



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Title	Anti-Bullying Policy
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Purpose of the policy	To outline the process for responding to bullying.
Related policies/guidance	DfE guidance: Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017 MHS Behaviour and Relationships Policy MHS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
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Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, Manchester Hospital School has due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and to foster good relations across all protected characteristics. Manchester Hospital School will take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented.

Manchester Hospital School serves the needs of a very large and diverse range of children, young people and their families at times when they are extremely vulnerable. Our core purpose as a school is to uphold the child's right to Education and our policies and procedures are necessary to keep staff and children safe. We acknowledge that our students are often living with a range of very complex medical conditions including mental ill health and therefore we keep the needs of the student at the heart of all decisions. We will, therefore, work within the parameters of all statutory policies whilst seeking to understand and support the child's long term education and health needs.

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1.0 Introduction

At Manchester Hospital School we take bullying seriously. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and every incident of bullying is investigated and dealt with. If bullying or harassment does occur, all students should be able to inform an adult in school and know with confidence that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. At Manchester Hospital School, we work to create a culture of safety and nurture, where pupils can share their worries or concerns.

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on groups or individuals. It can be a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for a young person's mental health. It often has an impact on childhood and a lasting effect on people's lives well into adulthood.

2.0 Aims

This policy sets out our consistent approach to incidents or reports of bullying. The policy aims to ensure consistency across all sites when leaders are responding to incidents or reports of bullying.

3.0 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 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.

This 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/college as being a form of child on child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's and young people's emotional development

Forms and types of bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance;
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions;
- Physical bullying;
- Emotional bullying;
- Sexual bullying;
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying.
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils/learners with protected characteristics):
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith;
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture;
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND);
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying);
- Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying;
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act).

4.0 Safeguarding young people

Bullying should always be considered a safeguarding issue and dealt with by the school in an appropriate manner.

As a school we may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

In cases where child-on-child abuse is identified, we will follow our child protection procedures, taking a contextual approach to support all children and young people who have been affected by the situation.

See the Manchester Hospital School Child-on-Child abuse policy for more information.

The same safeguarding considerations should be applied to bullying incidents that occur outside of school hours or on the journey to and from school. Manchester Hospital School has a key part to play in coordinating a supportive response and involving the relevant agencies to ensure the child is safe and the perpetrators appropriately sanctioned.

5.0 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying, or online bullying, can be defined as the use of technologies by an individual or by a group of people to deliberately and repeatedly upset someone else. Cyber bullying is increasingly prevalent. Awareness-raising and promoting an understanding about cyberbullying are essential to enable ongoing discussion and to ensure members of Manchester Hospital School community are not unknowingly facilitating cyberbullying because of a lack of understanding.

This is achieved through the school's PSHE and RSE curriculums. Our young people will be taught how to recognise cyberbullying and how to take the correct action.

6.0 Recognising the Signs of Bullying

It is recognised that all schools are likely to have a problem with bullying at some time. At Manchester Hospital School we have a proactive approach to identifying and acting upon potential signs of bullying. These signs may include when a young person:

- becomes shy, withdrawn or anxious
- lacks concentration, or shows a deterioration in his or her work
- starts to attend school erratically
- has spurious illnesses
- feels ill in the morning
- is unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- is bullying/ harassing other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

N.B. These signs and behaviours are not limited to the above and they could also indicate other issues that a young person may be experiencing.

7.0 Bullying outside of school

School staff members have the authority to respond to incidents of bullying outside the school premises / day. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances.

This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on.

The site DSL will liaise with the Head Teacher to consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police.

If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed. While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, the school will follow the MHS Child on Child Abuse policy.

8.0 Anti-bullying in the curriculum

Manchester Hospital School will raise awareness of the impact of bullying by teaching our young people about staying safe through its curriculum.

