

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Senior School

Introduction

The School recognises the very serious impact of bullying with respect to its negative impact on the teaching and learning process and its potential to cause severe psychological damage which can affect the long-term health, well-being and confidence of the person being bullied, whether a student or a member of staff, and even in extreme cases their will to live.

This policy incorporates:

- Ways in which the school community will try to develop the students' social interaction skills, school systems and the school environment so that bullying is **prevented**;
- Procedures for **action** to be taken if bullying is reported;
- **Support** and guidance available for victims;
- **Sanctions** and guidance to be used with perpetrators of bullying.

It is the personal responsibility of each member of the school community, staff and students, to create an encouraging and respectful school ethos and a productive, uplifting working environment. The School recognises that learning takes place most effectively when students feel valued by their teachers, their peers and their family. Relationships between staff, between staff and students and between the students themselves should be positive and caring. Staff and older students are expected to provide role models in this respect.

This policy is compliant with the contents of the February 2016 ISI Regulations, the 2014 published DfE document *Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies* and it incorporates strategies from the 2011 research report *The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-bullying Strategies in Schools*. It also includes advice from the 2014 DfE published documents 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying' and 'Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff'.

The School complies, in its anti-bullying policy and procedures, with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and with the aims of the Equality Duty of April 2011. All members of the school community are entitled to fair and equal treatment, regardless of race, religion or belief, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity. The School also works to ensure that a student is not treated unfairly because of her appearance or dress.

Governors, staff and students will work hard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations across all members of the school community.

The School will not discriminate unlawfully against, harass or victimise a student or potential student in relation to admission procedures, educational provision or access to any benefit, facility or service, and it will not subject students to any other detriment.

Criminal Law relating to bullying

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour could be a criminal offence under the following laws:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1998

It is an offence to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or to send something with an indecent or grossly offensive message or a threat or information that is false and known and believed to be false by the sender.

- Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986

If a member of staff feels that a criminal offence may have been committed, s/he will consult with the Deputy Head (**Pastoral**) who will discuss with the Head Mistress whether the assistance of the police will be sought.

Aims of the anti-bullying policy

The School aims to provide a supportive, friendly and safe environment for all students and staff, where bullying is not tolerated, so that staff can teach and students can learn in a secure and relaxed atmosphere and achieve their full academic potential. There is an expectation within the school of excellent standards of behaviour and mutual respect with staff and older pupils modelling positive conduct. Success and achievement, both inside and outside the classroom, are celebrated in order to encourage this positive environment within school. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other policies:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education Policy
- The ICT & E-Safety Policy

Definition of bullying

Bullying is aggressive behaviour, normally repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another student or group physically or emotionally. Such bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. The bullying may be motivated by actual differences or perceived differences.

It can be the action of one individual or a group. It can be face-to-face, indirect or using technology (social websites, mobile 'phones, text messages, photographs and email).

This policy is primarily aimed at preventing the bullying of students.

Objectives of the anti-bullying policy

- To ensure that governors, staff, students and parents understand what bullying is, so that they avoid any behaviour that may be construed as bullying
- To provide students with personal and social education about friendship and other relationships and social interactions, so that they become more aware of the importance of their own responsibilities in maintaining good working relationships and personal friendships
- To recognise that the emotional /social interaction and decision-making skills in a young person's brain are not fully developed; to understand that they will make mistakes and that they will need adult guidance.
- To take preventative measures against harassment by educating students about differences between people and by including assertiveness training and anti-bullying strategies in the curriculum

- To provide students, staff and parents with a clear set of procedures to be followed by staff if bullying is reported, with the intention of de-escalating and stopping any continuation of the harmful behaviour
- To investigate, immediately and with an open mind, any incidents of alleged bullying in order to collect **and record** evidence that helps to determine the sequence of events and possible motives
- To apply sanctions against perpetrators of bullying that are reasonable, proportionate and consistent, in order to emphasise that bullying behaviour is wrong
- To help bullies understand the consequences of their actions and to teach them different ways of behaving
- To support and safeguard victims of bullying and to provide them with guidance on how to deal with future incidents of harassment
- To apply the school's behaviour management sanctions if a student is found to have made a false allegation of bullying against a fellow student

School statement of values

The following values, relevant to how we treat each other, were drawn up in consultation with students.

