

Meridian Trust

Anti-Bullying Policy

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1 Purpose

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive students can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or student, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child be best able to benefit from the opportunities available at the school.

The College is completely opposed to bullying and it will always be challenged. Bullying is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the college community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. As such, everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all students and all staff have a duty of care to ensure our students are protected from harm, and this includes bullying.

2 Principles

We will:

- Adopt a definition of bullying that is agreed across the Meridian Trust family of Academies.
- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur.
- Raise awareness of bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect.
- Seek to involve all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Promote positive action to prevent bullying through our Lifeskills (PSHE) and pastoral programme, related activities and through curriculum opportunities.
- Provide support for all members of the College community that may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying.
- Provide appropriate training for both staff and students to support the implementation of the policy across the College.
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality, and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds.

3 Definition of bullying

There may sometimes be misunderstanding about the meaning of the term 'bullying'. One-off incidents, whilst they may be very serious and must always be dealt with, do not fall within the definition of 'bullying'.

We define bullying as **persistent or repeated, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate members of our community.**

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- It is repeated over time.
- There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial • Faith-based • Gendered (sexist) • Homophobic/biphobic • Transphobic • Disability-based 	taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)
Sexual	explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber-bullying	bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites

4 Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every member of the college community to work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying.

The Headteacher is ultimately responsible for the well-being of all students and staff. All staff, students, parents and governors should be made aware of the policy alongside awareness being raised of the issues associated with bullying in the College.

Staff

All staff will:

- Treat each other respectfully
- Foster in our students' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our students.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to House Office (Senior Tutor and Student Support Assistant).

Students

We expect our students to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the student who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.

- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances. Witnessing bullying without acting or reporting it will be regarded as offering tacit support for the bully and effectively joining in with the bullying.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.
- Not use bullying tactics themselves as retaliation.

Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Taking appropriate responsibility for the use and misuse of technology, including social media.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to a member of staff and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other students.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken; whilst helping to foster confidence, assertiveness and negotiation skills to deal with unkind behaviour.
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, trying to ascertain the truth.
- Speaking respectfully when talking to all members of college staff.

5 Sanctions

Sanctions will be dependent on the nature/severity of the bullying incident and could range from:

- Contact with home
- Restorative conversation/conference
- Removal from specific classes if/where appropriate
- Removal of lunch/break time for an agreed period
- College detention (30/60/90 minutes)
- Headteacher's detention (1 hour 30 minutes after school on a Friday)
- Isolation (1/2 day or full day)
- Suspension

6 Anti-Bullying Charter

A group of students at Swavesey Village College have worked together to devise an Anti-Bullying Charter that should be observed by all students and adults. Work in form time and assemblies will be devoted to developing an understanding of the charter. See on the next page a copy of the final charter.



ANTI-BULLYING CHARTER

Everybody within the Swavesey Village College community (teachers and other staff, parents, carers and young people) agrees to being *responsible*, *respectful* and *safe* in relation to any bullying incidents.

RESPONSIBLE

- It is important to understand what bullying is and its effects on people, and our college's approach to bullying.
- Listen to anybody who sees bullying, wants to talk about bullying or is being bullied.
- Tell someone such as a teacher, other adult or peer about bullying behaviour. We will never look the other way and do nothing.
- We will act responsibly when online, or when communicating through technology.

RESPECTFUL

- We will not discriminate against people of a different race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or ability. Any language or behaviour that does do this will be challenged.
- Be considerate and supportive of each other. Don't be a bystander and let bullying happen as this is just as bad as being a bully.

SAFE

- All students have the right to feel safe in our college.
- If someone is made to feel unsafe and/or uncomfortable then you must talk to someone who can do something about this.
- *We all have a responsibility to make sure that SVC is a safe environment to talk about bullying.*



7 Bullying outside of college hours

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of the college. Bullying can take place on the way to and from the college, before or after college hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of online bullying in particular means that it can impact on students' well-being beyond the college day. Staff, parents and carers, and students must be vigilant to bullying outside of college, and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy (Appendix B).

8 Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable. 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 SIMS. Staff are also asked to challenge, record and sanction the casual use of derogatory language. Follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for students found using any such language.

9 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 teacher regularly reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions. All prejudice-based incidents are also recorded on the Cambridgeshire County Council Prejudice Reporting for Education (PRfE) system.

