ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY 2024-2026

Approved by:	Ratified by Governing Body	**Date:** June 2024
Effective Date:	September 2017	
Last reviewed on:	June 2024	
Next review due by:	June 2026	
Reviewed by:	Karen Hayward – Executive Principal	
Website:		
Yes/No	YES	

Rationale

The Federation believes that in a caring school, respect for individuals and good relationships between all members of the school community are central to its well-being. Bullying will not be condoned as it can cause serious long-term damage to the student's health, educational attainment and outlook on life.

Policy

Bullying damages lives. The aim of this policy is to provide students with a safe and secure working environment free from bullying and harassment. It is recognised that all schools are likely to have a problem with bullying at some time. We aim to provide the means and opportunity for students to let us know if bullying occurs and the strategies to deal with it when it does. This policy aims to produce a consistent response by the school to any bullying incidents that may take place.

Aims of the Anti-Bullying Policy

- To create an environment where students feel safe and free from bullying behaviours
- Develop channels of communication so that students feel comfortable to report bullying
- Assert clearly that we do not tolerate bullying or any kind of harassment

Guidelines

1. RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF BULLYING

Bullying is deliberately harmful behaviour over a period of time. Staff will watch out for the signs and symptoms of the following forms of bullying:

- Physical e.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal e.g. name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect, e.g. spreading rumours or social exclusion
- Misuse of mobile phones and all forms of social media

The Federation recognises that any student can be bullied but certain factors that can make bullying more likely are:

- A lack of close friends in the school
- Shyness
- Race, religion, sexual orientation or social class
- A disability or some other obvious difference, e.g. stammering or acne.

Staff will suspect bullying is occurring if a student:

- Becomes withdrawn and anxious
- Shows a deterioration in his or her work
- Starts to attend school erratically
- Has spurious illnesses
- Persistently arrives late at school
- Prefers to stay with adults.

2. SPECIFIC TARGETED TYPES OF BULLYING

2.1 Racist Bullying

- Verbal abuse by name calling, racist jokes and offensive language
- Physical threats or attacks
- Wearing provocative badges or insignia
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Racist graffiti or other written insults

2.2 Sexual Bullying

- Abusive name calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- In its most extreme form, sexual assault or rape

2.3 Homophobic or Transphobic Bullying

- Spreading rumours
- Social isolation
- Text messaging
- Frightening looks
- In addition to more obvious forms of bullying such as name calling

2.4 Cyber Bullying

- Cyberbullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass or target another person. Online threats and mean, aggressive, or rude texts, tweets, posts, or messages all count. So does posting personal information, pictures, or videos designed to hurt or

embarrass someone else.

- We will not tolerate this type of bullying and we could also involved the police if such behaviour is occurring outside of school. We are also able to search a students phone or computer area in line with our statutory obligations to keep children safe. Please refer to our "Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy" for further information.

2.5 Students with Special Educational Needs

Students with Special Educational Needs may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other students; however, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific difficulties or disability. This said, it should not be forgotten that any child may experience bullying and that anything that can be seen as different by peers may potentially lead to bullying (i.e., A G & T, LAC, etc.)

3. PREVENTING BULLYING

The Federation will take every opportunity to demonstrate to students, through the curriculum and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying. Staff will not ignore bullying or suspected bullying. All school staff will, wherever possible, intervene to prevent bullying incidents from taking place.

The Federation will encourage students to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher or other adult within the schools. Students will be told that they may bring a friend with them if they wish. The Federation will ensure that all staff, students and parents are aware of the Federation's anti-bullying and harassment policy. Staff will praise and encourage students when they show kindness and consideration to others.

4. REPORTING BULLYING

All members of the school communities have a responsibility to identify and report bullying concerns.

a. A victim can speak to their form tutor/class teacher, another member of staff, the Student Support team or email the school.

b. Parents/guardians can inform their son/daughter's Senior Pastoral Staff/Pastoral Support Assistant or Class teacher.

c. Students concerned about others can inform the Pastoral Support Assistants, Student Support, Form Tutor or teaching staff, as well as use the email address above.

d. Staff must inform the relevant Pastoral Staff/Senior staff of any concerns.

e. Any physical attacks should be reported immediately to a senior member of staff and a Serious Incident Report produced (see Behaviour for Learning Policy for each school); perpetrators should be immediately isolated and the victim treated, reassured and protected. Parents/ guardians of both should be informed.

