



Midhurst Rother College

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Anti-Bullying Policy

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of Intent

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Midhurst Rother College; it sees itself as a friendly, caring school committed to providing a safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a calm and secure atmosphere. If bullying should occur, all students should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone that knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell staff.

The College recognises its legal duty to ensure the safety of students and to prevent and respond to all forms of bullying (Children's Act 2002, Education and Inspections Act 2006). Prevention and responses to bullying and harassment are also an essential part of ensuring compliance with equalities legislation. The Equalities Act 2010, requires schools to protect students from discrimination and harassment based on disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race, religion or belief; and sex and sexual orientation.

The College's motivation (and response to prevent bullying) goes beyond the law, it recognises that students who are safe and happy make better learners.

Objectives of Policy

- All Governors, teaching and support staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All Governors, teaching and support staff should know what the College policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents/carers should know what the College policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- The College takes bullying seriously; students and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace.

- Bullying behaviour deliberately causes hurt (either physically or emotionally)
- Bullying behaviour is usually repetitive (though one-off incidents, such as posting an image or sending of a text that is passed around a group, can quickly spiral into bullying behaviour)

- Bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power (the person or people on the receiving end feel like they cannot defend themselves).
- Bullying behaviour is not teasing between friends
- Bullying behaviour is not falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement (though in some cases this can lead to bullying)

What might some of the signs and symptoms of bullying be?

- Property or money has gone missing, or property is damaged
- A student having physical marks on their body (i.e. scratches)
- A gradual change in behaviour (i.e. having trouble sleeping)
- Excessive use of social networking sites
- Having trouble with College work for no apparent reason
- Using a different route to get to College
- A student is easily upset or irritable
- A student making excuses not to go to College

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility.

How can Parents/Carers help?

- Talk to your child and let them know that you will help
- Show them how to resolve conflicts without using power or aggression
- Contact the College immediately and keep in contact until the situation is resolved.
- Try and stay calm and make a note of what your child says
- Reassure your child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Ensure that no-one in your home uses bullying behaviour

Action that will be taken by the College in the event of bullying:

- 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 the Pastoral Leader
- the Pastoral Leader will interview all concerned and will record the actions taken
- the College will work to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
- if appropriate , the police will be asked for their advice
- after the incident has been dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure no further incidents occur.

Bullies and the Bullied

We recognise that it is not always easy to identify those who bully and those who are bullied. No-one is born a bully or a victim of bullying, this concerns behaviour and inter-relational conflict. Bullying can be overt and detectable, such as physical assault, or it can be subtle and more difficult to spot, such as the spreading of rumours or deliberate social exclusion. Some students may both bully and be bullied by others.

Bullying, prejudice and discrimination

Bullying can be motivated by wider prejudice and discrimination, for example, homophobic bullying; bullying of students with AEN; bullying related to race and religion; and gender-based bullying. The prejudice that drives some bullying can be found in society at large, communities and homes. This means it is important for the College to examine the motivation behind bullying and look at whether as a school it needs to challenge prejudice and discrimination on a wider basis. The College therefore looks at data in terms of micro-populations (e.g. gender, AEN, racial etc).

Emerging types of bullying

Developments in technology have provided new opportunities for inter-relational conflict and harassment, commonly called cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying, as with any form of bullying, is driven by a desire to cause hurt. Cyber-bullying can include sending or posting harmful messages, comments and images online or through mobile phones; excluding others from social networking; and impersonating other people in order to cause harm.

Sexual bullying is a form of gender-based bullying; it includes behaviour with a sexual element that is harmful, non-consensual and repeated. Typically this could include sexual comments and name-calling; spreading sexual rumours; use of technology to spread sexual gossip, comments and images; and can also involve non-consensual touching (for example, touching, pinching or slapping body parts, pulling bra straps and clothes, pulling down trousers, or lifting up skirts). Girls are most likely to face sexual bullying, perpetrated by boys, but boys can also be subject to sexual bullying by girls, and there can be sexual bullying between young people of the same sex.

