Anti-Bullying Policy

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Review Date: **This policy will be reviewed according to The Mercian Trust's Policy Schedule. If there are any changes in legislation or legal requirements, an earlier review will be conducted to ensure compliance and relevance.**	
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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY - OVERVIEW

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. (DfE)

At Queen Mary's High School, we ensure that every student has a positive educational experience and enjoys their time at school. We are proud of our community and family ethos, and will address any bullying or negative behaviour towards another person.

We have a team of student anti-bullying ambassadors made up of representatives from all year groups. They support the work of the staff and are proactive in preventing bullying and supporting their peers. As a school we are moving away from the labels of Bully and Bullying and instead moving towards the term *Perpetrator* and *Bullying Behaviour.* Our hope in doing this is to remind everyone of the serious nature of this behaviour.

By preventing and tackling bullying, we create a safe and disciplined environment in which all pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is defined by the Anti-Bullying Alliance as the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.

TYPES OF BULLYING

Emotionally harmful bullying can take the form of exclusion from peer activities, talking to others about the victim, using threats, name calling, mimicry, ridiculing, graffiti, refusing to cooperate in work or play. It also includes gestures and comments about appearance or the onset of puberty, sexual innuendos and unwanted exposure to pornographic material.

Physical bullying involves any physically aggressive acts and includes sexual assault. Prejudice related bullying in all its forms is often racist, sexist or homophobic, or is targeted at children with special needs or disabilities.

Racist bullying is where a young person is targeted for belonging to a particular ethnic group.

Sexist bullying can be targeted and perpetrated by both genders on opposite and same-sex victims.

Homophobic bullying is aimed at gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgender young people.

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages maybe through peer pressure. (Also known as youth produced sexual imagery).

"*Anyone who has or sends indecent images of someone under the age of 18 is breaking the **law**. Both having and distributing images of this nature is an offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Encouraging someone to take or send 'sexts' can also be illegal."*

Cyberbullying is the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. It may consist of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation, defamation or impersonation.
Cyberbullying may take the form of general insults or prejudice based bullying for example homophobic, sexist, racist or other forms of discrimination. While there is not a specific criminal offence called cyberbullying, activities can be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including:

- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 ● The Malicious Communications Act 1988 ● The Public Order Act 1986.

CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

We will not tolerate any Child on Child abuse. This could include, but may not be limited to: -

- any form of bullying as described above;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sexting;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Every member of the school community has the right to feel safe and secure during their time at school, on school visits, and when travelling to and from school, free from humiliation, oppression and physical, mental, emotional or cyber abuse. The school will do all in its power to enable each pupil to achieve their full academic potential unhindered by the words or actions of bullies following the agreed Anti-Bullying Procedures.

PROCEDURE FOR LOGGING INCIDENTS

All incidents of bullying must be recorded on cpoms by the member of staff to whom it has been reported. The relevant Head of Year and DSL should both be alerted to the incident. It would also be expected that the member of staff to whom the incident has been reported would have a conversation with the relevant Head of Year as soon as possible after the event. A more detailed pastoral/discipline report is to be completed by the Head of Year and recorded on cpoms. Any handwritten evidence is to be placed in each involved pupil's file, along with statements and copies of all associated correspondence. Copies of these can also be placed electronically on cpoms where relevant. Any sanctions are to be clearly stated in the report. Governors will be kept up to date of any bullying incidents via the Headteacher's report which is provided at every LGB meeting.

This policy has been updated following consultation with our Anti-Bullying Ambassador team of students - January 2024

AGREED ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURES

As a School we:

- Will have an agreed Code of Conduct and an Anti-Bullying Code known to pupils, staff (teaching and non-teaching), and parents. These will be included in the Students' Planner and the Staff Planner and will be reviewed regularly. They will be reinforced by reminders posted around the school. This was last reviewed and updated in Jan 2024.
- Will ensure that in form groups at the start of each year students will be given time to agree a Class Code of Conduct which will include anti-bullying principles. This will be displayed prominently in the form room.
- Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide staff supervision at break, lunchtime, before school in the LRC, and on the school gates and main locker areas at the end of school.
- Will have a group of student Anti-Bullying Ambassadors who will regularly promote anti-bullying messages and act as support for their peers on any matters that are bullying related.
- Provide opportunities to discuss aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other in tutor time and PSHCEE lessons.
- Will not use teaching materials or equipment which portrays a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, religion, age, special needs or disabilities.
- Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people.
- Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- Will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school; we will involve parents where necessary.
- Ensure that form tutors, subject teachers and support staff are kept fully informed of incidents involving their pupils.
- Ensure that major or significant incidents are referred to in assemblies without names being mentioned, so that pupil awareness may be sustained and pupils can see that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Report bullying incidents involving exclusion to the Local Governing Body via the Headteacher's report.
- Support the development of our Cultural Awareness Society (CAS), LGBTQ+ group, Mental health ambassadors and Neurodiverse learners to ensure all voices are represented.
- Hold events throughout the year to raise awareness and the profile of Bullying behaviours.
- Support students' Mental Health and well-being throughout school.

- Understand that people will fall out and it is important to remain kind in our words and actions

Students are told, if you are being bullied:

- Remember, your silence is the bully's greatest weapon. ● Be proud of who you are: it is good to be individual.
- Try not to engage with or retaliate to any bullying behaviour that is directed at you.
- If you feel like you want to retaliate, talk to a trusted adult or a member of the Anti Bullying Ambassadors team in school.
- Stay with a group of friends or people: there is safety in numbers.
- Confide in others when the bullying is taking place online. Do not bottle it up or feel that you are on your own.
  Our Anti Bullying Ambassadors are trained to be able to help you.
- Be assertive: do not let bullies get you down.
- Tell an adult you trust straight away.
- You will get immediate support.
- If the bullying is taking place online, build a profile of evidence to present to a trusted adult by taking screenshots as evidence.
- **Be the UPstander. If you see bullying taking place you must report it straight away.**

Students can email the Anti Bullying Ambassadors to seek some help at antibullyingambassadors@qmhs.org.uk

We support the victim(s) in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with the Anti Bullying Ambassadors, the Pastoral Support Co-ordinators or another adult if they choose.
- Informing the victim's parents/carers.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it, from Anti Bullying Ambassadors, mental health ambassadors and, if necessary, a referral to the relevant external counselling agencies.
- By arranging for them to be escorted to and from school premises if necessary.
- By taking disciplinary steps to prevent further bullying.
- By doing everything we can to ensure that the person feels safe.

The role of the bystander(s)

"A bully rarely continues to bully without supporters and an audience" (Anti-Bullying Alliance)

If you know someone is being bullied:

- TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel that you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Staff have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.
- Do not assume that someone else will speak out.

Parents are told:

- Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard. ● Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, and ask questions such as who they have spent their time with, how lunchtime was spent.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. It is best to ask to speak to the relevant Head of Year. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- Communicate openly with your child that you will be contacting the school. Please DO NOT take matters into your own hands. You may be tempted to speak to other parents or even post something on social media, but this could be detrimental and exacerbate the situation.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your own child that there is nothing wrong with them. It is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.
- Allow staff within the school to deal with the situation.

Further advice and guidance can be found following the link below: ABA Guide for parents

Staff are told:

1. **If a member of staff sees, or is called to a bullying incident or an attack taking place, they must:**
   - Keep calm.
   - Send an uninvolved student to get other staff to help.
   - Separate the alleged bully/attacker from the alleged victim, if it is safe to do so. If it is not safe, ask someone to send for the police.
   - Be firm but not aggressive where physical restraint is necessary, using the minimum necessary force following the guidelines in the Physical Restraint Policy.
   - Be careful not to do or say anything which might escalate violence or inflame the situation.
   - Send someone to call an ambulance if there are serious injuries.
   - Disperse any bystanders, retaining any witnesses who saw the whole incident. Send witnesses with another member of staff to write statements.
   - Preserve any weapon or anything which might be needed as evidence.
   - Alert other staff that students are likely to be excited or disturbed, by whatever means is possible given the time of day.