5. DEALING WITH BULLYING INCIDENTS

Any incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable.

In dealing with bullying, school staff will:

- Not ignore it
- Not make premature assumptions
- Listen to all accounts of the incidents
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages students to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves
- Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed.

5.1 If a student is bullied

Staff who receive a report of a bullying incident from a student will refer the incident to a member of the pastoral team/senior team who will:

- Listen to the student's account of the incident
- Reassure the student that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do
- Make it clear to the student that he or she is not to blame for what has happened
- Make a note of what the student says
- Interview those student/s involved in the alleged bullying and any potential witnesses
- Check CCTV, mobile phones, etc. for evidence if appropriate
- When following up an incident listen carefully to all accounts – several students saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth
- Issue the appropriate sanction where required
- Explain that the student should report any further incidents to the pastoral team or any other member of staff immediately.

Staff will ask the student:

- What has happened
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Where it happened
- Who saw what happened
- What he or she has done about it already.

If there are concerns that a student is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of bullying, it should be treated as a child protection concern and will be reported to the local authority's social care department.

5.2 Advice to students

The schools will advise students who are caught up in bullying incidents to:

- Stay calm and look as confident as possible

- Be firm and clear, look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Immediately tell an adult what has happened.

The schools will advise students involved in cyberbullying incidents to:

- Avoid retaliating or returning messages
- Check what information is in the public domain
- Keep any relevant evidence
- Prevent the incident from recurring, for example by changing contact details and blocking contacts
- Contact the host where appropriate.

Where there is evidence that a phone has been used in a cyberbullying incident, staff can use disciplinary powers to confiscate the phone. This should be reported to a senior member of staff.

A more detailed advice leaflet as well as assertiveness training is available for students who have been bullied.

6. DEALING WITH SERIOUS BULLYING

If the preventative measures and student support strategies do not succeed, serious bullying will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy when one or more of the following sanctions may be used:

- Be removed from the group
- Lose any break or lunchtime privileges
- Have any item that might have been used for cyberbullying confiscated
- Be put in detention or isolation
- Be banned from a school trip or sports event where these are not an essential part of the curriculum
- Be suspended for a fixed period.

In the most serious cases, permanent expulsion will be the most likely sanction if the bullying:

- Involves serious actual or threatened violence against another student
- Amounts to persistent and defiant misbehaviour.

7. RECORDING INCIDENTS

All incidents of bullying and discussions with the students involved will be recorded, along with the school's response. Bullying is recorded on SIMs/School Pod and maintained by the Vice Principal/Head of School.

8. PREVENTING RECURRENCE

House Achievement Leaders/Senior Leaders will put in place appropriate strategies which may include:

a. Mediation/Restorative Justice between the victim and the perpetrator
b. Parents/guardians of both victim and perpetrator will be informed about the investigation and actions taken
c. Setting up a Pastoral Support Plan for the perpetrator
d. Refer the perpetrator to other external agencies for additional support and intervention.

9. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

The schools will work with parents/guardians in dealing with bullying. Bullying in school is everyone's problem. All staff, students and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the schools a happier place for everyone.

Parents/guardians and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.

The schools will encourage parents/guardians who suspect that their son or daughter is bullying or being bullied to immediately contact the school and make an appointment to see the child's House Achievement Leader/Senior Staff as soon as possible.

Parents and guardians will be informed of incidents and involved in discussions. The school will discuss with parents/guardians how they can work together to stop the bullying.

MONITORING EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The policy will be evaluated and reviewed every three years by the pastoral committee and the Senior Leadership Team.

OTHER POLICIES THAT HAVE RELEVANCE ARE:

E-Safety Policy
Equality Policy
Policy for Dealing with Racist Incidents
Behaviour for Learning Policy