



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Governing Body has adopted  
The Meridian School Anti-Bullying Policy

Date adopted by the Governing Body: October 2014

Chair of Governors:  Paul Bolton

Date of Review: October 2016

## 1. INTRODUCTION

At Meridian School we are committed to creating an atmosphere where students and staff are happy, where there is an atmosphere that is caring, protective, supportive and safe and where no-one is intimidated, humiliated or abused. We aim to promote consideration and respect for others.

We are determined that everyone understands that they will be protected from bullies at Meridian. Our policy incorporates guidelines for staff, students and parents to ensure that we all remain vigilant and pro-active in preventing bullying. We also stress the importance of responding and offering support when bullying occurs. We encourage our students **not to suffer in silence**.

## 2. RAISING AWARENESS

### i) Definition

Bullying is a deliberate act, often repeated over time, which aims to hurt another individual or forces them to change their behaviour pattern. We believe that those involved in bullying fall into three categories: bullies, witnesses and victims.

### ii) Different types of bullying

We recognise that there are five types of bullying:

- Gesture bullying e.g. use of body language
- Verbal bullying e.g. name calling, saying hurtful things
- Physical bullying e.g. physical contact
- Extortion bullying e.g. blackmail and making threats
- Exclusion bullying e.g. unnecessary exclusion
- Cyber bullying e.g. mobile telephones and the internet

## 3. INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

### i) Procedures to follow for Students: Who to Tell

- Talk to someone as soon as possible – a teacher, Senior Tutor, Tutor, Co-tutor, Parent or 'Buddy'. Take a friend with you if it helps to give you confidence. See Appendix for a list of organisations you could contact.
- Keep a record of what happens to you and report it to a member of staff.
- Try to ignore bullies where possible – walk away.
- Practice what to say with a friend if you feel it would help. It does not have to be clever or witty, just a short response, then walk away.
- Try to minimise the opportunities for bullying, e.g. don't linger in corridors, stay with a group.

**ii) Procedures to follow for Witnesses:**

- Report bullying to a member of staff
- Offer a kind word to the person being bullied
- Encourage other witnesses to come forward
- If possible, make it clear to the bully (in a non aggressive, non confrontational way) that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Promote an ethos not to accept victimisation of others. To speak up.
- To make a record of the incident and pass it on to a member of staff. It could help with the follow-up.

**iii) Procedures to follow for Staff**

Avoid labelling incidents as bullying or individuals as bullies. It is an emotive term and the issue may be a single incident of unpleasant behaviour

- Listen to the student and take what they say seriously
- Don't promise to keep the bullying a secret but reassure the student that you will help sort out the problem
- Keep a log of any bullying incidents reported to you and pass on to a Senior Teacher.
- The Senior Teacher may, if appropriate, bring the bully and the victim together to discuss their feelings about one another and the problem. A member of staff is always present at these meetings. This approach is handled very carefully by the pastoral team members who ensure that in any such circumstance, the conclusion to these meetings is a positive one
- Encourage an atmosphere of 'talking and listening' at all times.

**iv) Procedures to follow for Parents whose son/daughter is being bullied:**

- Trust your instincts if you feel your child is acting out of character at home and inform school of any suspicions
- Stay calm and find out exactly what has happened
- Contact the year leader who may have further information
- Encourage your son/daughter to talk to someone in school
- Reassure your son/daughter that the bullying is not their fault
- Practice responses to the bully's most frequent taunts (if appropriate) – it helps to have a reply prepared; encourage your son/daughter to walk away

**v) Procedures to follow for Parents whose son/daughter is bullying other children (taken from DfES guidelines):**

To stop your child bullying others:

- talk with your child: tell them that what they are doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- show your child how they can join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's form tutor or Senior Tutor and explain the problems your child is experiencing
- discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop the bullying
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are cooperative with other people
- discourage family members from bullying behaviour or from using aggressive behaviour or force to get what they want

#### **4. CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

In line with our Behaviour Management Policy, consequences will follow bullying behaviour. The possible sanctions will vary depending on the incident, from the 'one off' occasion that may warrant an after school detention, to a persistent bully being confined to particular areas of the school during break and lunchtimes. In cases of severe and persistent bullying it may be necessary to exclude a student. We will also suggest or offer counselling for the bully.

We are continuing to research current methods for dealing with bullies and victims of bullies and have made contact with some of the agencies listed in the Appendix for information. This information is used by Senior Teachers and Senior Tutors when appropriate.

#### **5. THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY**

The school will deal with all reported bullying incidents that take place in school, and support students who perceive that they are being bullied.

It should be noted that the school cannot be held responsible for bullying which takes place outside school.

Paragraph 19 DfES Guidelines Don't Suffer in Silence

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying off their premises. This was recently confirmed in a court judgement which ruled that the head's duty of care to prevent bullying only applied within the precincts of the school (Leah Bradford-Smart v West Sussex Council).

Where a student tells of bullying off the school premises, a range of steps could be taken:

- talk to the local police
- talk to the local transport company ( a good deal of bullying takes place on journeys to and from school)
- talk to the Senior Tutors at school (for information only)
- talk to the head of other school involved
- map safe routes to school
- talk to your son/daughter about how to avoid/handle bullying outside school
- contact any of the agencies listed in the Appendix.

#### **6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The Bullying policy will be reviewed annually and the implementation and effectiveness of it assessed. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Success indicators of the policy include:

- an environment that does not promote or allow bullying behaviour
- effective procedures for those who are affected by bullying
- effective consequences to stop bullying behaviour.

**APPENDIX**  
**Information and Contacts**

**Advice line for parents on all matters concerning schools**

**Advisory Centre for Education**

1b Aberdeen Studios  
22-24 Highbury Grow  
London N5 2EA  
Tel: 020 7354 8321  
Website: [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

**Anti-Bullying Campaign**

10 Borough High Street  
London SE1 9QQ  
Tel: 020 73781446 (09:30 – 17:00)

**Careline**

London Tel: 020 8514 1177  
Leeds Tel: 0532 302 226  
Telephone counselling for anyone experiencing bullying or other problems

**Children's Legal Centre**

20 Compton Terrace  
London N1 2UN  
Advice Line Tel: 020 7359 6251 (weekdays 14:00 – 17:00)

**Kidscape**

2 Grosvenor Gardens  
London SW1W 0DH  
Tel: 020 7730 3300  
Website: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
Bullying counsellor available Mondays and Wednesdays

**Parentline Plus**

Endway House, Endway  
Hadleigh, Essex SS1 2AN  
Tel: 0808 800 2222  
Website: [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)

**Childline**

**Studd Street London N1 0QW**  
Tel: 0800 1111  
Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)