At MHSG we feel that each individual should

- respect others, regardless of age, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, physical or learning difficulty / disability, health, appearance or family background
- help to create a caring environment where all relationships are open and friendly
- keep our school clean and tidy and show respect for each others' property
- be happy at others' success and give support in times of disappointment
- value extra-curricular achievement as much as academic success
- discourage malicious gossip and realise that teasing can go too far

Methods of bullying

• Verbal or by image	Being insulting, abusive, offensive, hurtful; name-calling; spreading rumours; using sarcasm; using peer pressure on other students to make them act in ways that cause them to underachieve or to lose self esteem; hurtful teasing It can be spoken or written. It can be placed on computers / mobile phones; mobile text messages or photographs /videos on camera phones/ social networking sites/ e-mails/ chat rooms/ websites.
• Physical	Violence of any form – for example, pushing, kicking, punching, hitting Taking, damaging or hiding belongings
• Behaviour	Behaviour (or body language) which others find intimidating, unfriendly, threatening, tormenting; excluding from friendship or working groups Peer pressure to behave in inappropriate ways

Examples of discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Race or religion, belief or culture	Offensive mimicry; taunts or jokes; wearing of provocative badges or insignia; racist graffiti; making fun of customs, accent or dress; refusal to co-operate or work with others of a different race, religion or culture
Homophobic	Focusing on gay, lesbian or transgender sexual orientation

Sexist Sexual	Comments denigrating one gender Uninvited touching, sexual innuendo or propositions, pornographic images or graffiti, comments about emerging puberty or appearance
Disability / special educational need	Offensive comments; taunts or jokes
Pregnancy Maternity	Discrimination which contravenes legal requirements
Age	Offensive language; discrimination in relation to job opportunities

Girls frequently experience friendship issues in the early years of secondary school. These can be very distressing, but they are not usually classified as bullying. However, girls will be supported in handling such issues, for example by resolving conflict through open discussion in the presence of a trusted member of staff.

Different roles within bullying incidents

- 1 **Ringleader**
The person who directs bullying activity through their social power
- 2 **Assistants**
They actively join in the bullying, sometimes because they are afraid of the ringleader
- 3 **Reinforcers**
They give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing
- 4 **Outsiders / bystanders**
They stay back and remain silent and therefore appear to support the bullying.
- 5 **Defenders**
They try to intervene to stop the bullying and comfort students who experience it.

Roles and responsibilities: Dealing with bullying incidents among students

It is the responsibility of all staff and governors to be alert to possible harassment, **to deal with incidents of bullying as the highest priority** and to follow the principles and procedures in this policy when following up cases of bullying.

Specific responsibilities are stated below:

- The **Governors** will evaluate and review the anti-bullying policy and will ensure that the policy complies with current legal requirements.
- The **Head Mistress** and **Deputy Head (Pastoral)** will review and amend the policy, using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in the previous year to improve procedures and taking account of new legislation and government guidance. The Deputy Head (**Pastoral**) will keep a file of details on all incidents that s/he deems to be bullying.
- The **Deputy Head (Pastoral)** and **Deputy Head (Curriculum)** will ensure that relevant staff receive training updates as required. Amendments to the policy will be discussed with the Pastoral Team at Pastoral Team meetings and circulated to staff by the Deputy Head (**Pastoral**). Heads of Year will be given guidance by the Deputy Head (**Pastoral**) as incidents occur, as part of their training.
- The **Deputy Head (Curriculum)** will arrange and monitor staff supervision duties, in order to ensure that there are no permanently unsupervised areas where bullying of students might occur
- The **Pastoral Team** will follow up reports of bullying of students:-

Form Tutor	Minor incidents and friendship issues
Head of Year	More serious incidents
Deputy Head (Pastoral)	Very serious incidents

Head Mistress

Bullying incidents requiring suspension or expulsion

In all cases, the Head of Year, Nurse, Deputy Head (**Pastoral**) and Head Mistress will be informed via the interview record sheets.

