



MURRAY PARK SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Title of Policy	Anti-Bullying
Date of adoption	Spring 2025
Originator	Rebecca Somes
Date of review	Spring 2027
Additional information	Update May18 Data will be processed in line with requirements and protections set in the General Data Protection Regulation Updated January 2021 - Following leaving the European Union policy updated to refer to UK GDPR Updated March 2022

Throughout this policy *parents* refers to *parents/carers*

At Murray Park School we strive to create a culture based on one of our core values of Respect. Students must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are a school which sets high standards for our students it is important that we create an atmosphere in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no student must suffer from harassment of any kind. Because bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make our students knowledgeable about bullying and teach them strategies that enable them to stand up for themselves without resorting to retaliation in any form. Because bullying is in the news and is a form of real anxiety for parents, it is important that we inform parents fully about our approach to dealing with bullying, so that parents can distinguish between what is bullying and what is not.

Aims of the Policy

1. To create a school ethos which encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.
2. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school leadership, teachers, students, parents.
3. To produce a definition of bullying.
4. To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
5. To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour for all involved parties.

Definition of Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying, however our school definition of bullying is: **repetitive intentional** hurting of one person or a group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or on social media and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

The following are protected characteristics and our role in school is to ensure that students are protected from discrimination in relation to these both in-person and online. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment (transphobia)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- maternity or civil partnership

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is our first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. (See ref: *Preventing Bullying 2017, DFE*).

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Bullying can be (but is not limited to):

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- teasing
- making threats
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)

At Murray Park School we understand that sometimes there is relational conflict between students. This is not defined as bullying where there is a balance of power. However, where there is unkindness between students the pastoral team will endeavour to support students and reemphasise our core values.

Anti-Bullying Code

Bullying will not be tolerated at Murray Park School. It is not an acceptable part of growing up.

Every student has the right to enjoy learning and leisure free from intimidation. Students should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying. Bullying is too important not to report. Reports of bullying will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken.

Reporting Bullying

Students can report bullying to any member of staff. In particular, students should report bullying to their Tutor. The incident should be recorded on Go4schools.

If the bullying persists, students should report it again. An incident witness statement sheet will be completed to be kept as a record of the instance of bullying. Incident witness statements can be obtained from the Head of Year (HOY) or from student services.

Students seeing others being bullied should report it using the same methods as a victim. When bullying is reported, appropriate action will follow either on the day or the next school day

HOY or preferred members of staff will be expected to deal with the issue appropriately and enter their intervention on Go4schools.

Unchecked bullying also damages the bully who learns that he/she can get away with violence, aggression and threats and that this sort of behaviour gets them what they want.

Responses of Staff

All staff should ensure that bullying or threatening behaviour is not tolerated in school. All staff should respond to bullying in the first instance by:

listening to the victim

reassuring the victim

continuing to offer help, advice and support to the victim

In responding to incidents of bullying all staff should take action when bullying is reported by:

- taking action as quickly as possible.
- considering whether action should be public or private.
- making it clear to the bully that such behaviour is not acceptable.
- establishing whether or not the incident is part of a pattern.
- encouraging the bully to see the victims point of view.
- explaining why a punishment (if any) is given.
- sharing information with other members of staff.
- Pastoral staff informing parents if appropriate.

At all stages staff must ensure that the school behaviour policy is followed. All stages should be recorded on Go4schools.

Discipline

The school behaviour policy must support these principles:

- within the school bullying will not be tolerated
- bullying behaviour is confronted clearly and pursued beyond the mere application of sanctions
- students who persist in bullying, despite counselling and support are suspended from the school or may be removed from mainstream classes
- police involvement - first instance Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)

Many forms of bullying may be criminal offences, such as assault, robbery, criminal damage, harassment and indecent assault. It may be necessary for school or parents to involve police in cases involving such actions.

Dealing with Bullying

What Students Can Do

- Try to stay calm
- Remind yourself that bullying is wrong. You do not deserve to be bullied
- Don't ignore it but keep safe
- Take firm and confident action - tell the bully to 'STOP'
- Don't pretend to be friends with the bully
- Let an adult know - somehow - as soon as possible. Remember it does not matter how you do this - just do it the best way for you
- You can help yourself by:
- Staying with a group of friends or people
- Avoiding areas where you feel unsafe

When you see or know other people being bullied

- Remind yourself it is right to let an adult know and that adults expect you to do this
- Remember it is only the bullies and those who support them who say it is wrong to let an adult know
- Remember, by doing nothing you may be allowing the bully to continue
- Help and support the victim - but Keep Safe
- Let an adult know as soon as possible

What Parents Can Do

We believe it is important for our school to work with parents/carers to help them to understand our approach with regards to bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the student being bullied or the one doing the bullying. We will ensure parents/carers are made aware of how to work with us on bullying and how they can seek help if a problem is not resolved. Some parents may need specific support to help deal with their child's behaviour. Where our school identifies that this is the case, we will initially provide support ourselves or signpost the parents to somewhere more appropriate.

