ANTI-BULLYING AND HATE POLICY

Introduction

Bullying is contrary to the values held at Marling, particularly courtesy and integrity, and should not be tolerated in any form.

We place the highest priority on achieving an emotionally and physically safe environment for our students and staff. They have the right to learn and work in a safe, secure and supported environment where they feel free from bullying.

As we prepare children for adult life we aim to increase confidence, self-respect, regard for others and a sense of responsibility. We have a clear role in helping to build a society with a sense of community, of purpose, of order and belonging. All members of our community are expected to work towards the prevention of bullying.

This policy is in addition to, and complementary to the School behaviour policy, attendance policy, child protection policy, equal opportunities policy, the E-Safety policy, and the Early Help Offer.

Aims

- The principal aim of the School's intervention will be to stop any further bullying.
- To educate pupils through the lesson based curriculum and in their wider school life that bullying is socially unacceptable.
- To ensure that all members of the School community, staff, parents/carers and pupils, are aware of the kinds of behaviour which form bullying.
- To establish a culture in which all members of the School community consider bullying to be unacceptable and take responsibility for tackling it.
- To ensure that those who consider themselves to have experienced bullying feel confident to tell someone about it without fear of making the problem worse. Students should not 'suffer in silence'.
- To ensure that the School's response to bullying will be considered and proportionate to the behaviour of the reported student and the effects on the reporting student. To help and support those who have reported bullying.
- To understand the reasons why people bully and work to change their behaviour.

The nature of bullying

The National Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as, "Emotionally harmful behaviour and physically harmful behaviour that is repetitive, wilful, and persistent. It is carried out intentionally to be harmful by an individual or group of people."

Hate –based bullying can include bullying targeting:
- Race, religion or culture.
- Special Educational Needs or disabilities.
- Appearance or health.
- Sexual orientation.
- Young carers, looked after children, or other home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.

Bullying actions can occur in a range of ways which are not mutually exclusive, including:
- Physical.

- Verbal.
- Sexual (see Peer on Peer abuse section in Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).
- Written.
- Cyber-bullying – including text messaging, instant messaging, email, postings on social networking sites, misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera and video facilities.
- Homophobic bullying – this may take place over actual or perceived sexuality, including the use of the word 'gay' in a derogatory sense.
- Transphobic bullying – antagonistic words or actions aimed at or related to transsexual or transgender people.
- Unkind or otherwise inappropriate references to particular characteristics of a child with learning difficulties or disability.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Interference with property.
- Extortion.
- Other non-verbal intimidation.
- Pupils or students who collude with or accept bullying as bystanders are also involved in the actions of the bully.

Please be aware that this list is not exhaustive and is subject to change.

Bullying in any, or any combination, of the above categories creates psychological distress - sometimes accompanied by physical distress.

Use of language that hurts or discriminates against others will never be tolerated or dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"

It is important to recognise that students fall out with each other and we cannot instruct or impose friendships on young people who have fallen out. We work hard with students to mediate friendship issues; part of growing up is the ability to make the correct friendship choices. Situations where friendships breakdown can lead to bullying behaviours. For example, if a student incites others to exclude or mock another.

Conflict between students does not necessarily constitute bullying, even where it results in one-off verbal or physical confrontation or assault. Bullying can, though, arise from conflict. Conflict can arise due to personal differences between individual students or groups of students, problems from outside School becoming interwoven with School life or from difficulties arising from the breakdown of relationships between individuals or groups of students. Sanction for issues arising from conflict between students may lead to sanctions in line with the School behaviour policy.

How do we work to prevent bullying?

A wide range of strategies will be used in order to ensure that all members of the School community have the awareness to ensure that they:

- Can identify bullying.
- Are clear bullying behaviours are always unacceptable.
- Will feel confident to report bullying if it is happening to them.
- Will feel confident to intervene (or report it to someone else) if they witness bullying happening to someone else.

Strategies to achieve this include:
- Reminders in September to staff during INSET, to all Year groups in start of term assemblies, to parents/carers at Parents'/Carers' Information Meetings.
- Promotion of understanding through Anti-Bullying week activities each November.
- Work throughout the year within the SMSC programme including assemblies, tutor time, Lifeskills lessons and SRE carousels.
- Promotion of the "studentsupport" email address for students to report concerns.
- Staff modelling positive relationships to students.
- Treating all incidents reported seriously and ensuring actions, in line with outlined procedures are timely, consistent and constructive.
- Staff training, including awareness of anti-bullying procedures within induction for new staff.
- Posters around the School which are regularly renewed.
- Outside agencies are used where appropriate to offer advice or training.
- Peer support mechanisms are put in place (anti-bullying mentors).

