Education Act 2011

Also previous awareness of:

“Bullying – Don’t Suffer in Silence – An Anti-Bullying Pack for Schools” (64/2000), DfE 2000

Cyberbullying , DfE 2007

Homophobic Bullying, DfE

2007

Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, DfE 2008

Bullying Conflict & Resolution / Secondary, Prim-Ed

Useful policies / booklets / websites for community use:

<http://www.childnet.com> <http://www.digizen.org> <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

www.antibullying.net/resourceswwwlinks.htm www.kidscape.org.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/bullying