

Anti-Bullying Policy



THE **MIRFIELD**
FREE GRAMMAR

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Approved by	TBC
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1. Rationale

1.1. We strive to create a culture based on our core values of Tenacity, Health, Equity, Morality, Flourish and Generosity. Students must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are an academy which sets high standards for our students it is important that we create an atmosphere in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no student has to suffer from harassment of any kind. As bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make our students knowledgeable about bullying and teach them strategies that enable them to stand up for themselves without resorting to retaliation in any form. Additionally, because bullying is in the news and is a form of real anxiety for parents/carers, it is important that we inform supporting adults fully about our approach to dealing with bullying, so that they are able to distinguish between what is bullying and what is not.

2. A definition of bullying – including protected characteristics

2.1. There is no legal definition of bullying, however our school definition of bullying is: **Repetitive intentional** hurting of one person or a group by 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. – See Roles in Appendix 2

2.2. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber- bullying via text messages or on social media and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, protected characteristics* for example on grounds of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. (*<https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights>)

2.3. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is our first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. (See ref: *Preventing Bullying 2017, DFE*).

2.4. The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Schools have wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 to give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

2.5. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Principal will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed

2.6. Bullying can be (but is not limited to):

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- teasing
- making threats
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)

2.7. We appreciate that cases of bullying can be very complex with a range of roles involved, the terminology used can be seen in the appendix alongside a brief description of these roles.

2.8. We understand that sometimes there is relational conflict between students. This is not defined as bullying where there is a balance of power. However, where there is unkindness between students the pastoral team will endeavour to support students and re-emphasise our core values.

3. How we set the right ethos of being a 'UPSTANDER' (telling) school

3.1 An 'Upstander' and telling school is one where students do inform staff when bullying is taking place.

3.2 If students who feel they are being bullied are to tell us about bullying we must work together to create an atmosphere of trust. Students who are classed as targets must know that their concerns will be taken seriously and recognise that investigations take time.

3.3 We must also make it as easy as possible to report bullying. They must understand that these may result in a number of different outcomes.

3.4 If this is to happen, then everyone on the site has a responsibility to ensure that we live by our core values and that we all set a good atmosphere round school. We want to make it clear that this responsibility includes:

- promoting an open and honest ethos that ensures that all members of the school community know and agree with our stance on bullying
- ensuring that all staff exhibit positive behaviours, demonstrate our Core Values and become positive role models to students
- treating other people with respect at all times;
- doing nothing that could be construed as bullying;
- doing nothing that could be construed as supporting bullying. This includes relaying distressing messages, relaying threats, laughing at bullying, watching a fight;
- reporting to the proper person any bullying we witness or any behaviour which we feel could escalate into bullying.
- engaging students in reviewing and developing our anti-bullying practices
- analyse available data to ascertain how the school environment and the journeys to and from school can be improved.

4. How to deal with bullying and who to tell.

Peer issues and bullying are tracked and recorded on CPOMS. All reports or concerns of Peer Issues / Bullying should follow the process flow and suggested actions (see appendix 1)

4.1. Each year we will remind all our students to take the following action if they feel they are being bullied. These messages will also be reinforced throughout the year;

- if you feel able to, then let the perpetrator(s) know that they do not like what is happening to them and ask them to stop;
- if the bullying doesn't stop, tell someone in school who will initiate action to sort out the problem. This will often be their form tutor, any teacher or any member of staff.
- Use the link on The MFG website to report a concern or an incident of bullying, either for yourself or an incident you have witnessed, to report your concerns discreetly.

4.2. If bullying behaviour is witnessed by our students, as part of taking on the role as upstander, we ask that they too report their concerns using the above protocols. However, we emphasise that students must not use physicality or verbal abuse to try and resolve a matter.

4.3. If parents or carers have concerns or incident raised to them regarding peer issues / bullying behaviour we ask that this is reported in the first instance to their child's Form Tutor or Year Leader. This will be logged (on CPOMS) and the matter will be investigated and actions communicated to those involved; and where appropriate referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. What any adult – teacher, support staff, parent – who has been told about bullying should do

5.1. Go to, phone or email the student's Form Tutor or Year Leader of the student concerned.

5.2. If an adult does not know who the form tutor or Year Leaders is they should contact school and the Receptionist will advise them.

