

THE MAELOR SCHOOL



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Committee Responsible	Wellbeing Committee
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Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to provide information and guidance for parents, governors and teachers about the school's philosophy and practice in relation to combating the incidence of bullying at school.

This whole school policy provides a framework for changing attitudes towards bullying. As well as dealing with individual instances of bullying this policy sets out planned activities to help create an ethos that does not tolerate any form of verbal, psychological or physical bullying of one person by another.

1.0 Principles

- 1.1 All teachers, all support staff and student representatives will be fully involved in the implementation of this policy. On-going training, together with the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy, will promote an understanding and commitment to combat bullying at The Maelor School.
- 1.2 All classroom teachers have an important role to play in reinforcing positive messages about acceptable behaviour.
- 1.3 The pastoral programme will contain specific sections on bullying.
- 1.4 Bullying does not only happen at school. It is part of the wider community and can take the form of cyber bullying. This policy will need to be publicised to all parents and the wider community.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 What is Bullying?

Bullying is any action carried out by an individual or group designed to cause hurt or suffering to another individual or group.

Bullying is typically:

name calling
teasing
demanding money
making threats
being moved off bus seats
dirty looks
pushing
hitting
spitting
being ignored

spreading rumours
hiding belongings
cyber bullying – Facebook, Twitter etc.

2.2 Why Does Bullying Occur?

Bullying most often happens when actual or perceived differences between groups and individuals are highlighted, for example.

- **physical and academic ability or performance**
- **race, creed, gender, sexual orientation and social class.**
- **friendship groups and club or team membership**

No matter how mild the act of bullying it is important that all acts of bullying are recognised and dealt with immediately. Any form of bullying will have a corrupting influence on the other pupils that witness what is happening.

2.3 Who are the Victims?

It is difficult to judge in advance who might be seen to be vulnerable to bullying. Victims may be pupils who:

- **are new to school**
- **are different in appearance**
- **speak differently**
- **are from different backgrounds than other pupils**
- **suffer from low self-esteem**
- **react strongly when bullied**
- **are more nervous or anxious than most pupils**
- **are isolated from friendship groups**
- **are different academically**

2.4 What are the Symptoms of Bullying?

Most victims of bullying will elect to stay silent and live with the bullying in the hope that it will go away. All staff should be observant and look for the following signs that may indicate that an individual is a victim of bullying:

- **avoiding social areas at break/lunch times**
- **losing dinner money**
- **buying friendship with sweets/money/cigarettes**
- **being frequently absent from school**
- **being ill with stomach aches/headaches/feeling sick**
- **sudden lack of interest in schoolwork**

3.0 Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with through the pastoral system.

3.1 Subject Teachers/Form Tutors

A class teacher will be watchful, observe the social relationships between pupils in the class and act upon any concerns arising from the behaviours, or reports made by pupils, in their teaching/tutor group.

Where a teacher comes across bullying he/she must;

- 1 Remain calm; take charge of the situation. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation;
- 2 Take the incident or report seriously;
- 3 Take action as quickly as possible;
- 4 Think hard about whether action needs to be private or public and which pupils are involved;
- 5 Reassure the victim(s) and not make them feel inadequate or foolish;
- 6 Offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s);
- 7 Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove;
- 8 Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view;
- 9 Use the **No Blame Approach** to help defuse the situation and educate the bully about the consequences of their behaviour and how they can help the victim;
- 10 Punish the bully if necessary, but with extreme caution. Reacting aggressively or punitively gives the message that it is all right to bully if you have the power;
- 11 Explain clearly the punishment and why it is being given;
- 12 Inform the appropriate Head of Year/Pastoral Manager of the incident that occurred and what action you took; inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant, e.g. unsupervised toilets.

Note: It is acknowledged that the 'No Blame Approach' may not be relevant to situations of serious unprovoked aggression which will be dealt with as serious offences through the normal channels of school sanctions. The 'No Blame Approach' should nevertheless provide the cornerstone of our dealings with situations here, as most of these could be regarded as lower level incidents if spotted and acted upon early.

3.2 Head of Year/Pastoral Manager

The Head of Year / Pastoral Manager has an important role to play in co-ordinating the efforts of all to reduce bullying in the school. They must:

- work with parents who report incidents of bullying to resolve the situation;
- follow up all incidents of bullying;
- encourage both the victim and the aggressor to record the events in writing;
- interview all parties and record the discussions in writing;
- contact the parents/guardians of the pupils concerned and seek their support;
- place any written reports in the respective pupils' files for an agreed period of time;
- deal with friends' involvement to prevent escalation.

3.3 General Advice to Staff

1. Make sure the incident does not live on through reminders from you;
2. Try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident if you uncover the trigger factor;
3. If you have to deal with bullying, what should you avoid?
Do not:
 - be over-protective and refuse to allow the victim to help him/herself;
 - assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour, with the bully; keep the whole incident a secret because you have dealt with it;
 - try to hide the incident from the parents of the victim or of the bully;
 - call in the parents without having a constructive plan to offer either side.
4. Teachers should write down details of incidents.

4.0 Curriculum Support

1 The issue of bullying will be addressed through the curriculum for all pupils.

2 The school's pastoral programme will include lessons/drama/role play that looks at strategies to avoid bullying including:

- ways of avoiding being an attraction to bullies;

- ways of dealing with different forms of bullying;
- ways of not giving in to bully gratification;
- using the peer group for support and to keep safe;
- developing confidence to tell an adult about problems;
- engaging pupils in discussing and helping develop systems for reporting bullies;
- encouraging creative work - video presentation, poster campaigns, assemblies that tackle the issue of bullying;
- encouraging pupils in examining the school environment, highlighting areas that need regular supervision or would benefit from improvement by minor alterations.

5.0 **The Role of Parents**

The school recognises the important role that parents play in supporting an anti-bullying policy.

Parents can support this policy by:

1. recognising the signs where a child might be the victim of bullying, e.g. a pattern of headaches or stomach aches in the morning, lethargy and an unwillingness to attend school, asking for more pocket money, damaged clothing or bruising missing belongings, any sudden change in moods.
2. taking an active interest in the child's social life, discussing friendships, how lunchtimes are spent and the journey to and from school;
3. informing the school immediately if bullying is suspected and asking for an interview with the Head of Year/Pastoral Manager.
4. working with school to devise strategies to help the child and providing him/her with support inside and outside school;

5. reassuring the child that there is nothing wrong with him/her.

6.0 **The Role of Governors**

1. To formally approve the school's policy.
2. Review the implementation of the policy on an annual basis.
3. Publicise the policy to parents and members of the community whenever possible.
4. Bring to the notice of Headteacher any incidents of bullying which have come to their attention.

6.1 **Restorative Justice**

Where it is deemed desirable and useful, Restorative Justice will take place at the appropriate time. This may be led by our Police Liaison Officer or a member of the Pastoral Team. Restorative Justice is a victim focused resolution to a crime or a non-crime incident. The victim is given an opportunity to meet face to face with the bully in a safe and supervised setting to talk through the impact that the bullying has had, or is having, on them. Victims need to know that an offender fully appreciates the harm they have caused. An apology or some kind of reparation are the likely outcomes which help the victim move on and put the incident behind them.

Restorative Justice is designed to empower the victim and to help the perpetrators understand the consequences of their behaviour. The offender must accept responsibility for what they have done. Their participation is voluntary.