Pupils may:

- Be frightened of getting to or from school
- Change their usual route
- Not want to go on the bus
- Be unwilling to go to school (or be school phobic)
- Feel ill in the mornings
- Begin truanting

- Begin doing poorly in their school work
- Come home regularly with clothes or books damaged
- Come home starving (bully has taken dinner)
- Become withdrawn, start stammering, lack confidence
- Become distressed and anxious, stop eating
- Attempt or threaten suicide
- Cry themselves to sleep; have nightmares
- Have their possessions 'go missing'
- Ask for money or start stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Continually 'lose' their pocket money
- Refuse to say what's wrong (too frightened of the bully)
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- Begin to bully other children or siblings
- Become aggressive and unreasonable
- Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above

If your child is being bullied

- Stay calm
- Take it seriously and make the time to find out the facts
- Talk calmly with your son/daughter. Let him/her know they are valued and important.
- Emphasise that you are going to support them
- Don't agree to keep it a secret
- Reinforce that it is right to let people know
- Talk with the school. You can contact the Form Tutor, Head of Year, Headteacher or any member of staff or the governors. Ask school what it intends to do
- Give your son/daughter a chance to talk about his/her feelings about being bullied
- Help your son/daughter practise strategies such as being confident, walking away and keeping safe
- Keep a written diary of all incidents
- Check that your child is not inviting the bully by some unacceptable or unpleasant behaviour or attitude
- Stay in touch with school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

Students sometimes bully others for many reasons, including:

- They don't know it is wrong
- They are copying other people
- They have not thought through the reasons why bullying is not acceptable
- As a way of coping with a difficult situation
- As a means of getting their own way
- As a response to abusive situations

If you learn that your son/daughter is bullying:

- Try to stay calm
- Talk calmly with your son/daughter. Let them know they are valued and important. Explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other people unhappy
- Ask if he/she has any ideas about why they bully and what they think might help him/her stop
- Find out if there is something in particular which is troubling him or her and try to sort it out
- Work out if there is something in particular which is troubling him or her and try to sort it out
- Work out a way for him/her to make amends for the bullying oSet up some sort of reward for good behaviour
- Set limits. Stop any show of aggression immediately and help him/her find other non-aggressive ways or reacting
- If he/she bullies when faced with certain situations, help him/her work out and practise alternative ways of behaving
- Explain that getting away from a situation where he/she can feel themselves losing their temper, or things getting out of hand, is not weakness. It is a sensible way of ensuring that the situation does not get worse
- Praise him/her when they do things well. Create opportunities for him/her to shine
- Talk with the school. Make sure the form tutor and Head of Year know. Explain that your son/daughter is making an effort to change his/her behaviour. Ask what ideas they have to help Murray Park staff are committed to helping.
- Talk to the staff about setting realistic goals for your son/daughter - don't expect too much too soon - and about rewarding him or her when they achieve one of these set goals
- Other students may deliberately provoke or bully, especially if they think the bully is trying to reform. Explain to your son/daughter that they may be taunted and provoked but that they think someone is trying to pick a fight

Parents can help by making it clear that violence is always unacceptable and by leading by example.

Supporting Organisations and Guidance

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

DfE: "Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies", and "Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools"

March 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

DfE: "No health without mental health":

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nohealth-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>

Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

MindEd: www.minded.org.uk

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk

Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
Cyberbullying
Childnet International: www.childnet.com
Digizen: www.digizen.org
Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBT

EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk
Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk

SEND

Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-ofpractice-0-to-25>

Racism and Hate

Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be kept under continuous review. Our whole school monitoring and review procedures will set out how this takes place. We will survey views of students and parents throughout each year and seek to listen to the views of students about their safety. We will promote this policy with parents once per year by email and by giving it priority space on the school website.

This policy will be monitored by the Personal development, Behaviour and Welfare governing body committee who will examine relevant data and students' views on the effectiveness of the policy.

Data Protection & GDPR

Data will be processed in line with requirements and protections set in the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

