

# MORE HOUSE SCHOOL

## POLICY

### Anti-Bullying

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#### Rationale:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Anti-Bullying Strategy, the Behaviour for Learning Policy, and the Safeguarding Policy. Each of these documents works in synchronicity with the others, ensuring that there is a thorough and considered approach towards bullying and its nature. This policy is in place to ensure that everyone in the school, staff and pupils, has an awareness of and sensitivity to bullying: **any behaviour, repeated over time or part of a sustained pattern of behaviours, which is intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people.** Appropriate measures will be taken to support all involved, to raise understanding of all parties, to reform the perpetrator and to strengthen the confidence of the victim.

The school is committed to a proactive approach towards bullying prevention, ensuring that the assembly programme, PSHEE/RSHE programmes and form tutor periods, incorporating the Behaviour Curriculum, devote time to continuous discussion of matters of this nature.

In collaboration with the Safeguarding Policy, the school takes a 'safeguarding first' approach to incidents of this nature.

#### Purpose:

- To recognise that bullying can be:
  1. Physical - hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, damage to someone else's belongings;
  2. Verbal - name calling, nasty teasing or spreading rumours, including racism, homophobia and transphobia, whether directed towards children or adults;
  3. Indirect - someone being deliberately left out or ignored;
  4. Subtle - nasty looks, gestures - often difficult to detect;
  5. Repeated often - can continue for a long period of time;
  6. Electronic – targeted e-mails, social-media posts or direct messages, and text messages;
  7. Discrimination relating to protected characteristics or purely an individual;
  8. Extortion. And to recognise that bullying behaviours can arise from a pupil's lack of social understanding and weak language skills.
- To promote an environment throughout our school community which minimises and works to eradicate any form of bullying, and promotes the safety and wellbeing of all.

#### Broad Guidelines:

Education is vital; bullying should be, and is, thoroughly addressed as an educational topic, in assemblies, at form-time, during flexi-day activities, within lessons, and at many other opportunities. Pupils are made aware of what action to take if they perceive bullying, and that they cannot resolve bullying single-handed.

DOC REF: ANTI-BULLYING

Last reviewed September 2023. Next review due by : October 2024.

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It is recognised that a victim of bullying may not recognise the situation themselves, and the concern may be raised by either themselves, or by another pupil or adult.

It is equally recognised pupils in residential schools cannot necessarily escape bullies or bullying for long periods of time as they are not going home as often. More House School staff recognise this can happen, ensuring that protocols are in place to support discreet reporting, providing safe spaces to speak with staff members, but also to maintain supervision and variation to the boarding experience, ensuring that pupils are not in similar groups or areas continuously.

Pupils are taught and supported to:

- a) tell someone - friend, teacher, parent, Independent Person or Independent Visitor;
- b) explain how the situation is affecting them;
- c) have a say in the solution;
- d) inform the Headmaster or any adult whom they trust, if they think a member of the school's staff is treating them unfairly.

**The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:**

#### **School:**

More detailed information is provided in the School's Anti-Bullying Strategy.

- School measures to reduce risk of bullying include:

Whole School and Year Group Assemblies, Tutor group discussion, School Council and Boarders' Council discussions, PSHEE sessions, staff visibility at breaktimes and at other less-structured times, staff awareness of bullying indicators, teaching students to be confident in reporting suspected bullying, contact with parents, quick and effective responses from school, development of appropriate interventions, ongoing monitoring, Speech and Language Therapy sessions, social-skills intervention, mentoring.

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached, with support from Head of Year (HoY) and the Senior Management Team (SMT) where needed.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the HoY.
- The HoY will interview all concerned, speaking to victim and bully separately and in private, and will record the incident including in the central record of instances of bullying behaviour administered by HoYs, and overseen by the Director of Pastoral Care and Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- Form tutors will be kept informed and if it persists, the form tutor will advise the appropriate subject teachers.
- Parents will be kept informed.