Bullying outside of College

Bullying behaviour can take place both inside and outside College. Bullying outside College may include incidents of cyber-bullying and arguments between peers outside of College time (whilst not wearing uniform). The College is not in a clear legal position to take action about incidents that happen in the evenings or at weekends but it will do its best to resolve such issues. The College's advice in these situations is that parents and carers should always refer the matter to the police. The College will take action where bullying occurs on the way to and from College, by whatever means, and on school trips.

Bullying and Crime,

There are times when bullying behaviour can become a criminal offence, for example:

- threatening or actual physical assault
- threatening or actual sexual assault
- the use of technology to bully or harass
- theft
- coercing others to commit a crime
- hate crime (for example, racism)

Where the Principal/ Vice Principal (Anti-Bullying Lead) thinks that a crime may have been committed, the police will be contacted for advice. Where there may be child protection concerns in relation to an incident the Child Protection policy will be followed, contact (where necessary) being made with the relevant agencies.

Serious bullying incidents

All bullying incidents will be taken seriously, as all incidents of bullying are painful and have consequences. Some incidents may result in either internal isolation or external exclusion, a criminal investigation and/or referral to specialist support. Parents/carers will be informed at each stage. In determining sanctions the College will carefully consider whether the behaviour of the student is a result of provocation, bullying or harassment.

Leadership

Lt Col. Tex Pemberton is the Governor with oversight of bullying issues, with Mrs Christine Denne, Vice-Principal as the Senior Member of Staff responsible for dealing with bullying. All bullying incidents are recorded, with action taken and monitored to ensure no further incidents occur.

Within the curriculum the College will raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE (e.g the bullying project in Year 8), Internet Safety in ICT, and it will develop empathy and emotional intelligence through Social and Emotional Literacy education, discussion in form tutor time, assemblies and subject areas (as appropriate) in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour. The College works in partnership with the Local Authority, regularly participating in training and awareness raising days linked with West Sussex 'Action Against Bullying' (AAB). All members of the Pastoral team have had training in Restorative Justice. The College Council has an active student/staff working party on Health and Well-being that discusses bullying concerns. The Student Planner contains advice for students. The College website contains a hyper link to CEOP and Think U Know.

A student and parent/carer survey is conducted every 12 months and this allows the College to monitor concerns about bullying. The College also assesses its environment through monitoring systems within the academic year, ensuring that students feel safe and are confident that there are staff within the College who they can approach with any worries.

This policy has been developed and implemented in consultation with the whole College community including students, parents/carers, staff, governors and partner agencies. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix A – Pathways of Help –procedures in College for reported bullying.

Appendix B- Support Agencies

Appendix A

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Appendix B

Bullying support for parents, carers and College staff

- **Action Against Bullying Support Line** is available on 0845 075 1010 (Monday - Friday 8am-6pm). Calls will be handled through trained staff members who will provide information and guidance, and referral to other specialist services, including the West Sussex Bullying Caseworker. For schools in West Sussex the key person is Paul Rigglesford (Strategic Lead) who can be contacted on 01243 382911 or via email at paul.rigglesford@westsussex.gov.uk
- **Parentline Plus - 0808 800 22 22** - a national help line available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and they also have a comprehensive website (www.parentlineplus.org.uk)
- **Childline – 08000 1111** - advice and stories from children who have survived bullying
- **Bullying on line-** www.bullying.co.uk
- **Kidscape** – Parents helpline (Monday - Friday, 10am -4pm) also see www.kidscape.org.uk

Useful sources of information

Stonewall- the gay equality organisation founded in 1989. Founding members include Sir Ian McKellen (see www.stonewall.org.uk)

Cyberbullying.org -one of the first websites set up for young people, providing advice around preventing and taking action against cyber bullying (see www.cyberbullying.org)

Chatdancer - a website that informs students about the potential dangers online (including bullying) and advice on staying safe while chatting (see [www. Chatdancer.com](http://www.Chatdancer.com))

Think U Know- the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), has produced a set of resources around internet safety for secondary schools. www.thinkuknow.co.uk