- The **Well Being Co-ordinator** will provide up-to-date resources on bullying issues, and will ensure that there are Well Being sessions on the nature of bullying and how to deal with harassment within the programme at appropriate stages of student development
- **Subject teachers** will ensure that
 - they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the Form Tutor of such observations
 - they select working groups and pairs so that girls have the opportunity to work with a variety of peers, not only friendship groups, through the year
 - the composition of groups shows sensitivity to girls who have been the victims of bullying
- The **School Nurse**, often the first person to receive reports of bullying of students, will offer emotional support to the victims, and will alert the relevant Head of Year and Form Tutor. She will provide a "post box" for girls to report bullying confidentially.
- **Parents** are asked, via the Parent Handbook, to inform the Form Tutor or Head of Year if they are concerned that their daughter might be suffering bullying.
- **Students** are asked, via the Student Planner, to tell a member of staff immediately if they are bullied or if they witness bullying of any other girl.

Line of referral for a member of staff

If a **member of staff** feels that s/he is being bullied by another member of staff (or indeed by a student), s/he should speak to the Line Manager in the first instance. If the Line Manager is the source of the alleged bullying, the member of staff should speak to the Deputy Head (**Curriculum**). Every effort should be made to resolve issues between staff informally through discussion. If there is agreement that the behaviour is indeed bullying and the intimidating behaviour continues after the informal discussion, the member of staff should keep a written log of incidents and may choose to follow the grievance procedure.

Line of referral for a student

Students are advised, in their Planner, to tell their Form Tutor, Head of Year, School Nurse or other trusted member of staff if they feel they are being bullied or treated unfairly in any way. Guidance is given on prevention and protection against cyber-bullying in the Student Planner.

Promoting the policy and procedures to students, parents and staff

- Students will be informed of anti-bullying procedures in the Student Planner
- Parents will be informed of procedures via the Parent Handbook, which is updated and issued annually.
- The awareness of staff about the principles of the school policy, legal responsibilities, methods to resolve and prevent problems and the sources of support available, is raised during staff meetings and briefings. Staff are also expected to read and understand the School policy on an annual basis via the staff handbook. Updates made to the policy will be emailed to staff.

Bullying outside school premises

If bullying that occurs outside school is reported to school staff, it must be recorded on an interview form and passed to the relevant Head of Year **within twenty four hours** of receiving the information.

The Deputy Head Mistress (Pastoral) reserves the right to investigate and take action on a bullying incident outside school premises if it has a negative effect on relationships within school or if it has the potential to damage the good reputation of the School.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of the anti-bullying policy

- Details of investigative interviews will be sent to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who will collate this information and revise procedures as necessary.
- An anti-bullying file will be maintained by the Deputy Head (Pastoral), who will make decisions on whether a class or year group need additional inputs on how to work co-operatively with others.
- Information on bullying incidents will be passed on to staff via Tuesday briefing and advice given on action to de-escalate and stop bullying behaviour
- Student questionnaires to audit the extent of bullying will be conducted annually with girls in Year 7 to monitor the extent (in any) of bullying
- Parent surveys will periodically include questions about bullying.
- The anti-bullying policy will be reviewed and updated at least every two years by the Deputy Head (Pastoral), and sooner if new government legislation or guidance becomes available.

The guidance on the following pages relates specifically to bullying of a student by peer(s).

ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURES

Staff guidance: General information

- Treat reports by students of bullying (including cyber-bullying) very seriously. Do not ignore reports or suspicions of bullying. Unpleasantness by one student towards another must always be challenged.
- Take action immediately. This applies to all staff, not only teaching staff.
- If bullying is **discriminatory** or involves **persistent harassment** or **assaults**, it is a criminal offence. Report it to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Head Mistress immediately.
- Produce a written record of each bullying incident and give this to the appropriate Head of Year, who will alert the Deputy Head (Pastoral)
- Respect a student's request that information is not discussed with other students.
- Support the victim in the weeks following the reported incident, to ensure that the bullying has stopped.

Staff guidance: Referral procedure if bullying is reported or witnessed

Interviews should be recorded on an interview sheet and emailed to the Form Tutor, Head of Year, School Nurse and Deputy Head (Pastoral).

For minor incidents

Report the incident to the student's Form Tutor, who will investigate and inform the Head of Year, School Nurse and Deputy Head (Pastoral) in writing of the outcome, using a standard interview sheet.

For serious incidents

Inform the **Head of Year** and the **Deputy Head (Pastoral)**, one of whom will investigate and record the interviews and outcome in writing.

In the unlikely event of a physical assault, call for the School Nurse immediately.

If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a student is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the bullying incident may be treated as a child protection issue. In this case, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) / Designated Person will inform Children's Social Care of the student's local authority.

If the student has a special educational need or disability, the member of staff investigating will inform the Learning Support Co-ordinator and the School Nurse.

If the bullying involves any of the categories covered by the Equality Act (see page 1), inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral) immediately.

Staff guidance: (I) Investigation procedures

If the student is injured, take her immediately to the Nurse for a medical opinion of the extent of the injuries.

A. Interview the victim first.

- Act as soon as the bullying is reported.
- Use a room that allows you to interview in privacy.
- Ask the alleged victim to **write down details** and to sign and date her account. This may need prompting with questions from you afterwards to obtain the full picture – time, location, details of the incident, exact words used, any relevant previous incidents, names of any witnesses, etc. Ask for printouts of any relevant computer communications. Ask to see relevant mobile phone messages and write down the content and origin.
- If bullying is by students from another school, the Head of Year should telephone the relevant Head of Year or Deputy of the other school to report the allegation and ask for a return call on the result of their investigation
- Avoid making premature assumptions of guilt at this stage. **It is very important not to make judgements before you have interviewed all concerned students.**
- Offer sympathy and support strategies.
- If the bullied student may perhaps have initiated a sequence of events that ultimately led to the bullying incident, for example by using inappropriate words in an email, help her to understand how this might have been misinterpreted.
- Instruct the alleged victim that she must not communicate with others about the bullying until other interviews have been completed.

B Interview the alleged bully and any bystanders

- It is important that other interviews take place without girls being able to discuss or text / email matters concerning the allegation with each other.
- The interview with the alleged bully should be immediately after the alleged victim's interview,
- Interviews with bystanders should take place at the same time if possible, but separately, to reduce the possibility of communication / intimidation.
- Ask the alleged victim and bystanders to **write down details**, and to sign and date the accounts. This may need prompting with questions from you to obtain the full picture.
- Reiterate to witnesses that there are no innocent bystanders – they are all responsible if anyone was suffering bullying and they took no action to help
- Be non-confrontational.
- Do not attach blame until your investigation is complete.
- Listen carefully to all accounts – several students saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth, particularly if they have had an opportunity to discuss the incident in advance.
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that moves a bully on from justifying herself. Ask the alleged bully to suggest ways in which the incident might have been avoided and how the current situation could be improved.
- Tell all students interviewed that they must not discuss the interview with other girls.

