



## **Anti-bullying Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy applies to all pupils at Malvern College irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the College when or if bullying behaviour occurs. This policy provides guidance for all pupils, staff and parents about recognising bullying and what to do if a bullying incident occurs.

This policy has been drawn up with assistance from the guidance issued by the DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017) and will be reviewed against subsequent government guidance issued from time to time. Pupils, staff and parents should also see the supplementary advice documents and other helpful resources listed throughout this policy.

We recognise that there will be occasions when bullying incidents fall within Child Protection procedures or may be deemed criminal activity and that it may be necessary to report concerns to the Family Front Door or to the Police.

Peer on peer abuse is taken extremely seriously and procedures relating to this are in the Safeguarding Policy. We are mindful that Child Protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the abuser.

### **Definition of Bullying and Peer on Peer Abuse**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms and may include: name-calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; pushing; taking belongings; inappropriate text messaging and emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups; and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. Although sometimes occurring between two individuals in isolation, it quite often takes place in the presence of others.

Bullying is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the College. Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence and sense of self worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. It can lead to serious and prolonged emotional damage for an individual and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage and even self-harm (see the College's policy on self-harm in the Policy on supporting pupils with mental health problems at school). Those who conduct the bullying or witness the bullying can also experience emotional harm, and the impact on parents and school staff can be significant.

Pupils are bullied for a variety of reasons. Specific types of bullying include:

- Bullying related to race, religion, belief or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN), learning difficulties or disabilities
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying related to pregnancy and maternity
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist (related to a person's gender or gender reassignment) or sexual (talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way) bullying

Cyberbullying is the use of information and communications technology, particularly electronic mobile devices and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. The School has a separate Acceptable Use of ICT and E-Safety Policy which deals with cyberbullying and E-safety (Appendix Three) and sexting (Appendix Five).

Bullying is not a specific criminal offence but there are criminal laws that apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. Misuse of electronic communications could be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or email) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety; from the school's perspective this would generally be seen as bullying.

In many cases in which one young person causes or tries to cause harm to another, it is appropriate to regard it and properly deal with it as bullying. Bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as abusive or as child protection issues. However, it may sometimes be appropriate to regard a young person's behavior towards another young person as reaching the threshold of abuse if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

This is often a matter of professional judgement.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this will be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

### **Aims**

Through the operation of this policy we aim:

- to create an open and secure environment for pupils
- to work together as a whole community, staff, pupils and parents
- to promote an anti-bullying culture throughout the school
- to comply with the College's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Prevention of bullying and peer on peer abuse**

The College is pro-active in the prevention of bullying and peer on peer abuse.

The College recognises the tensions of a co-educational international boarding environment. Our education promotes fundamental British values such as tolerance and respect for others.

**Education:** Measures are taken throughout each year to educate pupils about bullying and this policy. These measures include:

- Life skills lessons
- Assemblies in Chapel
- annual talks on anti bullying
- the Guide to Malvern College which raises awareness of sources of help including from the College Counsellors and Independent Listeners
- the College intranet, called Buzz, and tutor groups also provide advice to pupils on anti-bullying.

**Training:** Appropriate training across the College is arranged to ensure that all those with responsibility have the necessary skills to deal with cases of bullying. This training includes:

- the training of Chapel Prefects, Heads of Houses and peer mentors
- the training of staff to better identify potential problems especially before or between lessons, in queues, in changing rooms and in Houses, to watch for signs of distress in pupils – poor work, spurious illness, isolation, a desire to remain with adults.
- staff training includes guidance on the importance of setting by example and how staff promote good behaviour among pupils by ensuring the effective implementation of this policy

**Pupils' responsibilities:** We emphasise with senior pupils the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger pupils and each other. In particular:

- peer group befriending is encouraged and a buddy system for new pupils is operated. Older pupils are encouraged to keep an eye on younger pupils and offer support.
- Peer Mentors are trained to help identify and then support victims as well as supporting bullies to modify their behaviour.
- Chapel Prefects, Heads of House, their Deputies, the Lower School and Student

Council representatives can also help if pupils have a problem.

### **Meetings**

- monitoring of pupils in discussions and tutor group sessions is key to preventing bullying
- bullying is regularly discussed in meetings, including Pastoral meetings, SMT meetings, Housemasters' and Housemistresses' meetings, meetings of Senior Staff and the College Council. The result of these meetings is to feed back information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who seems to be isolated and any known conflict between pupils so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying incidents
- records of appropriate meetings include record of discussion and detailed actions about pupils where there are concerns.

### **Procedures**

Where a child discloses peer on peer abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer to WSCB procedures and seek advice from Family Front Door or the Community Social Worker before commencing an investigation or contacting parents.

Where bullying has been observed or is suspected by any member of staff, this should be communicated immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the relevant Housemasters/Mistresses, and a written account made and provided to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The following procedure will then be followed:

Stage One. The Housem will report the matter to and discuss the matter with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A record of this discussion will be kept in the Bullying File.

Stage Two. The alleged victim(s), any witnesses and the culprit(s) will be interviewed by the Deputy Head: Pastoral, and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead or another senior member of staff authorised to do so. Where useful and appropriate the Housem and/or tutor may be present at such interviews.

If there has been a misunderstanding or incident which does not require further investigation or disciplinary action, this should be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice given to the alleged culprit to modify his / her behaviour to ensure such a misunderstanding does not occur in future.

