



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

<b>Version</b>	<b>1.6</b>
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<b>Last updated</b>	<b>September 2024</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>September 2025</b>

### Record of Alterations

Version 1.0	Original
Version 1.1	Alterations
Version 1.2	None
Version 1.3	Alterations
Version 1.4	None
Version 1.5	None
Version 1.6	Alterations





## Table of Contents

1. General statement	3
2. Aims	3
3. Objectives	3
4. What is bullying	4
5. What bullying is not	4
6. Different forms of bullying	4
7. Signs of bullying	4
8. Why children bully	5
9. What to do if you think your child is being bullied	5
10. Advice for pupils	5-6
11. The school's commitment to a proactive approach	6
12. School policy for handling reports of bullying	6-7
13. Bullying in the Early Years	7-8



## **General statement**

The Mount School is committed to providing its pupils with a caring, happy environment within which every child can flourish, allowing them to live their lives to the full in as many spheres as possible. Everyone has the right to be treated with kindness and respect and to be properly supported if they are not. Bullying of any kind is deemed unacceptable and will always be taken seriously and acted upon. The Mount School will not accept bullying in any of its forms. This guide exists to help prevent and combat bullying, promote welfare and allow all members of the school community to live as one together.

All parents, pupils and staff of The Mount should be aware that bullying thrives in a climate of secrecy. It is deliberate and sly. Prevention of bullying comes first, followed by intervention to deal with any incidents that do occur.

## **Aims**

- To ensure a safe environment for all students at The Mount
- To emphasise the fundamental importance of establishing and maintaining a positive, caring ethos within the school
- Further aims are to establish an atmosphere where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, to raise general awareness so that the whole school community can play its part in recognising bullying and to take action when it occurs by preventing or responding appropriately to it.

## **Objectives**

- To ensure that all pupils, parents and staff can recognise what bullying is, know what the school policy is on bullying and what to do if it occurs
- To conduct staff training to maintain the high profile of the anti-bullying policy and to introduce new initiatives
- To build understanding and discussion of anti-bullying and related topics into the PSHE programme
- To confirm frequently that pupils will always be supported if bullying is reported
- To ensure that whenever someone knows that bullying is happening, someone is told about it or something is done
- To work with other professional agencies when necessary to keep children safe as described in the Children Act 1989, the SEN and Disability Act 2001, the government green paper "Every Child Matters" 2003, the Children Act 2004, The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Equality Act 2010, Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies 2014, The Prevent Duty June 2015, DfE Advice Behaviour and Discipline in Schools 2016 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018



## **What is bullying?**

Bullying is when a child deliberately uses his or her power over another to make them feel bad. Bullying goes on for a while or happens regularly. It is deliberate and sets out to hurt, humiliate or harm another.

Bullying (including peer on peer abuse) is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously our school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers in our school have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

## **What bullying is not:**

A one off argument, fall-out or fight. A friend sometimes being nasty. An argument with a friend. This type of behaviour will be handled in accordance with our 'Behaviour Policy', as part of our early intervention, prevention strategy. A copy of our Behaviour Policy can be found on our website - <http://www.themount.org.uk/school-info/policies>.

## **Different forms of bullying**

Physical – hitting, pushing, kicking, etc. Taking belongings.

Verbal – name calling/comments.

Prejudice – negative actions regarding race, religion, disability, gender.

Indirect – spreading rumours, leaving a person out of groups.

Cyber – by text, email or social media.

## **Signs of bullying**

Complaining of being unwell to avoid going to school (lots of tummy aches, headaches, non-specific illnesses). Changes in behaviour – bedwetting, moodiness, tantrums. Changes in personality – nervous, aggressive.



## **Why children bully**

They want to be in with the 'gang'. They are jealous of someone. It makes them feel powerful. It gets them what they want. They are having problems in their own life making them feel bad. They are being bullied themselves.

## **What to do if you think your child is being bullied**

- Listen calmly to your child. Reassure your child they will be taken seriously.
- Make a note of what your child says has happened.
- Talk in the first instance to your child's Form Teacher as soon as possible.
- Keep a log of all further incidents your child tells you about.
- Be patient and allow the school to investigate and deal with the issue. Bullying can be difficult to detect so staff may not be aware of any incidents.
- Model non-bullying behaviour yourself.
- Parents should not encourage retaliation, confront other children or parents or take out their frustrations on school staff.
- Please do not keep your child away from school.

