

# Anti-bullying Policy

## Meir Heath Academy



**Approved by:** Mrs M Southern

**Date:** September 2023

**Last reviewed on:** September 2023

**Next review due by:** September 2024

Meir Heath Academy seeks to develop the whole child taking into account spiritual, physical, intellectual and social maturity.

## **Rationale**

At Meir Heath we recognise that bullying can occur. When it does, it can be harmful both physically and emotionally for the victim. It can also be a sign that the child carrying out the bullying has underlying issues that need to be addressed. The purpose of this policy is to enable adults in the school to recognise bullying when it takes place and to deal with it effectively

## **What is bullying?**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour. It is usually repeated, often over a period of time and when it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. We believe that there are a number of types of bullying:

- Emotional: excluding from a group, tormenting, ridiculing, and humiliating
- Physical: hitting, punching, pinching kicking or taking someone's belongings.
- Verbal: name-calling, insulting, Indirect bullying, through spreading stories about someone, threats, making fun of someone
- Racist: racial taunts, gestures, making fun of someone's culture or religion Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Cyber: setting up hate websites, sending offensive e-mails or texts or posting hurtful Facebook comments

## **Bullying is not:**

It is important to understand that bullying is not odd occasion falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional 'joke' is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations, to develop resilience and to develop social skills to repair relationships.

## **It is bullying:**

If it is done repeatedly and on purpose. Whenever the opportunity arises it must be made profoundly clear that we will not tolerate bullying at our school. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can grow and learn in a relaxed and safe setting.

## **Why do we tackle bullying?**

We tackle bullying as an issue because we are an effective, caring school and we believe that:

- bullying makes people unhappy and leads to low self-esteem.

- pupils who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work.
- some pupils avoid being bullied by not attending school
- pupils who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour may copy this anti-social behaviour.
- we wish to build the self-esteem of all pupils, especially bullies and victims.

### **Role of Parents**

Parents have an important part to play in our anti bullying policy. We ask parents to:

Look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their usual standard.

Always take an active role in your child's education

Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent time with etc.

If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.

If you feel a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child or their parent in the playground or on their way home. Please inform the school immediately.

It is important that you do not advise your child to fight back or to repeat the bullies' behaviour - this will only make the situation worse.

Tell your child it is not their fault they are being bullied.

Reinforce the school policy on bullying and ensure your child is not afraid to ask for help.

If you know your child is involved in bullying others, please discuss the issues with them and inform the school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.

### **Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents**

Allegations and incidents of bullying at Meir Heath Academy will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All of those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will support all children involved whilst the allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

#### **The following procedures are to be followed:**

- Incidents of reported bullying need to be reported to the class teacher in the first instance
- The class teacher will speak to all children involved about the incident separately or if appropriate as a group. This will be reported to the Principal or Senior Leadership Team.
- The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested
- Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from having them to justify their behaviour.
- Appropriate action will be taken to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied i.e. loss of privileges, spending playtime and lunchtimes with an adult,

be withdrawn from class, be withdrawn from participation in a club or event not essential to the curriculum.

- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- An attempt will be made and support given to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her behaviour.
- If the bullying continues or in more serious cases of bullying parents will be informed and invited into the school for a meeting to discuss the problem
- Mediation meetings, with both parents and pupils present may be used to resolve the issues
- Incidents will be recorded and kept on file.
- In repeated or serious cases the school may follow the following sanctions: lunch time exclusion, fixed term exclusion or even permanent exclusion.

### **Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying**

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Work by the class teachers and support staff, or staff from other agencies as appropriate
- Regular PSHE teaching following the agreed scheme of work
- Awareness through anti bullying or friendship assemblies
- Circle time
- Drama/role play activities
- Playground buddies for children who are experiences difficulties settling into school
- Following of the whole school behavior policy which includes using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour.
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behavior towards one another.

### **Monitoring of Policy**

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and through staff meetings and will be reviewed annually.