If bullying incident is judged to have taken place:

Stage Three. The victim(s), witnesses and culprit(s) will make statements, as appropriate; the Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Head Pastoral will then decide upon an appropriate course of action, which will include help, support and counselling to the victim(s) and disciplinary action as appropriate and counselling for the bull(y/ies) in accordance with the sections below. All records will be kept and maintained in accordance with the “Record keeping and monitoring” section below.

The member of staff who reported the incident will be kept informed of progress.

Where it is established that bullying has taken place and further action is required the parents of all pupils involved will be informed by the Deputy Head: Pastoral, the Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster as appropriate

If a parent or a pupil is concerned about the wellbeing of another pupil, the pupil’s House or tutor should be informed. If at any stage there is a concern that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm, including the risk of self-harm, a report must be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the College’s Safeguarding Policy and the procedures in that policy will be followed. For further information about what to do if there is a concern about self-harm, see the College’s policy on self-harm in the Policy on supporting pupils with mental health problems at school.

### **Supporting the Victim**

We support the victim(s) in the following ways:

- offering them an opportunity to talk about the experience with someone they trust – a member of staff or responsible senior pupil – and giving advice and support
- informing the victim’s parents/guardians and working with them to ensure that the appropriate support is provided
- monitoring the position and offering continuing support when needed, seeking advice from external agencies, such as Family Front Door, as appropriate
- taking one or more of the disciplinary actions against the culprit as described below

### **Disciplining the Culprit**

The process of disciplining the culprit should, wherever possible, include providing whatever support and guidance are judged necessary:

- ascertain the reason(s) that might underlie the bullying behaviour - if there is a

concern that the pupil is at risk of significant harm, the procedures in the College's Safeguarding Policy will be followed

- inform parents/guardians and working with them as necessary to try to change the pupil's behaviour
- when appropriate, provide or arrange appropriate counselling
- disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Promoting Good Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- monitor subsequent behaviour.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

Although the Headmaster reserves the right to permanently exclude a pupil at whatever stage of the process, disciplining the culprit may involve one or more of the following:

- warning
- informing Parents/Guardians
- gating
- rustication
- permanent exclusion

Bullying incidents are followed up and the pupils involved are monitored over time, both the perpetrator/s and the victim(s). This is done to ensure the perpetrators do not slip back into bullying habits and that the victim(s) feel safe.

All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the College's Promoting Good Behaviour and Discipline Policy and any sanction will be employed promptly. Sanctions are intended to reflect the seriousness of an incident and convey a deterrent effect. Records of any such disciplinary action will be kept on the pupil's individual file, on the College's Bullying File (kept by the DSL) and, where appropriate, the College's central record of sanctions for serious misbehaviour.

### **Record keeping and monitoring**

School staff maintain records of the welfare and development of individual pupils. In addition, every complaint or report of bullying must be recorded in the Bullying File. The Deputy Head: Pastoral monitors these records in order to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual pupils and across the school as a whole, so that any necessary interventions can be made and to evaluate the effectiveness of the College's approach. In addition, the Deputy Head: Pastoral and the Designated Safeguarding Lead review the Bullying File annually and the outcome will be minuted.

### **Information for pupils**

What can you do if you are being bullied?

- Remember that your silence is the bully's biggest weapon
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong
- Be proud of who you are – it is good to be individual
- Try not to show you are upset. A bully thrives on fear
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers
- Be assertive. Shout NO! Walk confidently away. Go straight to a member of staff
- Fighting back may make things worse
- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You could tell your parents, your Housem, the House Assistants, your Tutor, the Chaplain, the College Counsellor (Jane Humphreys 07971 335 908), a Peer Mentor or a responsible older pupil.

You might also contact:

- » the College Doctor or Medical Centre Nurse
- » the Independent Listeners (Mrs Angela Lafferty 01684 577 478 and Mr Tim Wright 01684 541 102) ChildLine (080011111)
- » Children's Services Family Front Door (01905 822 666)
- » Anti-Bullying 0808 800 2222.
- » the Children's Commissioner (020 7783 8330)

If you are worried about speaking up, taking a friend along to support you might be helpful.

- Teachers will deal with bullies in a way that will aim to end the bullying and will be sensitive about not making things worse for you.

If you know someone is being bullied

- Take action! Watching and doing nothing makes you look as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and alone.
- If you feel you cannot get involved tell an adult immediately. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.
- If you are worried about another pupil's wellbeing or are worried that they might hurt themselves, tell an adult immediately.

### **Information for Parents**

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not want to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their usual standard.
- Ask how your child's day has gone, who they have spent time with, what they did at lunchtime etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the House immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action in accordance with this policy will follow.
- It is important that you tell your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Tell your son or daughter that there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his/her fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the College's Anti-bullying Policy, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.
- The DfE has published the following guidance document for parents: [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_and_carers_on_cyberbullying.pdf)  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444865/Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_and_carers_on_cyberbullying.pdf)
- Other useful organisations providing support for parents dealing with specific bullying issues include:

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)  
[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)

### **Guidance for staff**

In addition to its Preventing and Tackling Bullying guidance (July 2017), the DfE has published the following additional advice on dealing with bullying includes:

- Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools
- Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)

These documents contain links to other useful resources for advice and guidance on dealing with bullying and staff are encouraged to consider these when dealing with incidents of bullying.

The Head of Safeguarding and Pupil Wellbeing will support staff in dealing with serious and long-term incidents of bullying and the guidance and advice mentioned above, together with the procedures of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board, will be considered.

Advice on dealing with bullying is provided in the House Handbook. See also the College's policy on self-harm in the Policy on supporting pupils with mental health problems at school.

### **Review**

The annual review of this policy will be undertaken by the Senior Deputy Head.