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## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY (including Cyberbullying)**

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

- Bullying can be emotional or physical, prejudice-based and discriminatory. It can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- It also includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

### **Statement of Intent**

The MK Sapphire Federation recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our Federation can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

At MK Sapphire Federation we aim:

- To minimise and where possible eradicate bullying in all forms by taking action as soon as an incident is reported or seen.
- To provide a caring community in which individuals can feel safe and secure.
- To establish good relationships so that individuals can feel confident in seeking help and know that they will be listened to.
- To provide appropriate follow-up care should an incident of bullying occur.
- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy and of their obligations regarding it.
- To fulfil any legal obligations.

### **Values and Beliefs**

At the MK Sapphire Federation:

- We believe that bullying is unacceptable in any form and under any circumstances.
- We recognise that bullying has adverse effects on victims and their ability to learn therefore we are committed to minimising the risks and to supporting victims.

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## **Actions to Combat Bullying**

The MK Sapphire Federation will establish the following activities in order to combat bullying (including cyberbullying):

- Specific roles and responsibilities will be identified and allocated to members of staff in order to ensure that incidents of bullying are detected and appropriate action taken regarding both bullies and victims.
- A system of record keeping will be established so that all incidents are recorded and can be reviewed and reported to the Governing Body.
- All staff will be made aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy and of their responsibilities in upholding it.
- Appropriate staff training will be undertaken to ensure that the policy can be upheld in an efficient and caring manner.
- Measures which may lead to a reduction in bullying incidents such as changes to school environment and procedures will be under constant consideration.
- As part of Restorative Practice, all teaching staff will ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunity to discuss issues regarding bullying in class circle time or if necessary on a one to one basis.
- In the case of cyberbullying, the school will take steps, where appropriate, such as examining system logs, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses and contacting the service provider and the police if necessary. (Please also refer to Pepper Hill and Stanton Schools' E-Safety Policy and Giffard Park School's Digital Technologies Policy).
- The schools will teach e-Safety.
- Report any racist incidents on the Racist Incident Log (See the school's policy on Race Equality/Equal Opportunities) and pass this to either the Executive Headteacher or the Headteacher.

### **Cyberbullying:**

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the Federation will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school systems;
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
  - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance will be referred to, to ensure that the schools powers are used proportionately and lawfully)
  - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene Federation and School behavioural policies.

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- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
  - Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
  - Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
    - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
    - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
    - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

## **Pupil Responsibilities**

In line with Restorative Practice Principles it is important that pupils understand that in order for an Anti-Bullying Policy to be effective they must take on certain responsibilities within the school community. They are expected to:

- Support peers by being caring and respectful of differences and refrain from any behaviour which may be interpreted as bullying.
- Report any suspected incidents of bullying which the victim may be afraid to report.
- Report all incidents of bullying using the proper procedures.
- Report all incidents or suspected incidents to an adult immediately.

## **Role of Parents**

Parents can play a vital role by:

- Reporting any suspected incidents of bullying involving either bullies or victims.
- Encouraging their children to behave in a sociable and responsible manner.
- Supporting the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Encouraging their children to report any incidents or suspected incidents to adults in school.

## **Policy Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of the policy will be measured against the following standards:

- The variation in preventing escalation of bullying including cyberbullying incidents over a given time. If children feel confident and safe in reporting to adults reported incidents could at first increase.
- Variations in the number of incidents involving certain identified individuals or groups.
- Variation in academic performance which may be attributed to the consequences of bullying.

**This Anti-Bullying Policy is a working document which is constantly under review and will be reviewed annually.**

**The Executive Headteacher and Governing Body have ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy. All staff, pupils and parents have a vital part to play in the maintenance and development of the policy. All pupils on the school rolls will be covered by this policy.**