Staff guidance: (2) Recording procedures

- Write a brief summary of the incident(s) on an interview form. A separate interview sheet is needed for each student involved.
- Place these interview sheets in the individual files of each girl involved, writing “SEE BULLYING FILE IN C17” on the top of each interview sheet.
- Write a more detailed single account and attach written statements of alleged victim, alleged bully and witnesses. Full names of all involved should be included in this account.
- Send this to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) to be stored in the Bullying Incidents file in C17.
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) should keep a record of all incidents of As soon as you have all documentation, discuss your proposed action with the Deputy Head (Pastoral), who will check whether any of the girls interviewed have any previous history of involvement in bullying and will offer advice.

Staff guidance: (3) Action to punish the bully

A. Take appropriate action to deal with the behaviour of the bully

- If you are satisfied that bullying did take place, help the bully to understand the consequences of her actions and face up to the harm she has caused. Warn her that there must be no further intimidation. Inform her of the type of sanction to be used and what will happen if bullying is repeated. (See below)
- If possible, try for reconciliation and genuine apology from the bully.
- Realise that some students have not appreciated the distress they were causing and are willing to change their behaviour. Do **not** force a face-to-face meeting. This must be the decision of the student who has suffered the bullying.
- Try to reach agreement on reasonable long-term behaviour and how the bully can repair the harm caused.
- Prepare the bully to face her peer group – discuss what she will say to others in order to limit rumours.
- Inform parents in writing within five school days if their daughter has been involved in bullying others. State what action you have taken and what punishment will be/has been imposed.
- Apply an appropriate level of sanction commensurate with the seriousness of the bullying. (See below)

B. Sanctions

Sanctions to deal with bullying behaviour will be dependent on the level, seriousness and persistence of the bullying and will take account of any special educational needs, disabilities and needs of vulnerable students, but will follow the hierarchy of sanctions in Chapter 3 of the Staff Handbook.

For minor / single incidents

- an apology and assurance that bullying will stop OR
- a detention OR
- a piece of extra written work OR
- community service within the school OR
- temporary exclusion from certain areas of the school premises OR
- withdrawal of permission to use ICT or have a mobile phone in school

continued overleaf

Staff guidance: (3) Action to punish the bully (continued)

In more serious cases, the bully may be given several detentions and/or asked to sign a behaviour contract. Only the Deputy Head (**Pastoral**) can issue a behaviour contract, in consultation with the Head Mistress. Parents will be asked to come into school to discuss the contract and the reasons for it.

Tougher sanctions will be needed if there has been violence, but this is a rare occurrence in our School.

If the situation continues to cause damage to the learning environment, a change of class may be considered for the bully.

In very serious cases of severe and persistent bullying, suspension from lessons or even suspension from school may be considered. In the most extreme cases, a student may be expelled. Only the Head Mistress can make a decision on these forms of punishment.

Staff guidance: (4) Action to support the victim

A. Follow- up checks

Please note that all follow- up checks must be recorded on an interview sheet.

- If the victim visits the Nurse, the Nurse should check informally whether the bullying has stopped.
- The Head of Year should check with the victim formally on a weekly basis for a month after the complaint of bullying, but not in front of the class and again during the same half term.

B Support strategies

- Prepare the victim to face her peer group – discuss what she will say to others.
- Break up the group dynamics by assigning students to different places in class and in the form.
- Most bullying groups have a ringleader with other girls being frightened of not bullying. Teach the victim to be assertive if confronted by the ringleader:-
 - Try to stay calm. Practise controlled breathing.
 - Ignore the comments; pretend not to hear and walk away quickly OR use body language to look determined, strong and positive. Look the bully in the eye and tell her to stop. Be firm and clear.
 - Shout “No, go away” as loudly as possible
- Provide training to the student on building and maintaining working relationships.
- Give constructive advice if the victim seems to have been bullied because she is being a nuisance or intruding.
- Encourage the victim to tell a trusted adult in school straightaway if bullying is repeated.
- Encourage the victim to broaden her friendship groups by joining a lunchtime activity or team.
- Discuss bullying in a year assembly or in the form, and ask the class to suggest possible solutions.
- If bullying is about a particular issue (disability for example), mount an education programme during tutorial time, not focused on a particular child.
- If bullying occurs on the bus, ask a sixth former to take care of the victim.
- Ask another student to befriend and support the victim as a peer mentor.
- Use peer mediation to defuse tension and resolve further conflict if appropriate, using trained students to define the problem, identify key issues, discuss possible options, negotiate an agreement and evaluate outcomes
- Use theatre-in-education performances on bullying to raise awareness.

