

## MAGDALEN COURT SCHOOL

**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

*(for more details see Pastoral Care, Child Protection and PSHCE Policies)*

**Statement of Intent**

MAGDALEN COURT School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe and secure environment for all of our children so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere, without anxiety. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

It is vital that all adult members of our school community should be constantly vigilant to ensure that any situations where bullying is taking place are quickly perceived, and then dealt with, with thoroughness and with sensitivity.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

**Bullying – the nature of the problem**

Bullying is action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child. Bullying is one aspect of behaviour which causes hurt and anxiety to children. The possibility of any form of bullying taking place in school is an issue which often causes parents some concern.

A child is considered to be a bully if she/he knowingly commits unkind acts towards another individual. Any child or children who wilfully cause distress to other children will be accused of bullying.

We understand bullying to be deliberately hurtful behaviour, often repeated over a period of time, which makes another person feel uncomfortable, intimidated or threatened, whether this is intended or not

**What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional, indirect bullying - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) about someone, deliberately excluding someone from social groups or an activity, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages.
- Physical harm or the threat of physical harm - pushing, kicking, hitting, taking or hiding belongings, punching or any use of violence; deliberately destroying, damaging work or possessions or removing property
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

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**Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. MAGDALEN COURT School has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

**Objectives of this Policy**

- The proprietor, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- The proprietors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All children and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously.
- Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

**Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- changes their usual routine;
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- begins truanting;
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions go "missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen);
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying

**Procedures**

1. Children are encouraged to report bullying incidents to staff.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff.
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the

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bullying stopped quickly.

6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
7. Simple statements of the details of the incident, and of the way it has been resolved, should be made by the class teacher in writing and this information should be available to teacher colleagues as the child concerned moves up the school.
8. The Head Teacher should be informed at all times when it is considered necessary for the parents of the children to be involved.

#### Outcomes

1. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled after the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with. Each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
2. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
3. In serious cases, exclusion will be considered.

#### Prevention

We will use the following methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school rules;
- signing a behaviour contract;
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying;
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly;
- making up role-plays;
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

#### Anti-Bullying Strategies adopted by MAGDALEN COURT School

- MAGDALEN COURT School acknowledges the problem. Bullying happens everywhere in our society, including the staff-room.
- Asks pupils what they feel constitutes bullying. Discussions about what is and is not bullying can help form the basis for the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Establishes support mechanisms to help children who are being bullied. This could be an assigned group of staff or a group of pupils formed through a peer support scheme. Peer support schemes such as 'buddying', peer listening or peer mediation can create a happier, friendlier environment and offer much needed support to children who have problems.
- Has a whole school approach in which children and adults work together to create an environment where bullying is not tolerated.
- Although MAGDALEN COURT School is not directly responsible for bullying off its premises bullying doesn't end at the school gates. We work with the local community, through the police and the local youth services.
- Involves young people in anti-bullying work, as this is far more likely to succeed than if ideas are imposed on them. Children and young people often have the best approaches to solving problems within their peer groups.
- MAGDALEN COURT School finds constructive ways to help those who are bullying change their behaviour. Punishing bullies doesn't end bullying. It is important to stress that it is the bullying behaviour that is not liked, rather than the person.
- Bullying often takes place in groups. Children have a choice of watching from the margins, joining in, trying to remain uninvolved or trying to help those being

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- bullied. Acknowledge and reward children who help prevent bullying.
- Support schemes that encourage children to make friends. Having friends is one of the best defences against bullying, but not everyone has the right social skills to make friends easily. Teaching assertiveness skills and confidence-building to the class may be a way to make more children make friends.
  - Use time during PSHCE classes to talk about bullying/intimidation in general.
  - There are strategies for introducing new children to MAGDALEN COURT School.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying. Teachers routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

**The School's aims with regard to bullying are:**

1. to make clear to children, staff, parents and guardians that bullying is not acceptable;
2. to encourage a climate of openness in which children, staff and parents act immediately if there is any suspicion of bullying;
3. to provide a clear framework for dealing with incidents of bullying;
4. to educate children in resisting bullying;
5. to provide support for those being bullied and a framework within which those bullying others may recognise and reform their behaviour;
6. In accordance with the school's ethos to instil in all members of the school community a sense of caring and kindness for one another.

**Procedure for dealing with incidents involving bullying**

Teachers in MAGDALEN COURT School take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. We keep an anti-bullying logbook in the staff room where we record all incidents of bullying that occur outside lesson time, either near the school or on the children's way home or to school. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, they should record the event in the logbook.

The informal, discreet and sensitive approach has proved very successful in the rare genuine cases dealt with to date, and it is important to maintain this general level of tact for the sake of the children and of the school. Any bullying incident which occurs should be reported immediately to the class teacher of the 'bullied' child. The class teacher will investigate the matter, and seek to resolve each situation, as appropriate, in consultation with colleagues.

1. All teachers should be alert to possible warning signs in children such as distress, work difficulties, illness, problems of irregular attendance.
2. If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.
3. Form teachers must also inform and advise other members of staff where relevant.
4. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, the Head Teacher must be kept informed. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial

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- discussions have proven ineffective, the Head Teacher may contact external support agencies such as the social services.
5. If parents themselves report a concern to you that their child (or another) is being bullied then this should be dealt with immediately, as above.
  6. If a child informs a teacher that he/she is being bullied or a member of staff hears that bullying has taken place, he/she should take careful notes of time, place etc. and satisfy him/herself that there is a case to answer. All reports of bullying **must** be taken seriously.
  7. The teacher should then speak to the Head Teacher who will interview both victim and perpetrator separately. Detailed notes should be taken throughout.
  8. The Head Teacher will usually call the parents of the children concerned into school. After discussion, suitable actions will be decided in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.
  9. The form teacher should follow up any incident with appropriate support and advice for the victim.
  10. Remember, often those thought to be responsible need just as much help as the victim if the cycle of bullying is to be removed and behaviour changed
  11. Bullying behaviour should be seen and dealt with in the context of our overall School Behaviour Policy document. Any such behaviour which betrays the quality of the relationships in our community must be seen for what it is- destructive, and totally unacceptable.

**The role of the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher supports the staff in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that we do not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately. The Head Teacher monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The Head Teacher keeps accurate records of all incidents of bullying.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head Teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head Teacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a child is being punished.

The Head Teacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Head Teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

**The role of Parents**

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

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Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

**Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored on by the Head Teacher, who analyses information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

**Sources of Information**

This policy takes into consideration consideration the detailed information and strategies to reduce incidents of school bullying, to support victims and to deal with children who bully as follows:

- DfES - Anti-bullying pack '*Don't Suffer in Silence*'- available in several languages. It can be downloaded from [www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/)
- ChildLine in Partnership with Schools (CHIPS) - 020 7239 1000
- [www.childline.org.uk/schools.asp](http://www.childline.org.uk/schools.asp)
- Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk/professionals/professionalsindex.shtml](http://www.kidscape.org.uk/professionals/professionalsindex.shtml)
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance [www.ncb.org.uk/aba/](http://www.ncb.org.uk/aba/)
- Teachernet [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/)
- Ofsted -Report -'*Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools*' This can be downloaded from [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=3235](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=3235)

Signed.....

Date.....

To be reviewed by .....