10 College initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

- The Anti-Bullying Charter ensures all students understand and uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Our behaviour policy sets clear expectations about acceptable behaviour and how members of the school community should treat one another.
- Our curriculum includes opportunities for students to learn about different types of bullying and what they can do to prevent and respond to bullying.
- Tutor time provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for form tutors to target specific interventions.
- Whole-school and year group assemblies help raise students' awareness of bullying and derogatory language.
- Difference and diversity are celebrated across the school through diverse displays, books and images. The whole school participates in events including Anti-bullying week, Black History Month and LGBTQ+ History Month etc.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and students across the school.
- Restorative approaches provide support to targets of bullying and those who show bullying behaviour.
- Students are continually involved in developing school-wide anti-bullying initiatives through consultation with groups.
- Working with parents and carers, and in partnership with community organisations, to tackle bullying where appropriate.

APPENDIX A- ADVICE FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- A. Generally, it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way that will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.
- OR
- B. Tell your parents and ask them to call the school. Your tutor or Senior Tutor will do their best to help you.
- OR
- C. Tell an older student whom you trust, they will help you to get help.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED: -

- A. TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- B. If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- C. Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

THE FOLLOWING ADVICE WILL BE GIVEN TO PARENTS

- A. Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- B. If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will follow.
- C. It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- D. Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- E. Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they should not be afraid to ask for help.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED.

If bullying is suspected we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken: -

We support the **victims** in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a member of their House team or another teacher if they choose.
- informing the victims' parents.
- by offering a restorative conversation/conference.
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- by-taking steps described below to prevent more bullying.

We also discipline, yet try to help the **bullies** in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- informing the bullies' parents.
- by continuing to work with the bullies in order to correct their bullying activities and attitudes.
- by offering a restorative conversation/conference.
- by taking disciplinary steps (see section 5 of the anti-bullying policy).

APPENDIX B – Cyber-bullying (see E Safety Policy)

We recognise that online technology plays an increasing part in the lives of young people. We aim to ensure they recognise the need to use this technology responsibly, and to act online in a way that is safe and respectful towards others. The rapid development of technology means that these areas are always under review. However, general advice is listed below.

Key Safety Advice for Children & Young People

- Always respect others – be careful what you say online and what images you send.
- Think before you send – whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
- Treat your password like your toothbrush, keep it to yourself. Only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.
- Block the bully – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- Don't retaliate or reply!
- Save the evidence – learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations.
- Make sure you tell:
 - an adult you trust,
 - or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence;
 - the provider of the service;
 - check the service provider's website to see where to report incidents;
 - your school– your form tutor or your Head of House can help you.
- Finally, don't just stand there – if you see cyber-bullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying. How would you feel if no one stood up for you?

Key Safety Advice for Parents & Carers

- Be aware, your child may as likely cyber-bully as be a target of cyber-bullying. Be alert to your child seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or be secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- Talk with your children and understand the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone.
- Use the tools on the service and turn on in-built internet safety features.
- Remind your child not to retaliate.
- Keep the evidence of offending emails, text messages or online conversations.
- Report cyber-bullying:
 - Contact your child's school if it involves another student, so that they can take appropriate action.
 - Contact the service provider.
 - If the cyber-bullying is a potential criminal offence, you should consider contacting the police.

