



## Anti Bullying Policy

(This policy applies to all pupils including those in the EYFS)

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## 1. Introduction

At Mount Kelly we believe that every single child has the right to learn in a school environment, free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop their full potential. We expect our pupils to care for and support each other and treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. Mount Kelly will do all it can to support victims (and perpetrators) and educate pupils about the importance of an anti-bullying culture. We foster an inclusive environment and do not tolerate any bullying related to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

### **BULLYING OF ANY KIND IS DEEMED UNACCEPTABLE AND WILL ALWAYS BE TREATED SERIOUSLY AND ACTED UPON.**

This policy has been written with due regard made to:

- DfE “Cyberbullying – advice for head teachers and school staff” 2014
- “Preventing and tackling bullying” July 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools 2023
- Behaviour in School Advice for Headteachers and School Staff July 2022
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding School (2022),
- Independent School Standard Regulations 2010
- The Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 2015

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Promoting Good Behaviour Policy
- Online-safety Policy
- Suspension and Exclusions Policy
- Mobile devices Policy
- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (including Prevent)

## 2. Position and values

At our school the safety, welfare and well-being of all pupils and staff is a key priority. We take all incidences of bullying seriously and it is our duty as a whole school community to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment or discrimination. We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community. We want to enable our pupils to become responsible citizens and to prepare them for life in 21st Century Britain. These values reflect those that will be expected of our pupils by society when they leave school and enter the world of work or further study. We are committed to improving our school's approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring, reviewing and assessing the impact of our preventative measures.

## 3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education).

Bullying is hurtful or unkind behaviour which is deliberate, targeted and **sustained** over a period of time. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group, where the bully or bullies hold more power than those being bullied.

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including via email, social media and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours) means. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are sexual or sexist, homophobic, racist, which focus on religion or cultural or family background, special educational needs, appearance, disabilities or physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). It may also be unpleasant in other ways.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

## 4. Reasons for bullying

Some reasons why children might bully someone include:

- They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular or cool.
- They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time.
- They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group.
- They are fearful of other children's differences.
- They are jealous of another child.

- They are unhappy.
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.

‘Initiation ceremonies’ – painful, humiliating or anxiety-causing rites of passage to mark acceptance into groups, e.g., boarding houses or teams, are a form of bullying and are not tolerated at the School.

## **5. Recognising bullying**

- Pupils who bully others are not always easily recognised. There are no recognisable stereotypes. Bullies can also be victims and require appropriate support. This may involve being referred to the school Health and Wellbeing Team or an external counsellor.
- Bullies may have assertive, aggressive attitudes over which they exercise little control.
- Bullies tend to lack empathy; they cannot imagine what the victim feels.
- Bullies tend to lack guilt: they rationalise that the victim somehow "deserves" the bullying treatment.
- It is difficult to get the real facts about who bullies.
- Staff must be aware of children that tease others and share a laugh, often at others' expense. What could be construed as 'banter' (which itself can be harmful and unpleasant), can often escalate into bullying and also child-on-child abuse.
- All staff must ensure that they monitor and report any unsatisfactory behaviour of children, especially towards vulnerable children, as the school may then be able to identify a trend of repeated behaviour.
- It is imperative that the staff are vigilant and sensitive to those that are more vulnerable than others and stop any unwanted behaviour before it escalates.

## **6. Recognising those who may be vulnerable to bullying**

Bullies usually pick on vulnerable pupils. Vulnerability is not always visible to adults and the victim may look and behave like any other pupil. Recognition is made more difficult as some victims are 'passive' whilst others are 'active'. Even though it is not always easy, teachers should try to identify those who might be seen as vulnerable.

Pupils vulnerable to bullying may:

- be new to the class or school
- be different in appearance, speech or background from other pupils
- suffer from low self-esteem, whether as cause or effect of bullying
- be nervous, anxious, insecure – tend to be sensitive and quiet
- be younger and weaker than the rest of the peer group – less likely to retaliate

- be isolated, lonely or 'loners' – sometimes 'only children' with minimal experience of socialising and who are close to their parents
- appear or have in the past been powerful, aggressive, provocative and disturbed: these are 'active' victims
- have special educational needs
- be evidently more academically able than others

## **7. Signs of Bullying**

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to School;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/recorded as appropriate (see below). -

## **8. Definition of Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying can be defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others" (Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act carried out repeatedly over time, often against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner or Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts

Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and to violent and threatening behaviour which should be [reported to the police](#). These include:

- Violence or assault.
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation.
- Hate crime

## **9. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Governing Body**

- The governing body supports the Head Master / Head of Prep in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school.
- The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly.
- The governors require the Head Master / Head of Prep to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies.
- If a parent /carer has a complaint about how an incident has been dealt with the complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the complaints policy which can be accessed from the school's website.

### **The role of the Head Master / Head of Prep**

- The Head Master / Head of Prep will ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the school policy, and that they know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The day to day management of behaviour is delegated to members of the College and Prep Senior Leadership Teams.
- The Head Master and Head of Prep also have powers to respond to bullying outside of school premises, and to search for and confiscate items that may have been used to bully or intimidate (The Education and Inspections Act 2006: The Education Act 2011).