Staff guidance (5) Prevention of bullying through the curriculum

- Issues regarding bullying, methods of dealing with bullying, peer pressure, prejudice and discrimination, stereotyping and assertiveness training will be discussed in the Well Programme. Role play scenarios enable girls to practise how to react in bullying situations.
- Assemblies are another vehicle for teaching students about the differences between people and the importance, for instance, of avoiding prejudice-based language
- Well Being inputs will cover friendships, teaching students how to manage their relationships with others constructively.
- Well Being sessions will include co-operative group work to enable students to explore issues by considering different points of view and to become integrated into the peer group.
- Well Being sessions in Year 11 will use external experts for small group discussion LGB & T issues (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender).
- Opportunities for teacher-guided discussion of similarities and differences in major religions will be provided in the Religion and Philosophy curriculum.
- The Year 7 residential in the early autumn term will act as bonding exercises to enable girls to work co-operatively in teams,
- Staff will encourage student co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work in teaching methodology. Students will be allocated to groups selected by the teacher, and these will be changed at regular intervals to allow girls more contact with a wider circle of students in their year group.
- Victims of bullying will be drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interaction skills will be provided through participation in House and **extra-curricular activities and events** such as drama productions, Theme Days, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Young Enterprise and Sports Leaders Award, Model United Nations conferences, concerts, charity and social events.

Staff guidance (6) Pastoral support systems

- The School Nurse will provide a "listening ear" for students to talk through relationship difficulties on a confidential basis.
- The School Council will provide an opportunity for students to suggest improvements to aspects of school life.
- Each Year 7 and Year 8 Form will be allocated at least two Sixth Form Prefects to act as mentors.
- Additional Sixth Form students are available to act as personal mentors on request to the Head/s of Junior Sixth / Senior Sixth.
- When investigating bullying incidents, staff will remind students about the part they can play in the prevention of bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- Assemblies will raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying, for example during Anti-bullying Week and how students themselves can help in the prevention of bullying.
- Assemblies will provide opportunities to celebrate students' success and build self-esteem.
- A Bus Code of Conduct, developed with other local schools, aims to improve the standard of behaviour on journeys to and from school.

Staff guidance: Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying has become an increasing problem in recent years as a result of widespread access to technology. It is particularly difficult to control as it can be directed at a person at any time of day or night and wherever they are. It can be forwarded to a huge audience by the click of a button. UK studies suggest that 20 per cent of young people have suffered cyber-bullying. The following information has been incorporated into the Parent Handbook. Staff are asked to follow this guidance when they are advising students who are victims of cyber-bullying.

Most technology is used very responsibly. Young people generally use the internet or mobile phone in a positive way as part of their personal, social and academic development. Unfortunately, modern technology is also occasionally used negatively. The School expects that its students will not use technology inside or outside school premises as part of cyber-bullying and that both student and parents will co-operate with any reasonable investigation of the use of that technology by the School.

