

# Safe to Learn Policy



Reviewed: July 2018

Reviewed by: Michelle Motley

Adopted by: Full Governing Body July 2018

Next review: July 2019

## Rationale:

At Merryhills we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.** If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell an adult and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a '**TELLING**' school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell staff. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy.

## Objective:

This policy outlines what Merryhills School is doing to tackle and prevent bullying. We believe that it is the responsibility of the whole school community to deal effectively with bullying and this policy has been drawn up through the involvement of pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

## What is bullying?

It is essential that the Merryhills School community has a shared understanding and definition of bullying so that we can work together to tackle and prevent it. The Government defines bullying as:

*“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”*

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting or any other use of violence
- Racist or racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual, or unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber; all areas of the internet, such as email & social media websites; mobile phone threats via texts and calls; the misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

We are committed to ensuring that:

- all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- all pupils and parents know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- pupils and parents feel supported when bullying is reported.

- all staff are trained to identify bullying and follow the school's behaviour policy and procedures on bullying
- we recognise and address the needs of all parties involved in incidences of bullying

### **Merryhills is a bully free zone**

At this age, school children are learning about social interaction and building relationships. Sometimes they fall out or are unkind to their friends. It is important to distinguish friendship issues from incidents of bullying. Such situations will be investigated, monitored and managed in accordance with the school's behaviour policy unless the investigations suggest that the situation has become bullying. We take bullying very seriously, if after our investigation there is no evidence of bullying, but a falling in and out of friendship, the situation will be monitored. A phone call will be made after a 4 week period to a parent, to see how things are. A member of the Headship Team or Senior Leadership, will also check on the child, at least once a term to ensure they feel happy and safe. The class teacher will continue to monitor the child closely.

### **Signs and Symptoms:**

As a 'Telling School', we expect pupils to tell an adult if they or someone they know are being bullied. Sometimes pupils are reluctant to come forward and tell and therefore the school community must be vigilant for indicators which might suggest that a pupil is being bullied. **There is no fool proof way of telling that someone is being bullied and some signs could be signs or effects of something else.**

Adults should be aware of these ***possible signs*** and they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is nervous or afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

## **Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Every pupil has the right to be treated with respect and feel safe at school. Bullying is serious both for the victim and the bully: the victim needs to be supported and made to feel safe and those who bully need to learn different ways of behaving. At Merryhills, staff and pupils take steps to minimise the opportunities for bullying to take place.

These measures include:

- the early identification and support of vulnerable children, including those who are most at risk of being bullied
- actively providing systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience
- considering all opportunities for addressing bullying through the curriculum
- zoned playground areas, including a quiet area for vulnerable pupils
- the modelling and reinforcement of positive, respectful behaviour and relationships
- ensuring that pupils are aware of the sanctions which may be applied against pupils who bully
- working with staff and outside agencies to identify and address all forms of bullying.
- actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum and displays

Regrettably, bullying can sometimes happen. At Merryhills we want to support everyone in the school community to be able to identify bullying and respond effectively if it does happen. We use a range of strategies and resources to provide opportunities for pupils to report bullying and feel supported if they are or know someone who is the victim of bullying. Both the victim and the perpetrator will need support and both sets of parents will be informed.

These strategies and resources include:

- peer support networks through the school council, our 'house' system, mini-mentors
- 'concerns boxes' in classrooms and throughout the school
- friendship and social groups, including 'circle of friends'
- the use of PSHE lessons, or during assemblies or P4C lessons, and 'beat bullying' resources.
- circle time opportunities
- staff, visible and accessible, during playtimes and lunchtimes
- useful websites and helpline contact numbers displayed in the school

## **Procedures and outcomes**

Merryhills has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

If an incidence of bullying is reported, we will:

- ensure that a senior member of staff investigates the matter thoroughly, with all parties involved
- when necessary, inform parents of the findings of any investigations into bullying involving their child
- A follow up phone call will be made by a member of the Headship Team to the parents after 4 weeks of reporting a bullying incident, to check that everything is ok. If there are any further concerns parents must come in before. Someone will also speak with the child too.

If an incidence of bullying has taken place, we will:

- apply sanctions and consequences in accordance with the school's behaviour policy, leading up to and including exclusion (See Appendix A)
- monitor and review the situation after sanctions have been applied, to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place
- ask the bully or bullies to apologise
- organise, where possible, that the pupils are reconciled

The Merryhills school community will regularly discuss, monitor and evaluate this policy to ensure that Merryhills is a safe place to learn.