9.0 Understanding why bullying is occurring

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s and victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Other reasons or motivations given for bullying include: bullying related to race, religion or culture; bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities; bullying related to appearance or health conditions; bullying related to sexual orientation; bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances; sexist or sexual bullying. We carefully review the reasons why bullying is occurring on a case by case basis.

10.0 Implementation - Preventative Strategies

- Using our extensive knowledge of pupils/learners, and strong relationships with home, to recognise any changes that might result in 'bullying' behaviours;
- Changes to individual behaviour plans;
- Talking to pupils/learners about issues of difference through dedicated events or projects;

- Talking with pupils/learners about how to manage their own feelings and emotions;
- Ensuring that all pupils/learners are appropriately supervised;
- Ensuring that all members of staff are familiar with the policy;
- Watching for early signs of distress and where pupils/learners are able to communicate, listen to what they are saying;
- Ensuring that appreciation and respect for all cultures are promoted;
- Ensuring that all pupils/learners have the means to communicate, where verbal communication is challenging;
- Ensuring that teaching pupils/learners about bullying and its impact is embedded throughout the curriculum offer.
- Ensuring that monitoring and filtering software is effective in protecting pupils/learners from cyber based bullying

11.0 Steps taken when dealing with incidents:

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached;

The member of staff will pass all information to the site DSL at earliest opportunity

A clear account of the incident will be recorded on CPOMs

The site DSL will interview all concerned and keep a record of their findings;

Information is gathered about the incident before any conclusion is made about whether the incidents were bullying behaviour - both the pupil suspected of 'bullying' and the 'victim' will be listened to carefully;

Relevant staff and parents/carers will be kept informed;

If the issue persists, then further support meetings (with parents and staff) will be held;

In cases where a crime has been committed or a learner is believed to be in imminent danger or risk, the appropriate authorities (police, LA) will be informed immediately prior to any internal investigation. At this point our Safeguarding procedures will be followed.

If it is suspected that the bullying is in the form of staff on pupil/learner then the disciplinary procedure will be acted upon and a safeguarding concern raised. This will be reported to the LADO.

If internet/social media based bullying is suspected steps MUST be taken to check if the filtering and monitoring software protection can be improved.

12.0 Support for Pupils who have been bullied

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by staff:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an appropriate member of staff of their choice
- reassuring the student
- offering continuous support with a designated member of staff
- restoring self-esteem and self-confidence via reflection sessions
- offering continuous support and advice to parents
- being informed about the outcome of the investigation into their concerns
- including external agencies such as Children's Services where appropriate (e.g. where there are linked Child Protection concerns)

13.0 Support for students who have bullied

Students who have bullied will be supported by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the student became involved
- establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change
- informing parents to help change the attitude of the student
- involving other agencies, including Police and Children's Services, to support a change in behaviour (if necessary)
- regular reflection sessions (if necessary)
- attend a mediation (restorative justice) meeting with the affected student to resolve issues and prevent recurrence where this is deemed appropriate and does not place undue stress on the victim
- explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or another adult in school immediately

14.0 Behaviour and Relationships Policy

For students who have demonstrated bullying behaviour, the school's Behaviour and Relationships Policy will be followed. Bullying incidents will always be discussed with parents/carers so that they are aware. Using the restorative practices, a plan will be implemented to identify the steps that need to be taken to change the behaviour in the future and support the student in being able to do this.

15.0 Monitoring and Review

This policy is regularly monitored and reviewed, on a two year cycle, by the Headteacher and Governing Body to ensure that it is working as effectively as it should.

16. Equal opportunities

Diversity of cultures is represented in the books, display materials and equipment used within the school/college. Activities are organised to give pupils/learners the opportunity to share in, respect and appreciate a wide range of cultures and activities. Each child's culture is recognised and treated with respect across the curriculum and where possible children are given the opportunity to share experiences and knowledge in order to raise self esteem. If a child's culture or race might be a factor in an occurrence of bullying, staff should refer to Procedures for Dealing with and Reporting Racial Incidents.