6. Who should investigate

6.1. In the first instance we would expect the student's form tutor to discuss any issues with their tutees and suggest possible solutions. If this is ineffective or the form tutor believes he/she needs help in resolving an issue he/she will email the Year Leader. An investigation into a complaint of bullying will be carried out in most cases by one of the Year Leaders, but on occasions by a form tutor or Year Leader Manager / Asst VP or Vice Principal.

7. The need for gathering evidence

7.1. If we are to deal with incidents fairly, we must gather as much evidence as possible in order to establish what really happened. Incident sheets will be required to be completed by the intended target, perpetrator and any witnesses (staff/students/public).

8. How we deal with incidents that cross the inside/outside school boundaries

8.1. Where incidents that happen outside school are clearly having a detrimental effect on the life of student in school we will investigate these and, in conjunction with the parents/carers and the local police, take appropriate action.

9. What sanctions we use

9.1. At our school, sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any SEN or disabilities that pupils may have, and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other children and it should be made clear that their actions are wrong and appropriate sanctions imposed. We expect all students to be proactive and seek help from members of staff if they witness another student being hurt or they are concerned about others.

9.2. The following is the normal hierarchy of actions and sanctions. A serious case of bullying, however, might result in immediate suspension:

- A detention (removal of social time(s) at break/lunch/after school)
- Educational conversation with the perpetrator on the effects of bullying, reasons & future actions
- Restorative conversation between all students involved and an apology from the perpetrators, when consented to by the target
- A phone call/email to outline/discuss the matter with the perpetrator's parent/guardian, further removal of free time, seating plan changes within class, further education on the matter
- Reflection time plus perpetrators' parents invited in for a formal face-to-face meeting
- Timetable/Form/Band change for the perpetrator
- Suspension
- Formal parent/carer and student meetings with the Deputy Principal / Principal / Governors
- Permanent Exclusion

10. Engaging with parents and carers

10.1. We believe it is important for our school to work with parents/carers to help them to understand our approach with regards to bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the student being bullied or the one doing the bullying. We will ensure parents/carers are made aware of how to work with us on bullying and how they can seek help if a problem is not resolved. Some parents may need specific support to help deal with their child's behaviour. Where our school identifies that this is the case, we will initially provide support ourselves or signpost the parents to appropriate channels of help (see Supporting Organisations and Guidance list below),

10.2. We will:

- make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers.
- ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.
- ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
- work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.

10.3. Particularly during a lengthy investigation, or when there is a repetition of bullying, a target's parents may feel very anxious. It is very important that the investigator and the parents keep in contact but parents must understand that form tutors, Year Leaders and Senior Staff do have other demands on their time. We will always endeavor to contact parents on the same day that the incident occurred; however, phone calls may not always be able to be made as soon or as frequently as the parent would ideally like. Wherever possible we would not disclose a source of information about bullying and throughout the investigation would look for opportunities to keep those reporting concerns anonymous e.g. using CCTV or teacher witnesses.

11. How we monitor the situation

11.1. Pastoral staff will aim to check at regular intervals on the welfare of a student who has been bullied, but we do rely on students and parents/carers to report any repetition. Whilst the sanctions outlined above will be used as appropriate, both students and parents must understand that we cannot take action if we are not made aware of or supported in addressing

the matter with the identified perpetrator. Pastoral and Safeguarding surveys including questions related to Anti-Bullying are issued each term, which are also an opportunity for students to reflect on any peer issues and request support.

Support: During an investigation, it is likely that the alleged target will feel vulnerable, particularly at breaks, lunchtimes and the end of school. They will be offered protection at such times, in the form of a room/office in school to which they might go with or without friends, and alternative arrangements for buying and eating lunch. They will also be offered regular slots with their pastoral team to check in on their well-being.

Teaching

Our RSE programme also aim to educate students on a range of matters around bullying behaviours.

Bullying is also addressed and re-visited through the school year, alongside our values of TENACITY, HEALTH AND HAPPINESS, EQUITY, MORALITY, FLOURISH & GENERISITY throughout assembly programme, tutorial sessions and spiraling RSE programme – using videos, scenarios, information, guest speakers, presentations, charity/organization resources and activities.

Annually we will review and act upon the 'Kirklees Young People 's Survey' which takes Year 9 students sample student voice on issues that matter to them – including bullying.

Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org
- Bullies Out: <https://bulliesout.com/need-support/parents/bullying/is-my-child-a-bully/>
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” March 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying - support agencies

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBT support agencies

- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk

SEND - support agencies

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

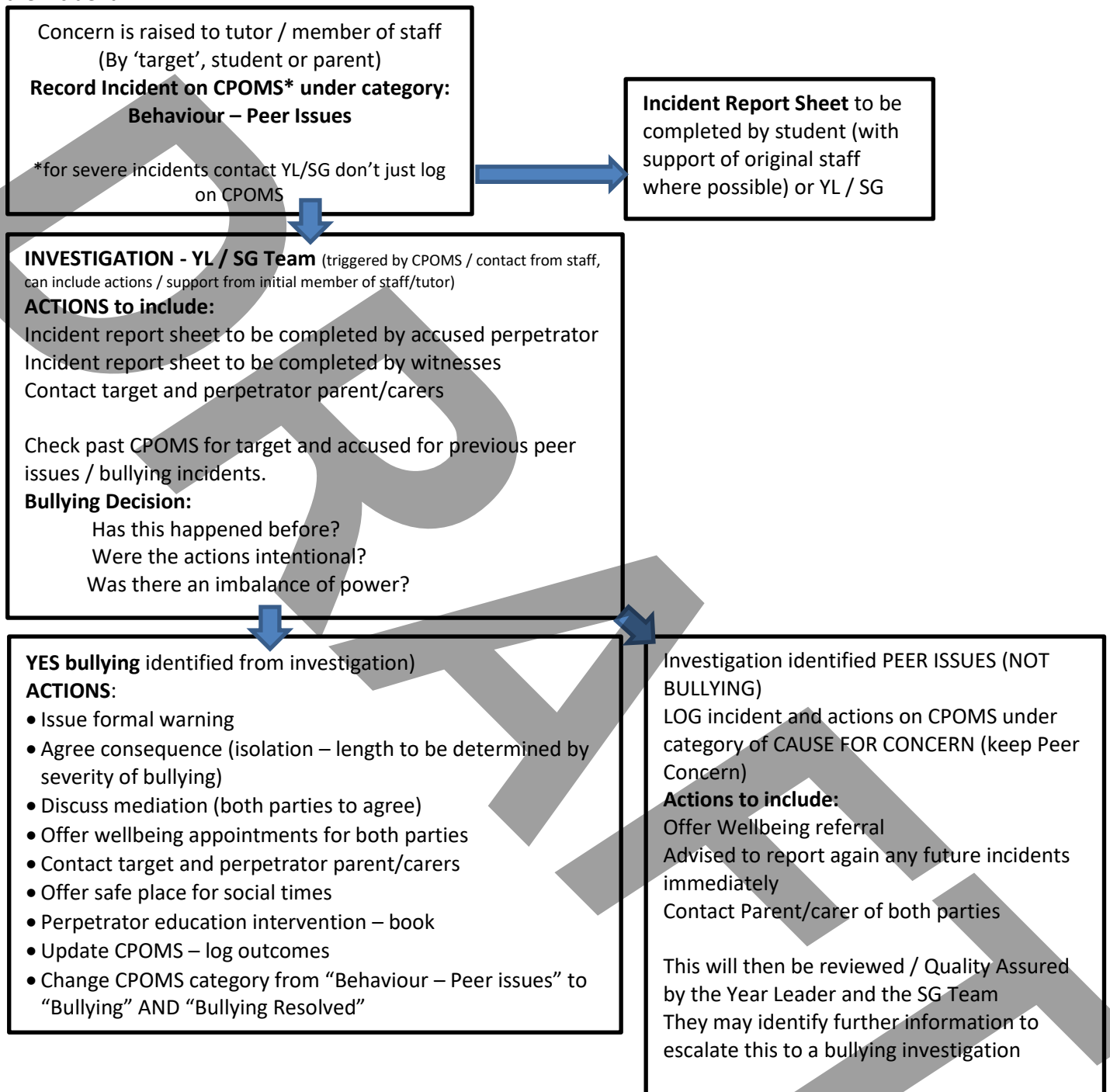
Racism and Hate

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

Appendix 1 – Process Flow for reporting / recording / actions

REPORTING PEER ISSUES AND BULLYING BEHAVIOUR CONCERNS - PROCESS FLOW

The following process is for general guidance and may therefore vary in action/consequence depending on the severity of the incident.



Repeated Bullying incidents – to the same student/ others post previous formal warning will lead to a more severe consequence and parent/carer meetings.
Safeguarding & Year Leader Team will be required to monitor daily the “Behaviour – Peer Issues” category

Appendix 2 - Roles of involved in bullying incidents

