

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Reference and Suggested Key Resource for Staff

DfE July 17 publication "Preventing and tackling bullying, advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies"

DfE factsheet - "School support for children and young people who are bullied"

DfE factsheet - "Cyberbullying, advice for Headteachers and school staff"

DfE factsheet - "Cyberbullying advice for parents and carers"

Aims

- We will not tolerate any form of bullying. The pupils and staff have a right to learn in an affirming and safe environment, able to express themselves without fear or intimidation.
- All children at The Iona School should receive an education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.
- Parents should be entitled to feel confident that when they send their children to school, knowing they are protected from bullying. Parents should work together with the school to prevent bullying.
- Class teachers will encourage parents to communicate concerning an upset pupil – swift response is essential in order to act effectively and pedagogically.
- Parents will be supported in their claims relating to bullying.
- We will help children to gain the personal qualities and self-esteem to minimise the risk of bullying. Identify children at risk and respond positively to their needs.
- Respond firmly to incidents of bullying.
- Encourage a 'telling' culture, through daily class life.
- All stakeholders to be aware of our definition of bullying and understand the policy and procedures in relation to bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms, making it extremely difficult to define. Children, young people, and adults can instigate bullying. The nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops.

The Iona School's definition of bullying is... 'the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. It is the repeated deliberate behaviour of an individual or group that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.'

Bullying is not the same as 'one-off' teasing or a falling out between friends. With bullying, there is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate another. There is a power imbalance, which makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves. It is usually persistent.

Occasionally, an incident may be classed as bullying even if it was an isolated event, if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered particularly in cases of cyberbullying. If the victim might be endangered, then intervention is urgently required.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening gestures.
- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, pinching, hitting, scratching, punching, biting, pulling or any violence.
- **Racist:** racial taunts, gestures.

- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, incidents include intrusive language, damage to sexual reputation, inappropriate touching and other behaviour perceived to involve unwanted sexual attention.
- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, exclusion, intimidating, spreading rumours, sarcasm, inciting others.
- **Written:** offensive about someone; using graffiti, notes or letters.
- **Damage:** to personal property by tearing clothes, ripping books etc.
- **Exclusion:** making sure others are isolated from their friends and peers.
- **Cyber:** misuse of text messages, cameras including up-skirting, video, email and social media, online abuse this can be peer to peer or from older people (whilst we discourage the use of technology, we are aware this may happen outside school).
- **Humiliation:** because they are seen to be 'different' (e.g. they wear different clothes, come from a different culture, have a different value system, follow a different religion etc).
- **Homophobic:** bullying someone due to their sexual orientation.
- **Transphobic:** incidents are those perceived to be insulting to someone's gender identity or to transgendered people.

Encouraging a 'Telling' Culture

We recognise how difficult it can be for pupils and parents to take action on bullying. Also how bullying thrives on fear and secrecy.

The key messages for children are:

- If you are being bullied, tell someone. Don't suffer in silence.
- If you see someone being bullied, tell an adult immediately. Children are aware of the slogan 'STOP! Several Times on Purpose? Start Telling Other People'.
- Don't think that it's OK to be a 'by-stander', this can give the impression that you think that bullying is acceptable when it never is.
- They are encouraged to report the incident to any adult in the school setting. They may write a note.

Procedures for All Staff

- Staff should be watchful and observe relationships. Where appropriate, observations should be brought to the weekly meetings.
- There should be appropriate supervision of pupils during unstructured time.
- Children should be reminded of the 'telling' culture.
- Staff to record any incidents on a bullying report form immediately.
- Discuss the matter within the weekly College meetings.
- Report any serious incidents to the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Managing and Recording Incidents

Reports of alleged bullying incidents can come from a number of sources including pupils, parents/carers, staff and members of the community.

All bullying incidents will be recorded on a bullying report form including cyberbullying. If you are able, obtain evidence to support your report.

Staff treat all reports of bullying very seriously and the College of Teachers pass these onto the Education Lead who will record all alleged/actual incidents of bullying in the School Bullying Incident Record and report to Trustees.

If a staff member observes an incident: Remember a swift response is essential in order to act effectively and pedagogically.

- Stop the incident.
- Confirm that the child is not physically injured. If the child is physically injured, fetch the nearest first aider.
- Show concern and support for the child who has been bullied (in presence of the other children involved if appropriate).
- Wait for the situation to calm before trying to find out what happened and then take time to listen carefully and establish the facts and factors involved. Bystanders may provide important background information.
- Tell both parties that the matter will be dealt with and that other teachers and the parents of those involved will be informed.
- Talk over the incident, the problems behind it, and possible solutions with all concerned as soon as possible

When reviewing an incident we will try to establish:

- Which pupils were involved.
- The nature and the extent of the bullying and where it was taking place.
- The effects on the person(s) being bullied.
- The nature of the relationship between the perpetrator(s) of the bullying and those experiencing it.
- If there were any triggers to the behaviour.
- The support and disciplinary measures required to try to resolve the difficulty.

