



# Anti-Bullying Policy

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## Introduction

At Mont 21hub, we are committed to providing a safe, caring, inclusive and supportive environment in accordance with Montessori philosophy, where children are able to learn and grow without fear of intimidation or judgement.

All members of our small community, adults and learners, are expected to uphold our values of respect, kindness and empathy.

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in our school.

## Legislation and Guidance

1. Education Act 2002
2. Education and Inspections Act 2006
3. Equality Act 2010
4. The independent School Standards ( England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
5. DfE - Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies 2017
6. DfE - Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff 2014.
7. Anti-Bullying Alliance <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as, 'behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally'. (DfE Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying)

'the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group to another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online'. (Anti-Bullying Alliance)

This can include:

Emotional – including being sarcastic, name-calling, excluding someone from a group or activity, being deliberately unfriendly, hiding possessions, making threats, tormenting and spreading malicious rumours.

Physical – any threat of or use of violence of any kind.

Verbal – the use of words to hurt, demean or intimidate, name calling using homophobic, racist, or religious slurs and persistent teasing.

Demographic – unkind or negatively charged comments or actions relating to: race, sex, sexist, gender-based - homophobic, biphobic and transphobic, religion, special needs, disabilities, physical attributes, cyber, social (relational) or family background.

Social or relational bullying involves harming someone's reputation or relationship within a peer group and although this can be verbal, is most frequently through the use of social media being a form of cyberbullying. Typically it involves spreading malicious rumours, exclusion from groups and activities, manipulating friendships, and other actions to make the victim look foolish and to humiliate an individual.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that involves digital technology and as well as social media, also includes messaging platform, emails, gaming platforms and other online space. It can occur at anytime and frequently when a person is alone involving threats, harassment, spreading false information, exclusion, doxing, impersonation, image-based abused and trolling.

The use of 'banter' whilst normally being positive and provide a sense of belonging and community, can also be subjective depending on each individual and be consider to be bullying if hurtful and demeaning, target protected characteristics, causes discomfort and distress particularly if the target is showing signs of being upset, and continues after someone has asked it to stop.

### **Signs of Bullying**

All adults must be vigilant in identifying signs of bullying and to take the necessary action promptly. Parents/guardians should also be made aware of the following possible signs:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet or sad
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Belongings suddenly go 'missing' or are damaged e.g books, clothing and devices
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons they used to enjoy, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self-esteem and confidence
- Loss of appetite, missing meals, coming to school hungry or binge eating.
- Frequent symptoms of stomach ache, headaches or faking illness
- Unexplained injuries
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to school
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school

There may be other causes of the above symptoms, however a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated.

All adults must be aware of the relevant roles that persons may play in a bullying situation, the ringleader who initiates the bullying, the assistant who actively participates,

the reinforcer who encourages the behaviour, the target who is the victim of the bullying, the defender who stands up against the bullying and the bystander who witnesses the bullying without intervening. This will be included as part of mandatory anti-bullying training.

## **Procedure**

### Preventative Measures

The Proprietor will ensure effective strategies are put in place to prevent bullying including,

- Daily use of the Behaviour policy as and when needed.
- Consultation with learners to form school agreements at the beginning of the academic year.
- Adults are proactive in the supervision and observation of learners.
- Identification of learners who maybe at risk of bullying with particular regard to those with SEND or who have protected characteristics.
- Advice to parents/guardians who suspect their child is being bullied.
- Delivery of anti-bullying education and awareness through circle time and open discussion, PSHEE, celebration of protected characteristics and anti-bullying week.
- The safe use of social media and other forms of digital communication.
- Induction and annual anti-bullying training for all staff members.
- Parent and learner seminars on internet safety and risks of cyberbullying and prevention measures.
- Implementation of IT safety measures and Acceptable Use Policy.
- Liaising with external agencies where necessary.

### Learners

- All new learners are briefed on the school's expected standards of behaviour.
- Learners are encouraged that if they encounter or observe bullying, to immediately report this to an adult where they will be fully supported and offered anonymity.
- Designated circle times and PSHEE to give learners an awareness of the social and moral responsibilities, as well as to highlight issues of bullying and how it is unacceptable.
- To be encouraged to report incidents of cyberbullying.

### Adults

- All new members of staff and external suppliers are made aware and who must comply with the Anti-Bullying policy including the stipulated procedures.
- Induction and annual anti-bullying training for all staff members.
- To respond to cyberbullying incidents and to take appropriate action including possible involvement of the Police by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head of Community
- Bullying incidents involving adults either to children or other adults will be taken very seriously and will be treated as a safeguarding incident and/or a criminal offence with possible involvement of Social Services and/or the Police.
- Notify and involve parents on any reported incidents and steps to resolve.

### Parents

- Any parent/guardian who is concerned that their child or another is being bullied should make contact with the Head of Community immediately.
- Mutual co-operation is expected from parents/guardians in the event that their child is founded to have bullied another member of the school.

## **Following a Report of Bullying**

If an incident of bullying, however minor, is reported, it will be fully dealt with and thoroughly investigated to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the learner.

The following procedure will be adopted:

- The adult who first discovers the incident, immediately reassures and supports the persons involved.
- They will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as is reasonably practically who will lead the investigation with the support of the adult who was initially involved and who will provide a written statement of the incident.
- The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and a written statement taken of all relevant details e.g persons involved, circumstances, date and time etc.
- The bully/bullies will be interviewed individually immediately afterwards and be asked to write a brief account of events.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to both victim and bully together using a restorative approach, explaining the emotional and psychological harm that the incident has caused to the victim and that any form of bullying is unacceptable in school or in daily life. The bully will be asked to offer a genuine apology and be encouraged to shake hands with the victim.
- Mental health and wellbeing support will be provided to both the victim and bully including access to counselling, guidance, peer support and regular catch-ups to ensure they feel safe and supported.
- The parents/guardians of both the victim and perpetrator/s will be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter and any actions taken by the school.
- If the incident is serious, appropriate consequences will be taken as detailed in the Behaviour Policy including possible withdrawal from the school (with special regard to repeated occurrences).
- If a safeguarding incident has occurred including of a sexual nature where it is considered a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact the local authority safeguarding team and the Police if necessary. External agencies will then handle the situation.
- If devices are involved such as mobile phones or laptops, these will be confiscated. If there are images involved, these will not be viewed by any adult in the school but will instead be reported to the local safeguarding team or Police.
- All adults will be required to monitor the situation going forward and to immediately report any further incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head of Community.
- A record of each and every incident will be completed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the SIS.

The school will ensure that all information and dealings are handled sensitively and discreetly and that this is only made known to those parties involved or who are asking to prevent/resolve similar re-occurrences.

**We expect confidentiality to be maintained at all times by school staff.**