- The Head Master / Head of Prep will ensure provision of staff training, to ensure legal responsibilities are known, sources of support are explained, and staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of bullying, and understand how to respond to it.

#### **Staff**

- All school staff, both teaching and non-teaching have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in the school's efforts to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the pupils involved and inform a member of the Safeguarding Team, reporting it through MyConcern.

#### **Pupils**

- Pupils should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for potential signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying. If pupils witness bullying they should support the victim, encourage them to report the bullying and, if possible, accompany them to tell a trusted adult.

#### **Parents / Carers**

- Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school community
- Parents/carers, 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 tutor.
- If they are not satisfied with the action taken they should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school complaints procedure.

### **10. Responding to allegations of bullying**

#### **When an allegation of bullying has been reported, the following actions will be taken:**

- Staff will log allegations of bullying on **MyConcern** as a Peer-on-Peer incident.
- The DSL / DDSL will allocate a case manager.
- The case manager will conduct an investigation and log on MyConcern.
- The case manager and relevant members of the SLT will hold a review meeting to determine outcomes.
- Outcomes will be recorded as one of the following:
  - **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
  - **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence; or
  - **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation;
- Once the outcome is determined the case manager and SLT will agree next steps and if substantiated will determine the which level of the anti-bullying policy to place the perpetrator on. SLT will also assess whether any other authorities (such as police or the



local authority) need to be involved, particularly where actions take place outside of school.

- Appropriate support will be offered to those who are the target of bullying including details of external agencies such as ChildLine if felt appropriate.
- The School recognises that pupils exhibiting bullying behaviour are also likely to have been victims of bullying behaviour themselves or may occur because the pupil is unhappy, jealous or lacking self-esteem. We will work with pupils exhibiting such behaviour to help make the required adjustments to their behaviour.

### **Bullying outside school premises**

- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on pupils' well-being beyond the school day. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy. The School has the right, and duty, to investigate incidents of bullying involving our pupils which take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips or that otherwise occur outside of school. The School has the right to take disciplinary measures in respect of such acts.

### **Derogatory language**

- Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored on MyConcern and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for pupils and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language using ISAMS.

### **Prejudice-based incidents**

- A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the Head Master reporting incidents to the governing body.

### **Bullying in the workplace**

- Incidents where it has been deemed that a member of staff has been bullying a pupil will be taken very seriously. The Head Master / Head of Prep, with the support of the governing body, will deal with this; formal action will be taken where necessary. Such action will also be taken if it is deemed that a member of staff is bullying other members of staff.

- In the event of the Head Master / Head of Prep being involved in such incidents, reports will be given immediately to the Chair of Governors who will also take formal action where necessary.

#### **Criminal law**

- Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.
- If school staff feel that an offence has been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. Such contact would normally be made by the DSL after consultation with pastoral staff and those dealing with the matter in school. The DSL will refer to the document “NSPCC – When to call the police” for further guidance as needed.

## 11. Bullying - Preventative Measures

Mount Kelly has adopted a range of strategies, age group dependent, to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour.

- All new pupils (including boarders and our youngest pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported.
- A pupil-friendly anti-bullying policy ensures all pupils can understand and uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given guidance on the School's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to and record allegations of bullying at Mount Kelly. All school staff understand the principles of the School policy, their legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent problems and sources of further support
- Adults in school are expected to be role models for respect and use of appropriate language, challenging inappropriate behaviour and language where needed.
- Application of the School's Promoting Good Behaviour Policy to send a clear and consistent message to the pupil body.
- Our Medical Centre and all our boarding houses and day house rooms display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of additional confidential help lines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Kidscape, Get Connected, and the Samaritans.
- All boarders have the telephone number of the School's confidential listener.
- The reinforcement of the clear message that bullying has no place at Mount Kelly, by means of assemblies, the PSHE programme, and by being alert to prejudicial language.
- Consultation with the 'Pupil Voice' on appropriate action.
- Taking part in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week.
- Training for members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy.
- For younger pupils, the supervision by school staff of play areas at lunch times and breaks.
- Providing information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if they suspect their child is being bullied.
- A clear policy on mobile devices.
- The celebration of all pupil's backgrounds and cultures.
- Raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching children to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, internet).
- Effective recording and monitoring systems.
- Working with multi-agency teams including police and children's services as appropriate.

- Engagement with parents and ensuring pupils are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- Peer-group "initiation ceremonies" designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation are banned and all House Masters/Mistresses remain alert to such actions.

## **12. Cyberbullying - Preventative Measures**

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, Mount Kelly has adopted the following strategies:

- Pupils are expected to adhere to the E-Safety Policy. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department and Designated Safeguarding Lead monitors pupils' internet use.
- Misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet will attract disciplinary sanctions.
- Pupils in years 5-13 with their own personal school email address.
- PSHE lessons are used to offer guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing personal data, keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Inviting external speakers to address pupils and parents.
- Taking part in initiatives such as Safer Internet Day.
- Not allowing the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the School, or where they may cause annoyance to others.
- The use of cameras/ mobile phone or devices with cameras in toilets, washing and changing areas is banned.

