

The Minster School



Anti-Bullying Policy

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Aims & Objectives

At The Minster School staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Research has shown time and time again that the extent of bullying in schools is greatly underestimated.

Consequently, the school's governing body has approved this policy.

Definition

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.' It may take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, special educational needs, disability and cyber (social networking websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email) bullying as well as the more traditionally understood examples of school bullying.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

Strategy for dealing with bullying

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

- Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, believe, act.
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Headmaster.
- Discussions with the bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at The Minster School
- If they own up then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Discipline Policy
- If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts
- Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim

- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, suspension or exclusion from school, depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s).
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition.
- As the behaviour of the bully (we hope) improves, then favoured activities etc can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying

Staff members receive training in safeguarding, including anti-bullying strategies which helps to raise staff awareness of the potential problems associated with bullying.

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at The Minster School we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- All staff listen, believe, act.
- The issue is regularly addressed at assembly, in PSHE and RE lessons, assemblies, house meetings and other appropriate times.

Procedures

1. Bullying and other unkind behaviour may be discussed in PSHE and RE lessons as well as at assemblies, house meetings and form periods. Through these forums, pupils are made aware that they should report cases of bullying behaviour (either towards themselves or towards others) to a member of the teaching staff.
2. Upon receiving an allegation of bullying, a member of staff must make an assessment of the severity of the incident.
3. The member of staff should then deploy the strategy (*see above*) that seems best suited to the circumstances.
4. All instances of bullying are recorded (a note may also be made on the pupil profile area of the school management system which allows other staff to discern patterns of bullying and acts as a log of incidents). Follow-up actions (including any sanctions) should also be recorded in the incident book / file.
5. Any incidents should be drawn to the attention of the pupil's form teacher and/or a senior member of staff. They may also be aired at the weekly staff meeting.
6. More serious incidents should be brought to the attention of the Headmaster, either informally or formally.
7. Following discussion with colleagues, the Headmaster will decide upon the course of action to take. Parents may be informed or called to interview.

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For serious breaches of discipline, sanctions may include suspension for a fixed period or permanent exclusion.