Our priority is to restore a sense of safety and wellbeing in the person who has experienced the bullying and to encourage better behaviour from those who have perpetrated it. Some incidents are resolved quickly and with limited intervention, other incidents can be very complex and demand a great deal of skill and expertise. Some incidents of bullying may require support from outside agencies, such as social workers, GPs etc. It is vital that these are reported to the DSL.

Sanctions:

When responding to a particular incident we will consider (in-line with our Behaviour Policy):

- The age of the individuals involved.
- The nature of the incident.
- Whether there are any behavioural/learning needs which could affect an individual's behaviour towards others.
- Whether the individuals have been involved in any previous incidents.
- The duty of care to all pupils and staff.

In the first instance, when bullying has been confirmed, the bully is counselled and a sanction is enforced which reflects the seriousness of the particular incident e.g. reprimand, withdrawal of privileges, written apology.

In exceptional circumstances, bullying may result in exclusion from school.

Involving Parents/Carers:

We will inform parents/carers of any incidents of bullying we are investigating. After an incident of bullying has been confirmed we will ensure that all parents/carers know:

- The steps that will be taken to resolve the incident.
- The progress towards a satisfactory conclusion.

Issue Date

This policy takes effect from September 2019.

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed (and if necessary revised with the approval of the School Management Team) on an annual basis.

Endorsement

Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

Name:	Mr Martin Taylor
Position:	Trustee
Signed:	
Date:	10 th October 2019

Related Policies

- Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Code of Conduct
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Parent Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Harassment of Staff Policy

Appendix 1 - Bullying behaviour is normally characterised by:

- Deliberate aggression, where someone wilfully seeks to harm another.
- A perceived imbalance of power where those being harmed feel powerless.
- Aggression that leads to pain and distress.
- Pain that can be physical and/or emotional.
- Action that takes place over a period of time – a single, isolated incident of aggression would not normally be described as bullying.

Possible Signs and Symptoms:

A child may indicate through signs and behaviour that he or she is being 'bullied'. Parents, teachers and guardians should be aware of the following possible indications or signs and should investigate / respond as recommended within the policy:

- changes in their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to playgroup/kindergarten (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares

- feels ill in the morning
- considers imaginary revenge plans/retribution
- wets bed / pants
- is distressed by the prospect of going online or using social media platforms (when this is usual behaviour)
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

It is important to note that these signs and behaviour could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Appendix 2: Iona Pupil's Anti-Bullying Charter

- We will not tolerate bullying.
- Bullying will be dealt with seriously.
- When we report bullying, staff will give us fair hearing.
- We have the right to travel to and from school without being bullied.
- We will not put others down.
- We will not judge others by appearance alone.
- We will accept others regardless of race, religion, culture or disability.
- Bullying is too important to ignore – it must be reported.
- Bullying via electronic communication is just as important as physical and verbal bullying and must be reported to your teacher.

Appendix 3: Support

Within the school community, good relations are always fostered between the parents and the teachers. We would encourage parents or individuals who have issues to present these issues to their child's' teacher. The issue is then assessed and appropriate action taken. We might look at the following ways of helping the children, through discussions with parents, to resolve the situation:

- In the cases of impulse reactions involving say for example pinching, hitting we would advise the child be made subtly aware of limb engagement.
- We would emphasise the importance of reducing unnecessary nerve/sense stimulation (e.g. TV, media etc.).
- We might suggest dietary inclusions or exclusions. Encouraging parents to seek advice.

- We would actively encourage the parent/guardian that their anxiety was not shown or revealed unnecessarily to the child. We feel that the child's future is profoundly influenced by the people about him and as such reactionary impulses on the part of the guardian will find reflection within the child's' psyche and imitative actions. It is therefore of paramount importance that the child be surrounded by activities and responses worthy of imitation. Intense emotional responses are inappropriate for the young child.
- We would give pedagogical stories to enhance understanding.

Outcomes

- The parents involved are kept informed of any decisions or changes both with regards to the behaviour in question, improvements or consequences necessary.
- In all cases, except where special needs are determined and this is not possible in a normal sense, children will be reconciled and parents will be reconciled.
- Subsequent to the incident/s having been investigated and dealt with, in each case, monitoring will ensure the consistent negative behaviour is not repeated.
- In exceptional circumstances exclusion would be considered either temporarily or permanent.

Prevention

The child's' world within the Steiner educational setting is one of love, peace and nurturing, enabled by the quiet and composed inner stance of the teacher. The teacher is also on a path of self-education and inward striving, and stands there as a help to the child in overcoming the hindrances we all encounter in our self-development.