Appendix A:

## Unacceptable Behaviour and Consequences

Level of Seriousness	Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour	Consequences	Examples of Sanctions/Support
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignoring the <i>Merryhills Code</i></li> <li>• Talking in assembly/Talking inline</li> <li>• Interrupting an adult/others</li> <li>• Spoiling others' games</li> <li>• Avoiding work / wasting time</li> <li>• Inappropriate noise</li> <li>• Distracting others</li> <li>• Cheekiness/ Answering back</li> <li>• Teasing, name calling (apart from bullying/ racist comments)</li> <li>• Leaving chair in class without permission/good reason</li> <li>• Pushing in the line</li> <li>• Play fighting</li> <li>• Lack of co-operation</li> <li>• Running inside school</li> <li>• Unwanted physical contact</li> <li>• Swinging on chair</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sanction Level 1- Unacceptable behaviour dealt with by all staff This is during a session or during playtime/lunchtimes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reminder of the Merryhills Code or Behaviour Policy</b></li> <li>• <b>WARNING-on the third to be re directed in the classroom</b></li> <li>• <b>If behaviour continues sent to Phase Leaders</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finishing work at break time/ at home</li> <li>• Positive re-direction, highlighting the good example of others</li> <li>• Be spoken to about the consequences of their behaviour by a member of staff</li> <li>• Re-positioning within the group / classroom</li> <li>• Time out in classroom</li> <li>• Time out area at lunchtimes, with prompts to refocus/calm down with support, where necessary.</li> <li>• Discuss the antecedence (what happened before the behaviour), the behaviour and the consequence of their action</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent Level 1 misbehaviour</li> <li>• Disruption</li> <li>• Disrespecting another child</li> <li>• lying</li> <li>• Refusal to follow instructions</li> <li>• Spitting</li> <li>• Throwing/kicking an resources or equipment around the classroom/playground</li> <li>• Being inside school without permission/good reason</li> <li>• Disrespecting property/defacing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sanction Level 2- Unacceptable behaviour dealt with by Phase Leaders &amp; Class Teachers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Phase Leader- Time out</b></li> <li>• <b>Parents informed by class teacher, verbal and logged. If parent is not accessible on that day phone call must be made home by Class teacher.</b></li> <li>• <b>Incident recorded by Phase Leader</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time out in another class for the rest of the session and to complete class work- Phase Leader Classroom.</li> <li>• Written apology, with support as needed</li> <li>• Exclusion from after school activities if receiving Level 2s regularly.</li> <li>• Have to reflect on the consequences of their behaviour with a senior member of staff</li> <li>• Regular Home – School communication book monitoring pupil's work and behaviour</li> </ul>

3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent Level 2 misbehaviour</li> <li>• Continuous disruption</li> <li>• Disrespecting an adult/Visitor</li> <li>• Blatant dishonesty</li> <li>• Verbal abuse towards another person</li> <li>• Spitting at someone</li> <li>• Swearing</li> <li>• Physical abuse /aggression</li> <li>• Leaving the classroom without permission</li> <li>• Intimidation, tormenting</li> <li>• Fighting</li> <li>• biting</li> <li>• Graffiti/vandalism</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sanction Level 3- Unacceptable behaviour dealt with by AHT/DHT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Parents informed by AHT/DHT and handed an incident letter. If parent is not accessible on that day letter must go home with the child.</b></li> <li>• <b>Incident recorded in class file and letter sent to parent in file.(if child is not collected by parent a text will be sent to notify parent of the letter coming home)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miss part of lunchtime/playtime</li> <li>• Time out with AHT/DHT for the rest of the session and to complete class work- Phase Leader Classroom.</li> <li>• Written apology, with support as needed.</li> <li>• Exclusion from after school activities if receiving Level 3s regularly.</li> <li>• Have to reflect on the consequences of their behaviour with a senior leader</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent Level 3 misbehaviour</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Dangerous refusal to follow instructions</li> <li>• Throwing an object at someone with intent</li> <li>• Using swear words/gestures to offend someone</li> <li>• Violent physical attack (whether provoked or not) Physical attacks on staff</li> <li>• Leaving school without permission</li> <li>• Severe intimidation and tormenting</li> <li>• Racial, social, cultural, disability or religious abuse</li> <li>• Stealing</li> <li>• Sexual harassment or abuse</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sanction Level 4 Unacceptable behaviour dealt with by Headship team (HT,DHT,AHT)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meeting with parents and a phone call and incident letter given to parents (copy kept on file and urgent meeting with parents arranged)</b></li> <li>• <b>Incident recorded in class file</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To miss all playtimes that week and where appropriate work in another class for the rest of day or in Head's/ Deputy/Assistant Heads office.</li> <li>• Be spoken to by the Headship Team and parents together.</li> <li>• Individual Behaviour plan devised between pupil, parent and teacher with specific targets and time scale.</li> <li>• Monitor behaviour daily.</li> <li>• Temporary in school base exclusion.</li> <li>• Fixed Term Exclusion</li> </ul>