Technology	Great for:	Examples of misuse:
Mobile phone	Keeping in touch by voice or text, taking and sending pictures and film, listening to music, playing games, going online and sending emails. Useful in emergency situations and for allowing children a greater sense of independence.	Sending nasty calls or text messages, including threats, intimidation, and harassment. Taking and sharing humiliating and/or inappropriate images. Videoing other people being harassed and sending these to other phones or internet sites.
Social media (Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter)	A quick and effective way of keeping in touch even while working on other things. Allows images, sounds, videos and text to be shared with others.	Sending nasty messages or content. Using someone else's account to forward rude or inappropriate messages via their contacts list. Please refer to the following link for further advice for parents https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/social-media-guides
Chatrooms & message boards	Groups of people around the world can text or voice chat live about common interests. For young people, this can be an easy way to meet new people and explore issues which they are too shy to talk about in person.	Sending nasty or threatening anonymous messages. Groups of people deciding to pick on or ignore individuals. Making friends under false pretences – people pretending to be someone they're not in order to get personal information that they can misuse in a range of ways – e.g. by spreading secrets or blackmailing.
Webcams	Taking pictures or recording messages. Being able to see and talk to someone live on your computer screen. Bringing far-off places to life or video conferencing	Making and sending inappropriate content. Persuading or threatening young people to act in inappropriate ways. Using inappropriate recordings to manipulate young people.
Social network Sites	Socialising with your friends and making new ones within online communities. Allowing young people to be creative online, even publishing online music. Personalising homepages and profiles, creating and uploading content.	Posting nasty comments, humiliating images / video. Accessing another person's account details and sending unpleasant messages, deleting information or making private information public. Groups of people picking on individuals by excluding them. Creating fake profiles to pretend to be someone else, e.g. to bully, harass or get the person into trouble.
Video hosting sites	Accessing useful educational, entertaining and original creative video content and uploading your own	Posting embarrassing, humiliating film of someone
Virtual Learning Environment	College site, usually available from home and school, set up for tracking and recording student assignments, tests and activities, with message boards, chat and IM.	Posting inappropriate messages or images. Hacking into someone else's account to post inappropriate comments or delete schoolwork.
Gaming sites Consoles & Virtual worlds	Live text or voice chat during online gaming between players across the world, or on handheld consoles with people in the same local area. Virtual worlds let users design their own	Name-calling, making abusive / derogatory remarks. Players may pick on weaker or less experienced users, repeatedly killing their characters. Forwarding unwanted messages to avatars – a figure that represents them in the virtual world or other devices in the immediate vicinity.

APPENDIX C – Recommended procedure for responding to all alleged or witnessed bullying incidents

Incident Reported – Day 1:

- An incident of bullying is reported to a member of staff or is witnessed by a member of staff.
- The witnessing member of staff takes a statement (using the Incident Statement Form) from the student on the day of the incident being reported.
- Member of staff e-mails the incident form to the student's House (ST and SSA).
- ST/SSA to contact parent to make them aware that their child has reported an incident and reassures them that this complaint is in the process of being actioned.
- House to record on SIMS for the victim (Behaviour Management – add new behaviour – *Type* bullying – select the nature of the bullying – add *comments* – select *Resolved* – change the *Points* to 0 – Ok - Save).
- House to discuss issue with other Houses at next Senior Tutor Meeting.

Day 2:

- Senior Tutor to agree with the victim/perceived victim a “go to” person (either themselves, the SSA or the student's Form Tutor) in case any further issues arise.
- Senior Tutor takes a statement from the accused or arranges for the SSA to do so.
- Senior Tutor or SSA take any further statements needed to have a clear understanding of the issue.
- Senior Tutor makes a judgement on how to action the behaviour with restoration and communication with parents at the heart of this decision. (For possible consequences please refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Senior Tutor to decide who will make contact with the victims or perceived victim's parents which must take place no later than the 3rd day. This could be a Senior Tutor, SSA or Form Tutor.

Day 3:

- SSA will update the original entry on SIMS for the *victim* which was put on by the first member of staff to include the outcome.
- SSA will store paperwork and file accordingly to ensure bullying is recorded in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- SSA will e-mail the form tutor to make them aware/update them on the bullying incident.
- SSA will update behaviour entry on SIMS of the *perpetrator* if the incident is confirmed (Behaviour Management – add new behaviour – *Type* bullying – select the nature of the bullying – add *comments* – select *Resolved* – add *Action Taken* - Ok - Save).

Approximately 2 weeks later:

- ST/SSA will speak with the victim/alleged victim and check that they are no longer having issues with the person(s) mentioned.
- If no issues are reported then the ST will also share this at their next ST meeting. If not ST/SSA will need to further investigate new incidents and escalate sanctions as and where necessary.
- If a restorative meeting did not take place following the incident, due to 1 or more students declining in the first instance, then this will be offered again at this point.

APPENDIX D USEFUL LINKS AND SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- 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
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: [www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send - module final.pdf](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf)
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

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
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis

Race, religion and nationality

- 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
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org

- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com/
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrc.org/educational

LGBT

- The Kite Trust: www.thekitetrust.org.uk
- Barnardos LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW)
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
 - A Guide for Schools:
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related