## **13. EYFS Children**

The youngest children at Mount Kelly are also encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to listen respectfully to others. Staff help children to celebrate differences and diversity by exploring festivals and cultures such as Diwali. We also acknowledge and embrace differences with our own children within the setting.

By directly teaching children about feelings and emotions we are able to equip them to deal with their own emotions when conflict occurs. Parents are always informed about an incident involving behaviour on collection and if appropriate are asked to sign an Incident or Physical Restraint form. In cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's teacher or Key Person and the Head of Early Years, to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

Our Promoting Good Behaviour Policy for the School is available on our website for parents and their children to read together.

#### **14. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability**

All relevant staff are trained to be alert to the specific needs of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including young carers. Those with SEND may not outwardly show signs of being bullied or may have difficulties in communication about being bullied. Staff will support such pupils in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of bullying related to these pupils.

Specifically, staff are trained to understand that:

- they must not make assumptions that indicators of possible bullying towards a pupil with SEND, such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability (and not a bullying concern) and must explore any concerns they have fully;
- these pupils are more prone to peer group isolation and bullying than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities of being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs is significant;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers are also risk factors.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead meets regularly with the Assistant Head, Personalised Learning and Deputy SENco and monitors the development and wellbeing of SEND pupils. The School recognises that additional pastoral support is often needed by SEND pupils. This is provided by the Personalised Learning departments at the Prep and College and these pupils' pastoral teams. Pastoral and academic staff are made aware of the needs of individuals, at staff meetings, via the SEND register and on the School's information management system.

#### **15. Complaints Procedure**

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly.

## 16. Intervention

All incidents / allegations need to be substantiated before placed on any of the following levels of intervention.

<b>Level 1</b> <b>Warning</b> Tutor /Hm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First incident</li><li>• Restorative 'conversation' / Education</li><li>• Possible school detention</li><li>• Apology.</li></ul>
<b>Level 2</b> <b>Formal Warning</b> SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repetition and / or more serious incident</li><li>• School Detention (Parents informed)</li><li>• Apology if deemed appropriate</li></ul>
<b>Level 3</b> <b>Head Master's formal warning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repetition</li><li>• Suspension (Length of suspension to be determined after investigation)</li></ul>
<b>Level 4</b> <b>PERMANENT EXCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As a consequence of a sustained failure to adjust behaviour towards peers</li><li>• See the School's Expulsion, Suspension and Appeals Policy for further details</li></ul>

During the process, all pupils will also be offered support and guidance on modifying their behaviour. At Mount Kelly, we believe that every pupil, including those involved in bullying, deserves the opportunity to reflect, learn, and grow. When a pupil engages in bullying, we recognize that they have made a mistake, and we are committed to helping them understand the impact of their actions. We provide appropriate support and guidance to ensure they can make better choices in the future. This includes restorative conversations, education on the consequences of bullying, and strategies to develop empathy and self-awareness. Our approach balances accountability with support, allowing pupils to learn from their errors and contribute positively to the school community moving forward.

In very serious cases it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or Social Services. However, it is the policy of the School to attempt to resolve such issues internally using our own disciplinary sanctions, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

### Monitoring, evaluation and review

- a) Members of the SLT meet to review incidents of bullying and to assess and respond to any emerging patterns or trends.
- b) Governors, the Head Master/Head of Prep and relevant staff will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.
- c) Termly reports will be reviewed by the Governing Body's Safeguarding Committee

- d) The school councils will review the policy and their views given to the Head Master/Head of Prep.
- e) Pupil Voice will be used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that pupils might have experienced.
- f) A record of all incidents alleged and actual will be centrally maintained on MyConcern and incidents will be analysed to reflect and re-design further strategies to improve procedures.

## Anti- Bullying: Pupil Guidance

***It is never the victim's fault that they are being bullied***

Mount Kelly is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying and general anti-social behaviour of any kind is unacceptable at 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.

### Key Principles for ALL of our pupils

Mount Kelly will not tolerate bullying behaviour.

Every pupil at Mount Kelly has a right to be happy and feel safe.

Pupils have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear.

Reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated.

Interventions we will take as a School when dealing with examples of 'bullying behaviour' which has been investigated and **substantiated**.

**It is important that we all try to be conscious of our behaviour, putting ourselves in the other person's shoes, so that we are aware of effects which may have been unintentional on our part.**

<b>Level 1</b> <b>Warning</b> Tutor /Hm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First incident</li><li>• Restorative 'conversation' / Education</li><li>• Possible school detention</li><li>• Apology.</li></ul>
<b>Level 2</b> <b>Formal Warning</b> SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repetition and / or more serious incident</li><li>• School Detention (Parents informed)</li><li>• Apology if appropriate</li></ul>
<b>Level 3</b> <b>Head Master's</b> <b>formal warning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repetition</li><li>• Suspension (Length of suspension to be determined after investigation)</li></ul>
<b>Level 4</b> <b>PERMANENT</b> <b>EXCLUSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As a consequence of a sustained failure to adjust behaviour towards peers</li><li>• See the School's Expulsion, Suspension and Appeals Policy for further details</li></ul>