

THE KING'S SCHOOL IN MACCLESFIELD



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE (SENIOR DIVISIONS)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Equal Opportunities Policy (Pupils);
- Safeguarding Policy;
- School Rules.

POLICY STATEMENT

At King's, we promote the kind, caring and welcoming environment which keeps our community safe. We want everyone to feel proud of being a part of King's and act with courtesy and consideration both within school and in the wider community. We aim to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential in secure, well ordered, supportive surroundings.

This school does not tolerate bullying. It has a clear responsibility to help staff and pupils deal with bullying should it occur and to prevent it. Learning takes place most effectively when students feel valued by their teachers, their peers and their family. Much emphasis is placed on the personal responsibility of each member of the school community, staff and students, for ensuring that relationships between staff and students and between the students themselves are positive and caring.

This policy complies with the principles of current legislation and with guidance provided by the Department for Education.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The school aims to prevent bullying of all forms within the school community. In the first instance, the objective is to provide awareness and training for all (pupils and staff) of the corrosive effects of bullying and the measures that can be taken to prevent it from happening in the first place. In this respect, our objectives are to become aware of any problems quickly and provide a swift and robust outcome with suitable support (and, if necessary, training) for all concerned to prevent reoccurrence.

In all cases, the school believes that:

- Bullying can be countered effectively;
- Bullying is learned behaviour and can be unlearned;
- Bullies need help and support to change their behaviour patterns;

- Targets of bullying need a balance between protection and empowerment.

The school's anti-bullying procedures apply to all incidents reported whether they have taken place inside or outside school including those where electronic means have been used. The school will use reasonable measures to discipline pupils for misbehaving and reserves the right to inform police if the misbehaviour could be criminal.

The methods adopted to achieve these aims and objectives are outlined in the rest of this policy document.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or by perceived differences. Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, either a single incident or repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via online messages, social media or the internet), and is occasionally motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, SEND or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. Bullying can be motivated by homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (HBT Bullying). Bullying on the basis of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the school's first priority, but the school recognises emotional bullying can be as damaging as physical.

Pupils can experience friendship issues at any stage of their education. These can be very distressing, but do not necessarily constitute bullying. All pupils will be supported in handling such issues in a mature fashion.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved;
- They will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible;
- The target of bullying will usually be interviewed on his/her own and asked to write an account of events;
- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will usually be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events;
- The incident should be recorded in writing and passed to the Head of Year/Vice-Principal who will record it on CPOMS (monitored by the Principal);
- Any incidents of bullying which are based on protected characteristics will be distinguished from others on CPOMS;
- The Head of Year, Vice Principal or the Principal will inform the tutors of all of those involved as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Head of Foundation will be informed;
- The target of bullying will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. It will be made clear to him/her why revenge is inappropriate. They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself;

- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the target of bullying, and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions; for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges or suspension. In particularly serious and/or persistent cases, the bully should expect permanent exclusion;
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought;
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and Sanctions Procedures;
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode;
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place;
- In very serious cases, and only after the Head of Foundation has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services. However, it is the school's policy to attempt to resolve issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to possible harassment of students, **to deal with incidents of bullying as the highest priority** and to follow the principles and procedures in this policy when following up cases of bullying. Other specific responsibilities are stated below:

- The Governors will (evaluate and review) the anti-bullying policy, and will ensure that it is non-discriminatory;
- The Head of Foundation and Principals will review and amend the policy, using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in the previous year to improve procedures and taking account of new legislation and government guidance. The school will keep a record of all reported incidents and Principals will review this data periodically to ensure an appropriate response to any patterns or trends;
- The Deputy Head (Operations) will ensure that staff receive regular training updates;
- The Pastoral Teams will follow up reports of bullying:

Form Tutor/Pupil Manager	Minor incidents and friendship issues
Head of Year/ Pupil Manager	More serious incidents
Principals / Vice Principal	Very serious incidents
Head of Foundation & Principals	Cases that could lead to exclusion;
- In all cases, Form Tutors, the Head of Year, Nurse, Vice-Principals, Principals and Head of Foundation should be informed.

The Head of PSHE will provide up-to-date resources to Heads of Year on bullying issues, and will ensure that there are Life Skills sessions on the nature of bullying and how to deal with harassment within the programme at appropriate stages of student development.