Cyber-bullying is defined as the use of technology deliberately to upset someone else. The following technology may be involved:-

Mobile phones	Instant Messenger	Chatrooms and message boards
Email	Webcams	Social networking sites Virtual worlds
Video hosting sites	Gaming sites and consoles	Virtual learning environments

The law has recognised that there is no longer a clear boundary between behaviour within a school and the external behaviour of its students. Unpleasant messages or images may be sent outside school time. Naturally we would expect parents to play the main role in dealing with any out-of-school incidents and guidance is provided to parents about setting clear boundaries with regards to their child's internet use in introductory evenings at the start of the academic year. If there is a clear link between a student's distress in school and inappropriate bullying behaviour offsite by other students, for example on the bus to and from school or through computers and mobile phones, we reserve the right to take such action as is reasonable with a view to stopping the alleged bullying and helping to mend relationships. This may involve a ban on bringing a mobile phone onto school premises or a search through a student's phone by a senior member of staff where a student is reasonably suspected of involvement in an incident of cyber-bullying. Inappropriate files or images may also be deleted.

Parents are also advised that there is a general increase in the use of fake profiles from which students can bully each other. Unless there is evidence of criminality in what is said via such fake profiles, there is very little the School can do to identify who is responsible unless evidence indicates blame. In such situations, support can be offered to the victim and social networking hosts advised of the profiles which can then be taken down.

The guidance for parents and students below is adapted from the DfE document 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying', published in November 2014.

Parent Handbook: How to prevent cyber-bullying: advice to students

- Remember that anything you place on technology (examples listed above), can be made public within seconds. You have very little control over this. **Nothing is guaranteed to stay private.** Whatever you send to others can travel world-wide and could stay on-line for ever. University admissions officers and future employers may be able to view messages, films and photos posted years before.
- Be careful what you say on-line or in text messages. It is easy to upset someone by not reading carefully what you have written before pressing the SEND key. Be careful what images you send.
- If you receive a nasty or rude message about someone, or a photo of them, **do not forward it** to anyone. Doing this means that you will be taking part in the bullying. You could even be breaking the law.

- Keep your password to yourself. Do not let anyone see you key it in. Do not let anyone know it or use it. Change your password regularly. Choose hard-to-guess passwords with symbols or numbers. This makes it harder for others to hack into your account.
- Only give your mobile number or personal website address to loyal friends whom you trust completely. Remember also that some people change friends often, especially in the early teenage years.
- Choose the highest security settings on internet sites; do not rely on default settings.
- Most social media services and other sites have a button you can click on to report bullying. Doing this can prevent a bully from targeting you and others in the future. Many services take bullying seriously and will either warn the individual or eliminate his or her account.
- Save the evidence. Always keep a copy of offending e-mails, text messages or a screen grab of online conversations and pass to a parent or a teacher.
- While you are on your mobile phone make sure you also pay attention to your surroundings.
- If you see cyber-bullying taking place, support the victim. Report the bully. Bullies get away with bad behaviour if no one tells.

How to respond if you are bullied: advice to students

- Do not reply to bullying messages.
- Do not retaliate by sending unpleasant messages back.
- Use the blocking and reporting facilities of the website.
- If necessary, change your contact details such as your instant messaging identity or your mobile number.
- Save the evidence. Keep copies, records and dates of offending messages, pictures and on-line conversations. Evidence will be needed by school, internet service providers and mobile phone companies. If the cyber-bullying breaks the law, the evidence may be needed by the police for an investigation.

Note that internet service providers will remove text or photos only if they break the law or the company's own terms and conditions.

- To get help:-
 - tell a parent or adult you trust
 - call a helpline like Childline on 0800 11 11
 - check the provider's website to see how to report incidents
 - ask your school for support and advice

If the cyber-bullying breaks the law, your parents may decide to contact the police.

We hope that the guidance given above is helpful to parents. We advise parents to be alert to signs of upset or withdrawn behaviour in their daughter after her use of the internet or a mobile phone.

We also recommend that parents use the tools on the internet service, turning on in-built safety features.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier depending on national or regulatory changes or when school trends are identified which may necessitate changes or updates in approach.

Reviewed by: H Jeys April 2016

Approved by Governors at Academic Development Committee April 2016

Presented to staff: At staff meeting and by booklet 19th April 2016