2. Guidelines for action immediately following an incident or the report of a physical or verbal incident.

- Send for the appropriate Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will take the following actions: Leave the alleged bully under supervision whilst dealing with the injuries and/or distress of the victim. If the alleged bully is also injured, her/his injuries will also be attended to.
- Photograph any apparent physical injuries at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Seek medical help or first aid for injuries which do not need hospital treatment. Send for the police if necessary.
- Obtain a written statement describing the incident(s) from the victim and any witnesses. If possible, ensure statements are written in isolation and/or under staff supervision.
- If the victim is well enough to return to lessons, allow them to go after assuring them that action will be taken but it may not be instant.
- If necessary, accompany them to their class and quietly explain what has happened to the class teacher or form teacher who can then keep an eye on the situation. ● If necessary, speak to the victim's parent(s) by telephone explaining what has happened and that an investigation is underway.

  If injuries are serious, arrange for parents to come into school or to go to hospital with their child.
- See the alleged bully and obtain a written statement describing the incident from their point of view (by now the wait and writing should have achieved calm).
- Ask the alleged bully to talk through their statement and discuss the actions/words which constitute bullying (this often encourages the perpetrator to admit fault).
- Do not accept spurious excuses: e.g:
  - it was a joke - not everyone is laughing
  - it was a game - the victim wasn't playing
  - it was an accident - did the bully help the victim, send for help or give sympathy? ● Inform the bully/bullies if photographs were taken or the police called.
- If the incident is serious, telephone the alleged bully's parents and arrange for them to come into school immediately.
- If the incident is less serious, supervise a meeting between the victim and the alleged bully/bullies and encourage an exchange of feelings and, where appropriate, an apology.
- Warn the alleged bully that retribution will not be tolerated and will constitute further bullying.
- If appropriate, tell the bully/bullies that sanctions will be applied and that parents will be informed.
- If appropriate, telephone or write to parents informing them of the incident and of any sanctions to be applied.
- If bullying is reported retrospectively by the victim/parents/other students, this procedure will be followed with appropriate modifications.
- Where allegations of bullying are denied, countered and cannot be successfully resolved, the school may initiate mediation by selecting and engaging an external mediator to intervene with the two sides. Parents will be informed that this measure is being applied.

3. Guidelines for action immediately following an incident or the report of a cyberbullying incident.

- If an allegation of cyber-bullying is made to a member of staff, they should re-assure the student that they have done the right thing and refer the incident to the relevant Head of Year.
- The Head of Year will take a statement of the alleged incident and gather evidence of the cyber bullying that has taken place. They can use screenshots where available to contribute to the portfolio of evidence.
- The alleged perpetrator will be interviewed to gather further evidence of the situation. It is important that both sides of a story are able to be given. If necessary the Head of Year will seek permission from the Head Teacher to examine data or files on a student's electronic device. (The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Head teacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.) ● It is important that if images of a sexual nature of Under 18's or students are on the device then a teacher must not open these images and refer the matter to the police.

4. Log details of the incident as soon as possible.

- All incidents of bullying must be recorded on cpoms with a brief summary of the events. All students involved need to be identified as either the victim or the perpetrator.
- The relevant Head of Year and DSL must be alerted.

Following investigation, a more detailed pastoral/discipline report is to be completed by the Head of Year and recorded on cpoms. Any handwritten evidence is to be placed in each involved pupil's file along with statements and copies of all associated correspondence. Copies of these can also be placed electronically on cpoms where relevant. Any sanctions are to be clearly stated.

Disciplinary Steps

- The level of sanction must depend on the nature and frequency of the bullying incident(s). It must be at the discretion of the Head of Year in consultation, where appropriate, with the Assistant Head, Deputy Head and/or Head Teacher and be in line with the School's rewards, behaviour and consequences policy.
- Students involved will be warned officially to stop offending, or to face escalating consequences.
- Minor incidents, e.g. name calling on one or two occasions, can usually be dealt with by the Head of Year with the warning that parents may be informed if the behaviour continues.
- Anything more serious than this must be reported to parents and the sanctions to be taken made clear, following the School's rewards, behaviour and consequences policy.
- Major or persistent incidents may lead to exclusion at the discretion of the Head Teacher.
- **All** physical attacks must be reported to parents and, depending on their circumstances and severity, may lead to exclusion. Any subsequent physical attack will automatically lead to exclusion.

