

# MAGHULL HIGH SCHOOL



## Anti-Bullying Policy

We at Maghull High School believe that all students have the right to feel happy, safe and included. Students have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear.

**All bullying of any sort, is therefore, unacceptable.**

We recognise the effects that bullying can have on students' feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

**Our definition of bullying:** Bullying involves dominance of one student by another, or a group of others, is premeditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobile phones.

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within school we will pay particular attention to:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying
- Bullying because of students' religious beliefs
- Bullying because of physical characteristics or accents
- Bullying because of students' sexual orientation ( including the use of homophobic or transphobic language )
- Bullying of students who have special educational needs or disabilities.
- Bullying of very able students

**Online bullying:** Online bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. Students are given guidance through assemblies and curriculum areas on the traumas of cyberbullying and how to react to it.

#### **Preventing Online Bullying**

- Making the whole school community aware of the impact of online abuse
- Making all students aware of their responsibilities in their use of ICT
- Conducting searches of Internet use in school by being able to access any e-mails and website use
- Providing and publicising different ways of reporting cyberbullying
- Providing support for all students who experience cyberbullying in or out of school
- Making clear to all students the sanctions in place for the misuse of ICT both in and out of school
- Keeping records of all incidents involving online abuse

#### **Supporting Students Who Have Experienced Online Bullying**

- Making sure the student knows not to retaliate or return a message

- Making sure they keep relevant evidence and not delete it
- Check the student knows ways to prevent it happening again
- Taking immediate action to contain the incident when content has been circulated
- Use disciplinary powers to confiscate phones that are being used for online abuse
- In cases of illegal content contact the police

In addition to this they are advised to:

- Always respect others – to be careful what they say online and what images they send
- Think before they send – whatever is sent can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever
- Treat their password as private information – keep it to themselves
- Only give their mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends
- If they are concerned in any way talk to an adult they trust.

## **SIGNS OF BULLYING**

These can include:

- Attendance problems
- Reluctance to stay after school/reluctance to go home
- Poor class work-changes in behaviour
- Anxiety
- Losing money and belongings
- Being aggressive, bullying others

## **ANY STUDENT WHO EXPERIENCES BULLYING WILL BE SUPPORTED**

### **Creating an Anti-Bullying Climate in School**

We at Maghull High School actively promote positive behaviour to create an environment where students behave well and take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being.

Our curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach students how to constructively manage their relationships with others

PSHE lessons, assemblies, tutor time and the work of our Learning Mentors are some of the many examples that are used to show students what they can do to prevent bullying.

We also promote appropriate behaviour through direct teaching, and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where these skills are learned and practised. Our aim is to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the school community.

Bullying will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the information we give to students and parents when they join our school.

We use school assemblies and in particular PSHE lessons to reinforce this message. Information about our policy and the phone numbers for Helplines are available on the school's website

### **Strategies for the Prevention of Bullying:**

- Providing a safe and secure learning environment for all students

- Reducing and eradicating, wherever possible, instances in which students are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy
- Promoting an ethos which values individual effort and achievement and develops a sense of respect for others
- Encouraging an ethos which emphasises tolerance and consideration of others.
- Encouraging activities through the curriculum or with support of our strong pastoral system to help build confidence and self esteem
- Making spaces available at breaks and lunchtime so that our more vulnerable students can meet and socialise
- Monitoring student behaviour and attitudes towards bullying
- Providing a supportive climate which will encourage students to report incidents of bullying.
- Providing high quality support for individuals who are bullied or bully
- Establishing a means of dealing with bullying, and of providing support to students who have been bullied.
- Responding effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to us
- Ensuring that all students, parents and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it

### **Strategies for Dealing with Bullying**

- Offering immediate support to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student that it is not their fault they are being bullied
- Explaining that there are a number of different approaches to dealing with the incident
- Affirming that bullying can be stopped and that school will persist with intervention until it does
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence
- Involving friends or older students in peer support or a buddying scheme

### **Procedures**

**Students who have been bullied, who see others being bullied or members of staff who receive reports that a student has been bullied, should report this as soon as possible to a member of the Pastoral Team.**

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously, recorded on our Bullying Form. This is followed up by a member of the Pastoral Team. They will all be logged in the student's file. Parents/carers will be kept fully informed. Any member of the Pastoral Team or any other member of staff that deals with a bullying issue will follow up after an incident to check that the bullying has not started again. This will be done within two weeks and again at a later date.

Where bullying is of a racist nature, we will record this using the Equal Opportunity Form.

Where bullying, according to the investigator, is of an inequality nature, this will be reported.

Students who have bullied will be encouraged to discuss what happened, why they became involved and what needs to change.

School will monitor carefully the nature and frequency of bullying. We will regularly survey students and frequently make clear that students must speak out against bullying and must tell.

**When tougher measures are needed:** If a student refuses to obey clear and explained instructions then at this point it may be necessary to invoke the full range of sanctions that are detailed in the school's Behaviour and Safety Policy.

These can include:

- Withdrawal from breaks and lunchtime
- Detention
- Internal exclusion
- Fixed term exclusion from school

In the most serious cases it could include permanent exclusion from school.

### **Bullying Outside of School**

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school.

Where a student or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will

- talk to students about how to avoid or handle it
- speak to the students if they are from our school and inform their parents
- talk if appropriate to the Head Teacher of another school whose students are bullying
- talk to the local police

### **Our Responsibilities**

Everyone within school is expected to

- Act in a respectful way and supportive way towards one another
- Adhere to and promote the objectives of this policy

Students are expected to

- Report all incidents of bullying
- Report any suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school

Parents can help by

- Supporting this policy and procedures
- Contacting their child's tutor or any other member of staff immediately if they have any concerns
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school

### **Evaluating our policy**

We will evaluate our anti-bullying policy using the following measures:

- The number of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period
- Students' perceptions of the scale through periodic questionnaires and discussions with the Year and School Councils

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. This involves contacting the clerk to the Governors through school.

### **Related Policies**

Our Anti-bullying Policy links with, and should be read in conjunction with, the other sections of the Safeguarding Policy, and Behaviour and Safety Policy and Home School Agreement.

