

Maple Medical PRU

Anti – Bullying Policy

Rationale

As a school community we all have a duty to promote the well-being of all pupils with a view to safeguarding and promoting their welfare. It is also the right of all children to receive their education in a positive working environment. We recognise the negative impact bullying behaviour has on the achievement, educational experiences and wider development of young people. We have a responsibility to create and maintain a secure and safe environment for our pupils.

Aims

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

Statement of intent

Maple believes that:

- Bullying is undesirable and unacceptable.
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found.
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness.
- All members of our community will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to enjoy and achieve in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.
- Children and young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.
- Children and young people should be involved in decision making about matters that concern them.
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.
- Bullying can be tackled by encouraging an environment where individuality is celebrated and individuals can develop without fear.

Legal Situation

Bullying behaviour can be illegal under the following legislation:

Protection from Harassment Act 1997,
The Malicious Communications Act 1988,
The Communications Act 2003, and
The Public Order Act 1986.

Statutory duty of schools

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents/ carers and pupils.

“Every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour, respect, and to prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils” (from DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION ADVICE: PREVENTING AND TACKLING BULLYING April 2011)

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can be:

Emotional	Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/or personal nature. Demanding money, material goods or favours by means of threat or force.
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence because of some perceived physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference
Racist	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Sexist	Derogatory comments relating to gender, including transgender
Homophobic	Because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abuse and threats. Ridiculing an individual.
Cyber	All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

(For pupils the definition may be phrased as STOP – Several Times On Purpose.)

Aims and Objectives

- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at Maple
- To enable everyone to feel safe while at Maple and encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying.
- To deal with each incident of bullying as effectively as possible, taking into consideration the needs of all parties
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to.
- To help and support pupils displaying bullying behaviour to change their attitudes and understand why it needs to change.
- To liaise with parents/ carers and other appropriate members of the school to ensure all members of our school feel responsible
- To liaise with mainstream school if the bullying is taking place there
- To maintain and develop effective listening systems for pupils and staff within Maple
- To involve all staff in dealing with incidents of bullying effectively and promptly
- To equip all staff with the skills and information necessary to deal with incidents of bullying
- To communicate with parents/ carers effectively on the subject of bullying.
- To ensure that all incidents of bullying are recorded and appropriate use is made of the information, where appropriate sharing it with relevant organisations.
- To promote emotional health and wellbeing across the whole school
- To recognise that bullying may involve staff as well as pupils and could be staff to staff, pupil to pupil, staff to pupil or pupil to staff

What we do to prevent bullying

Everyone involved in the life of Maple must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach. Through the consultation process, all stakeholders have agreed to:

- be supportive of each other
- provide positive role models
- convey a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour
- be clear that we all follow the ground-rules
- be fully involved in the development of the anti-bullying policy and support anti-bullying practice
- support each other in the implementation of this policy
- make pupils aware that being a bystander to bullying and not reporting it makes them involved too

All members of the school are expected to report incidents of bullying.

All Staff have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting children's sense of well-being. They have the closest knowledge of the children in their care, and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect.

Staff will;

- provide children with a framework of behaviour including rules which support the school
- emphasise and behave in a respectful and caring manner to children/young people and colleagues, to set a good tone and help create a positive atmosphere
- raise awareness of bullying through activities, discussion, morning meetings, peer support, school council, PSHE, anti-bullying week etc.
- through the Head teacher/senior staff member, keep the management committee well informed recording issues concerning behaviour management

Maple is committed to being an anti-bullying school and will;

- work towards creating and maintaining a secure and safe environment for our pupils
- approach the issue collectively - it is everyone's responsibility to tackle bullying whether they be teachers, associate staff or pupils. To support this, members of staff will have access to appropriate advice. Training and development opportunities will be made available where appropriate.
- monitor deteriorating attendance, poor punctuality, lack of progress and diminishing achievement as possible indicators of bullying
- actively foster a comfortable environment in which pupils feel at ease communicating and talking about their problems and anxieties. This will enable staff to help by counselling, bolstering, reassuring and making referrals to outside agencies when necessary.
- refer to the school's designated safeguarding lead if the incident is considered as putting the pupil at risk.
- Communicate with the mainstream school representative if a pupil feels that they are being bullied there.

Recording

All incidents will be recorded. A senior member of staff or the learning mentor will take responsibility for ensuring that the incident is properly recorded and that the record is updated as necessary throughout an investigation.

Parents / carers of all children/young people involved will be informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with. All discussions and actions relating to the incident/investigation will be documented and added to the incident log on CPOMs (our system of recording any incidents related to safeguarding).

Signs to look out for

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying in schools.

School's teaching and support staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Implementation

School

The following steps may be 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
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to a member of the SLT
- A senior member of staff will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Appropriate staff members will be kept informed and if it persists the staff member will advise the appropriate subject teachers
- Parents/ carers will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation will all parties concerned.
- In some instances of cyber bullying pupils may be advised to block the perpetrator on their phone and/ or on social media. If the bullying is deemed malicious or threatening then parents may be advised to report this to the police.

Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- offering continuous support and reassurance
- restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- working with parents/ carers and keeping them fully informed.
- following up and monitoring to ensure the bullying has ended.

Sometimes investigation may reveal that the recipient may be contributing to the situation by being over sensitive to everyday interactions with others and may need help with coping. In these circumstances the school will liaise with home and ensure support is put in place.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the pupil.

The following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending
- detention
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- minor fixed-term exclusion
- major fixed-term exclusion
- permanent exclusion.

Dealing with the perpetrator

Maple does not tolerate bullying but we do recognise that bullies can also suffer in the long term. Tackling bullies simply with punitive measures may reinforce their attitudes. If they are not helped they may persist with bullying into their adulthood. The perpetrator can also experience emotional harm.

Bullying is a learned behaviour and so may be unlearned. Therefore we will :

- talk incidents through calmly and reasonably. Can the perpetrator be persuaded to feel concern for the recipient and voice that concern?
- move on from there in a positive way e.g. "what can be done to help the victim?"
- set the perpetrator on a positive course of action and make sure it happens.
- if all goes well, bring the perpetrator and bully together for a constructive talk

In the longer term the school will work with the perpetrator to :

- get them to recognise that they have a problem
- clarify the type of bullying behaviour
- provide counselling if considered necessary
- get them to empathise with the victim (s)
- monitor and record any further incidents
- fully involve parents/ carers in the programme of re-education.

There is a range of strategies available including counselling and imposing the school's sanctions. Any sanctions must be applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children.

What should parents/ carers do if they believe their child is being bullied?

- Listen to, believe and support their children
- Encourage the child to tell a member of staff; if this does not happen inform the school. This can be done with a phone call or e-mail. Parents/ carers should be assured that staff will act sensitively and promptly, take the concern seriously and will not take action which makes the situation worse for their child.
- Advise the child against fighting back
- Monitor and keep the school updated

If incidents have not been dealt with to the parents/ carers satisfaction there is a clear complaints procedure which can be found on the website.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy every 2 years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Head teacher signature

Management Committee signature

Date of Policy March 2022

Date of Review March 2024