We will discipline the bully, but also try to help them change their behaviour in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- By informing the bully's parents/carers.
- By continuing to work with the bully in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- By taking disciplinary steps in line with the rewards, behaviour and consequences policy to prevent more bullying.
- By working towards a "fresh start/clean slate" position as soon as possible.
- By speaking to the bully about how they may be able to recompense the situation by apologising, while recognising that this might not always be achievable.
- Working with the bully to identify where they have not met the school values or behaviour principles of being Ready, Kind and Responsible.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In order for our school to maintain high standards and function properly and safely it is necessary for all members of the community to take responsibility for their actions. The points below build upon the core values and Being Ready, Kind and Responsible. Most of the points listed are common sense and all recognise the right of everyone within the community to be able to enjoy school and be in a pleasant, safe and secure environment at all times.

1. Arrive to school and lessons on time and properly equipped. In form time and lessons ensure that you are an active learner, focussed on building your learning power.
2. Wear the correct uniform smartly throughout the day both in and out of school.
3. Show consideration and kindness towards each other. We may not like each other all the time but you must always show other people respect.
4. Be courteous towards every member of staff. All are here to help you and everyone has a job to do. Listen and follow instructions politely and calmly.
5. Look out for strangers on site. All visitors should be wearing a visitor's badge. If they look lost, direct them to the Reception office. If you are concerned about strangers on site, report them to the nearest member of staff.
6. Make sure you have your swipe card with you and use it. It is a vital part of our security system. If you lose your swipe card, report this immediately to the Reception office
7. Move around the buildings without running or pushing. Be patient in a 'bottle-neck' location. Keep to the left whenever possible, to allow a better flow of people on corridors.
8. Keep your bags, purses and mobile phones in your locker at all times during the school day. If you need to bring large sums of money or valuables into school, take them to reception for safe keeping.
9. Look after our environment. Be careful not to damage the buildings, equipment, furniture, grounds or displays. Put all your litter in the bin and remember that chewing gum is not allowed in school as it damages clothing, furniture and carpets. Help to make QM a pleasant place to be.
10. Do not bring anything into school which could cause harm to yourself or others.
11. Outside the school, ensure that your behaviour enhances the school's reputation and reflects your role as an ambassador for our school.

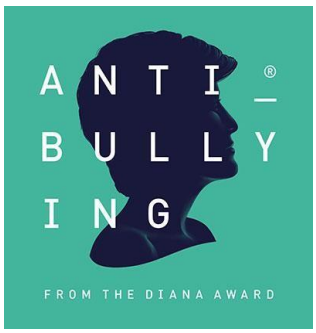
Students must understand that there will be consequences if they choose not to observe the code of conduct described above. This summarises our expectations of behaviour at QMHS.

QMHS Anti-Bullying Code

Bullying is any kind of deliberate action that is repeated with malicious intent and upsets the person on the receiving end or harms them in any way.
These actions can be Verbal, Indirect or Physical
This code has been written in consultation with our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and School Council and we expect everyone to abide by the code.

1. **Queen Mary's High School is a caring community where each individual is valued**
2. **Every member of the school community has the right to spend their time at school free from humiliation, oppression and physical, mental or emotional abuse in a safe and secure environment.**
3. **Every member of the school community deserves respect.**
4. **Every student has a right to learn and enjoy learning.**
5. **Our school community will not tolerate any unkind actions concerning the internet or electronic devices. This is cyberbullying and some actions of this nature can be illegal.**
6. **Our school will encourage self-esteem, tolerance and sensitivity towards others.**
7. **We expect students to support each other by reporting all instances of bullying which will be dealt with seriously.**
8. **Every member of our school community has the right to vocalise their opinions respectfully and without the fear of judgement.**
9. **Our school community challenges negative behaviour and discriminative language using a restorative approach**
10. **Our school expects everyone to be Ready, to be KIND and to Be Responsible**

Bullying and nastiness and intimidation are not funny, they must be reported every time.



Be the UPstander

Updated Jan 2024 in consultation with the School Council and the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