What will happen when bullying is seen or reported

Students and parents/carers are encouraged to share any concerns about bullying with a member of staff at the School. That member of staff will pass on concerns to the Head of Year of the student reporting the bullying. The Head of Year will assess the information available and determine the actions that need to take place. Those actions will include:

- Talking to the reporting student about the situation in a quiet and safe place, not overheard by others. A written statement should be taken.
- Reassuring the reporting student that the School takes bullying very seriously and explaining to them the next steps to be taken.
- Taking the wishes of the reporting student into account. The student has the right to ask for no further action to be taken but the student's welfare will be taken into consideration. If inaction would lead to clear and detrimental effects to the student's emotional and mental well-being, the student's wishes may be overridden.
- If further action is required, gathering additional, including interviewing, and taking statements from witnesses, reported student(s) and staff.
- Recording the incident on CPOMS (the School's online information management system for Child Protection and pastoral issues) under the Bullying category (with all statements and other evidence attached to it).
- The Head of Year making a decision on the next steps to take (once they have a clear and thorough understanding of the incident). This includes deciding on whether a formal sanction should be given to the reported student. (See "What sanction may result from incidents of bullying" section).
- Informing parents/carers of both reporting and reported students, usually via a telephone call, by either the Head of Year or Pastoral Support Worker, of the incident and outcomes from it.
- Informing relevant members of staff, for example the tutors of students and the SENCO [Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator] should be informed if any student on the SEN register is either a reporting or reported student.

What actions may result from incidents of bullying?

Actions that follow an incident of bullying are to designed to ensure that:
- The reporting student feels safe.
- The reported student learns from the incident and does not repeat the behaviours.

No two incidents of bullying are the same. Each case is carefully assessed to ensure appropriate outcomes are reached.

When incidents of bullying or conflict have been reported early it is often the case that a positive resolution can quickly be achieved through a restorative conversation to help the reporting student move forward and reduce the likelihood of incidents recurring. Where issues are more serious and/or more persistent a higher level of support and a sanction for the reported student is usually required.

A. Support for reporting students may include:
- Follow –up "check-ins" agreed with the student e.g. next day, same week, following week.
- Tutors to monitor for "signs and symptoms" and verbal check on student's well-being.
- Regular 1:1 meetings with Head of Year or Pastoral Support Worker 1:1 to develop strategies.
- Making a safe area available to vulnerable students.
- Referral to School Nurse, School Counsellor or outside agencies.
- Checking with parents/carers as to progress following the reported incident.

Vulnerable students may perceive a series of unrelated low level instances of conflict as bullying. Students in such situations will require support of specific and continuous pastoral interventions from staff.

B. Work with Bullies may include:
- Regular 1:1 meetings with Head of Year or Pastoral Support Worker 1:1 to develop strategies to understand the causes and consequences of their actions especially if racist, religious, sexual, cultural, disabled, or gender abuse is involved.
- Possible referral to School Nurse, School Counsellor or outside agencies.
- Check with parents/carers as to progress, following the reported incident.
- Use of restorative justice.
- Implementation of a Behaviour Support Plan.

C. Sanctions that may be given
Appropriate sanctions will be imposed in line with the Marling School Behaviour Policy. Sanctions may include:
- Issuing of behaviour points.
- Breaktime or lunchtime detention.
- After School detention.
- Internal isolation.
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion.

It is important to recognise that each case will be considered separately. Factors that will be assessed when deciding on the level of sanction issued include:
- The needs of the reporting student.
- How persistent the bullying has been.
- If there is evidence that the reported student has bullied the same student or other students previously.
- Whether the reported student knows, or should know, the impact their actions have had on their reporting student.
- The level of menace, intimidation or threat involved.
- The extent to which the bullying has been aggravated by use of the language of hate or by physical actions.
- The extent to which the power between reported and reporting students is imbalanced (for example their relative ages, social confidence or physical size).
- Any mitigating factors affecting the reported student.

In some cases, it may be decided no formal sanction is required. Where that is the case a warning about future conduct will be issued, parents/carers will be informed and a record kept for future reference.

Staff will:
- Recognise the different forms that bullying can take and be vigilant to signs of it.
- Support students who have been bullied.
- Assess and respond to incidents in line with protocols described in this policy.

Students will:
- Always report anything they feel could be classed as bullying that they have experienced or witnessed to a member of staff, to their parents/carers or to another student who can report it for them.
- Encourage the student who is experiencing bullying to tell someone.
- Show their disapproval of bullying and tell the bully to stop if it is safe to do so.

Parents/Carers will:
- Inform the School if they hear of bullying incidents.
- Support the School in the action it takes.

Monitoring
- All reported incidents of bullying will be logged on CPOMS.
- All incidents will be reviewed at fortnightly Key Stage meetings.
- Pastoral leaders will review data related to bullying regularly to identify and respond to any emerging trends.

Links to other policies:
Attendance Policy
Responsible Use Policy
E safety Policy https://www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk/marling-school#policies-and-reports
Behaviour Policy https://www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk/marling-school#policies-and-reports
Controlled Substances Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy https://www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk/marling-school#policies-and-reports
Safer Care Code of Conduct https://www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk/marling-school#policies-and-reports
Single Equality Policy https://www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk/marling-school#policies-and-reports