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- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and defined by the BfL Policy, and may be adopted by the school in consultation with concerned parties.
- Restorative justice may be used, bringing all the children involved together so everyone affected plays a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward. There are several different methods but they usually follow these principles:
  - Bullying and harassment sometimes occur in the context of group behaviour, and sometimes are displayed through an individual's behaviour.
  - Some bullying behaviours result from weak language skills, including social understanding, empathy and awareness of different perspectives and interpretations, and inference.
  - Often, bullying behaviours are influenced by a weak sense of self-esteem in the perpetrator, or may be influenced by the previous experiences of the perpetrator as a victim themselves.
  - Behaviour of children who bully can be changed by working together.
  - Punishments like detention or exclusion do not always help children understand why their behaviour is not acceptable and may put children at greater risk. Children who display bullying behaviour may seek revenge or continue to bully but change the method they use, making it harder to detect and resolve.
  - The aim is to develop empathy and concern for others, and to build pupils' skills in recognising inappropriate behaviours, identifying the impact of behaviours on others, advocating for themselves to one another and to adults, and participating in a whole-school sense of community and values, strongly influenced by the fundamental British Values.
- A central record of instances of bullying informs review by the Senior Management Team, identifying patterns and trends in order to evaluate the success of the school's Anti-bullying and related policies and provision, and to inform policy development, curriculum development and further intervention.

### Pupils:

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form-tutor or member of staff of their choice;
- reassuring the pupil;
- offering continuous support, possibly via referral to the Pastoral Provision Plus programme, managed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Head of Safeguarding;
- intervening to develop self-advocacy and social awareness skills as appropriate;
- restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened;
- discovering why the pupil became involved;
- establishing the wrongdoing and need to change;
- developing social understanding, language skills, empathy and self-esteem as appropriate;

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- offering continuous support, possibly via referral to the Pastoral Plus programme, managed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral);
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

One or more of the following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending, including formal communication and collaboration by the school with pupils' parents or carers;
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises;
- invocation of sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour for Learning policy;
- Internal exclusion;
- short fixed-term external exclusion;
- longer fixed-term external exclusion;
- permanent exclusion.

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in form tutor time, including the introduction of the Behaviour Curriculum, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

### Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

A central record of instances of bullying informs review by the Senior Management Team, identifying patterns and trends in order to evaluate the success of the school's Anti-bullying and related policies and provision, and to inform policy development, curriculum development and further intervention.

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

It should be acknowledged that some children are more vulnerable to becoming victims, and the reasons for this should be thoroughly investigated, with appropriate intervention to develop relevant skills, and counselling, given. Pastoral support should be arranged.

- Preventative measures are in place within the curriculum such as Speech and Language Therapy and social skills sessions in which group or individual problems are discussed.
- Any suspicions of a potential bullying problem are identified and discussed at the earliest opportunity, as well as at the twice-weekly 8.20am staff-briefing meetings, at which both boarding and teaching staff are present.
- Any adverse behaviour which may be the precursor of bullying should be addressed by behaviour modification methods which are already in place.
- Parents and carers are encouraged to voice any concerns, emailing their son's form-tutor, or contacting the school's Main Reception and School Office ([schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk](mailto:schooloffice@morehouseschool.co.uk) or 01252 792303) and they will be kept informed of any incident involving these sanctions, in their capacity as parent or carer for either a perpetrator or victim.

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- All members of staff have a duty to inform the Headmaster a a matter of urgency if they believe a colleague is involved in bullying, whether this information has come from a pupil or from observation. The Headmaster will investigate this and take appropriate recorded action.
- If members of staff have concerns about the Headmaster, they should take the matter to the Chair of Governors. More information on staff-members' responsibilities to report concerns can be obtained in the school's Whistleblowing policy.

### Conclusion:

Every member of the School's community has the right to be a part of a school community which minimises and works to eradicate any form of bullying, and promotes the safety and wellbeing of all. It is the responsibility of every member of our community to support these aims in accordance with this and associated policies.