



MONK'S WALK

SCHOOL

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Anti-bullying

Status:	Non - statutory
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Rationale

The board of trustees believe that in a caring school, kindness, respect for individuals and good relationships between all members of the school community are central to its wellbeing. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

Statutory duties of the school

Headteachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to determine measures (which may include the making of rules and provision for enforcing them) to be taken with a view to encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils. Schools have a responsibility (in accordance with part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2020) to treat bullying as a child protection concern (under the Children Act 1989) where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Under the Education and Inspectors Act 2006 the duties and powers afforded to a school are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equality policy
- SEN policy
- Behaviour for Learning policy
- Child Protection policy (section on peer on peer abuse)
- e-Safety policy

What does bullying look like, feel like, sound like?

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it.
- Happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour over time, not just a 'one-off' incident.
- Involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

It can be:

- Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings.
- Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive/personal remarks.
- Relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups.
- Cyber, e.g. emails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant messaging (IM), Social Network.
- Indirect, e.g. graffiti, defacing of property, display of pornography, class, disability, homophobic, racist or sexist material.

Bullying can take a range of forms and it is important to recognise that bullying is a form of peer on peer abuse and can include acts of a sexual nature including sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse. For more information about peer on peer abuse, please refer to our Child Protection Policy. Staff have been made aware of behaviours that might be seen as discriminatory and have been urged to report any behaviours of this nature, however minor they may seem.

When there are concerns about sexual abuse or serious or persistent physical or emotional abuse, the school may refer to Children's Services or the Police if bullying (either direct or indirect) involves an allegation of a crime. This may include hate crimes linked to the protected characteristics for schools are listed below.

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

What does not constitute bullying?

- Simply not liking someone is not an act of bullying. However, in a culture of kindness, at Monk's Walk School we believe that you do not have to be friends to be friendly and respectfully consider the thoughts and feelings of others we encounter.
- Arguments and disagreements. Falling out with a friend, arguing and saying something unkind, is not an act of bullying. Relationships often breakdown and with the support of school staff at Monk's Walk, relationships can be, and often are repaired through restorative justice.
- One off incidents of unkindness. Whilst these are unacceptable and will be addressed, they do not constitute bullying.
- Perceived non-verbal unkindness, for example, 'dirty looks' are not bullying.

Responding to reports about bullying

The school will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, an investigation will begin within 24 hours by the member of staff who has been made aware of it.
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded and given to the appropriate Head of Year who (in conjunction with their SLT link) will identify a member of staff to gather information (in line with our Behaviour for Learning Policy)
- The investigating member of staff will take statements or interview everyone involved and keep a detailed record. This will be held in line with the school's data policy/practice.
- If necessary, steps will be taken to create distance between the alleged bully and victim until the matter is resolved. This may mean the use of our Alternative Centre for Education (ACE) as a holding space – not as a sanction at the investigation stage.
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed during, and after an incident to monitor the situation.
- Where bullying occurs outside school, parents or carers will be encouraged to report incidents to the police if appropriate and any other relevant schools or agencies will be informed and advice/support obtained. If the issues impact upon relationships in school, we reserve the right to carry out an investigation and take action if deemed necessary.
- Punitive measures will be implemented as appropriate once facts have been established and statements/interviews taken.
- School currently adopts a practice of restorative justice and encourages these principles to ensure that issues are fully addressed and resolved.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken, depending on the school's judgement of the severity of the offence:

- Official warnings to cease offending.
- Detention.
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises.
- ACE (Alternative Centre for Education)
- Pre-exclusion warning meeting.
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion.
- Group or one-to-one work to explain the negative effects of bullying to the perpetrators and their cohort.

Preventing Bullying

We aim to involve all members of the school community in creating and maintaining a supportive and co-operative ethos where bullying is not acceptable, and to have effective procedures in place to prevent and deal with bullying. The following approaches are adopted at Monk's Walk to aid the prevention of bullying;

- PSHCE and Resilience Programme.

Year 7 - Kindness
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to show kindness to others 2. Impact of kindness
Resilience Programme
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experiencing negative emotions and coping strategies. Dealing with friendship conflicts 2. Media Navigator - Responsibilities to self and others' when posting online
Year 8 - Discrimination (challenging it and use of language surrounding the following)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disability 2. Sexuality 3. Immigration 4. Homelessness/poverty 5. Gang culture, bullying and coercion
Staying Safe
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Online bullying and harassment 2. Sexting 3. Grooming for different purposes 4. How to deal with negative online contact
Year 9 (Sex and Relationship Education)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safe, healthy and abuse free relationships

- Use of assemblies and form time to discuss issues related to bullying.
- Use Anti Bullying Ambassadors (nominated by Heads of Year) to work together to discuss bullying related issues, organise and run events throughout the year to raise awareness and promote kindness.
- Use of sixth form wellbeing mentors to enable peer advocacy and an improved confidence in students sharing their concerns.
- Promoting an atmosphere of confidentiality and trust so that students feel safe and secure when reporting bullying issues.

- Deploying 'Stay Safe' boxes around the school to encourage students to report bullying.
- Displaying 'What to do if...' posters around school, and in student planners.
- Update electronic bullying register to track and monitor incidents of bullying.
- Providing a confidential email anti-bullying hotline for students to report bullying (staysafe@monkswalk.herts.sch.uk)
- Publishing our policy in student planners and referring to it regularly.
- Working with victims and perpetrators after an incident to prevent recurrence through restorative justice.
- Displaying anti-bullying posters in form rooms and around the school.
- Including the policy in the Year 7 starter pack for new students and the parent handbook.
- Training staff to deal effectively with bullying issues.
- Encouraging all curriculum areas to contribute to anti-bullying awareness, through planned activities. (in addition to the activities of Anti Bullying week in November)
- Consulting with students by conducting surveys to monitor their views.
- Discussing our policy on the Student Council.
- Providing guidance to parents on what to do if they suspect bullying.

The implementation of the policy and procedures will be monitored by:

- The board of trustees of the School (via the Headteacher's report to trustees). This is achieved through reporting to trustees five times per year to show patterns of incidences related to bullying, racism, homophobia/transphobia and disability discrimination.
- The Deputy Headteacher responsible for student support and guidance.