Subject teachers will ensure that:

- They are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the Form Tutor of such observations;
- They select working groups and pairs so that students have the opportunity to work

- with a **variety** of peers, not only friendship groups, throughout the year;
- And the composition of groups shows sensitivity to those who have been the targets of bullying.

School Nurses and Pupil Managers, often the first people to receive reports of bullying, will offer emotional support to the targets of bullying, and will alert the relevant Head of Year and Form Tutor. A confidential box is available near the medical room.

Parents are asked, via the Parent Guidance published on the school's website, to inform the Form Tutor or Head of Year if they are concerned that their child might be being bullied.

Students are asked, either directly or via the Student Planner or email, to tell a member of staff immediately if they are bullied or if they witness bullying of any other pupil.

GUIDANCE SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (eg giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self-confidence;
- Frequent visits to the School Nurse with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares;
- Talking of suicide or running away.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers. The school recognises the seriousness of bullying, both physical and emotional, and that it may cause psychological damage to an individual.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We have the following preventative measures in place in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem:

- All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying;
- All new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to allegations of bullying;
- We use assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our Compass programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme emphasises the message about community involvement and taking care of each other;

- Standards of behaviour and issues surrounding bullying are regularly discussed by the School Councils. Pupil attitudes to their treatment in school and their relationships with each other are surveyed as appropriate.
- Some lessons, particularly R&P, English and Drama, highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills;
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place in line with our policy on whistle-blowing;
- All reported incidents are recorded on CPOMS and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept by Heads of Year and reviewed regularly by the Principals and Vice Principals in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm;
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both targets of bullying and bullies;
- The school counsellor is an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling. Confidential advice and counselling support is available;
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils;
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures;
- High standards of behaviour are expected on school transport and the Coach Code of Conduct makes reference to procedures to be followed in the event of unpleasant behaviour.

Cyber-bullying - Preventative Measures

In addition to the preventative measures described above, the school:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its policy for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Support Department monitors pupils' use;
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet; or social media apps.
- Issues all pupils with their own personal school email address;
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber-bullying in the PSHE and tutorial programmes;
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- Has an Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones;
- And bans the use of cameras on mobile phones in school without teacher permission.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR PUPILS AND PARENTS

For Pupils - What can you do if you are being bullied?

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong;
- Try not to show that you are upset; try to look and sound confident;
- Try to ignore the bully; remember that they want a reaction and try not to give one;
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers;

- Avoid engaging in arguments or unkind behaviour via social media;
- Inform your Form Tutor or any other member of teaching staff as soon as you can. They will take you seriously and deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and not make matters worse for you.

For Pupils - If you know someone is being bullied:

- Don't stand and watch; fetch help. Tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with bullying without getting you into trouble;
- If a friend tells you that they are being bullied, try to persuade them to tell a teacher themselves. If this does not happen, you should tell a teacher yourself;
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully. Show that you and your friends disapprove;
- Be sympathetic and supportive to someone who may be being bullied;
- Be careful about teasing people or making personal remarks; if what you are about to say may be hurtful, do not say it.

Guidance for Parents:

- Watch for signs of distress in your child; for example, they suddenly may not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to a normal standard;
- If you feel your child may be a target of bullying behaviour, inform the school immediately with as many details as you can. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken;
- Discourage your child from hitting back as this will only exacerbate the issue;
- Encourage your child to talk to their Form Tutor about any worries;
- Offer reassurance that informing the school will not make matters worse, but will allow staff to deal with the issue.

Guidance for Staff (proactive and preventative action):

- Offer positive role models in terms of mutual respect, listening and problem solving;
- Be aware of early signs of distress or withdrawal in pupils;
- Always listen, take seriously and act upon information received;
- Ensure that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled effectively;
- Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. the Curriculum, assemblies, form time, the PSHE programme;
- Build positive self-images among the pupils;
- Commend appropriate behaviour;
- Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.

If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected target of bullying, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

- The target of bullying is offered support;
- The perpetrator is reprimanded, punished appropriately and warned that there must be no recurrence of such anti-social behaviour. At the same time, pupils who bully others are given suitable help and guidance. In serious cases, acts of bullying can lead to suspension or exclusion;
- Parents are informed where appropriate.

Author: Principal, Senior Division

Approved: Governing Body

Date: October 2024

Next Review Date: December 2025