## **Advice for pupils**

Talk to someone you trust and get them to help you take the right steps to stop the bullying.

- Tell someone if ever you feel you have been subjected to hurtful treatment or words.
- Tell someone if ever you witness someone else being subjected to hurtful treatment or words.
- This is not 'sneaking'. It's not 'grassing'. It's being a responsible member of a caring community.
- If you do not tell someone who is in a position to help, the problem is unlikely to go away.
- If you do tell someone, you put the School in a position to do something to help.
- Also, the bully's cover is blown - they are exposed and have nowhere to hide. You help stop recurrences of bullying - in your own regard and generally.

If you feel you are being bullied:

- try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
- be firm and clear — look them in the eye and tell them to stop
- get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- tell an adult what has happened straight away or, if you do not feel comfortable telling an adult, tell another pupil.



If you have been bullied:

- Tell a teacher or another adult
- Tell your family
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- Keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened

### **The school's commitment to a proactive approach.**

We strongly believe that a proactive, preventative approach is the most effective strategy in combatting bullying. Creating an environment unconducive to the conditions in which bullying thrives is key. We teach our pupils to be caring, considerate individuals who embrace the differences of one another.

Our children learn how it is okay to have different opinions and beliefs to others and that the opinions and beliefs of others should be respected. Our children are aware that bullying has no place at The Mount.

In addition to our staff; House Captains, our Head Boy, Head Girl and School Council are all encouraged to take an active role in reinforcing our ethos, including the above.

### **School policy for handling reports of bullying:**

1. The Form Teacher will log the allegation and notify a member of the Senior Leadership Team of the allegation. This allegation may have come from a parent, pupil or staff member.
2. The form teacher will investigate the situation thoroughly (keeping a record) which may include all of the following: talking to the children involved, supporting the child who feels they are being bullied.
3. At this stage, any one-off incidents of behavioural nature will be dealt with accordingly.
4. If bullying has been found to have taken place, actions will be taken to resolve the matter such as: working through with the bully to change their behaviour, speaking to parents of either or both parties, encouraging a meaningful apology and reconciliation, determining an appropriate sanction or disciplinary measure, reporting back to parents. As bullying is complex, each case will be treated individually.
5. If the bullying continues or resumes, parents should immediately inform the Form Teacher.



6. If parents are not satisfied that the issue has been dealt with, they should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will then take over the matter.
7. If a suitable resolution has not been sought, parents should contact the Head Teacher.

Finally, if you feel the bullying has not been effectively dealt with, a formal written complaint can be made following the Parents Complaints and Concerns policy, which can be found on our website - <http://www.themount.org.uk/school-info/policies>.

## **Bullying in the Early Years**

### **Our Procedures**

- **Early Intervention:** Challenging bullying behaviour as soon as it arises is crucial. Staff should never ignore signs of bullying but should step in when the balance has tipped, using the opportunity to model conflict resolution and reinforce the nursery's rules to be Ready, Respectful and Safe.
- **Support for All Children:** Both the child experiencing bullying and the child displaying bullying behaviour need support. The child receiving the unwanted behaviour must feel heard and reassured, while the child displaying the behaviour should be guided towards positive ways of interacting with others.
- **Encouraging Children to Speak Up:** Children need to feel comfortable reporting instances when someone is not being kind to them. We will encourage protective behaviours, helping children understand who they can speak to when they feel worried or upset.
- **Avoid Labelling:** We do not label any child as a 'bully'. Labelling can be harmful and suggests that bullying is an inherent trait rather than a behaviour that can be changed. Instead, we talk about bullying behaviour, highlighting that it is a choice that can be addressed.
- **Promoting Positive Behaviour:** Positive behaviour and interactions will be praised, and the Golden Rules will be used to reinforce the expectations of the nursery.
- **Modelling Positive Behaviour:** Staff and parents are encouraged to model positive behaviour, as children learn from the adults around them.
- **Storytelling and Empathy:** Storytelling, dolls, and role-play can be used to explore empathy and address sensitive topics, such as friendship and how to play together nicely.
- **Challenging Stereotypes:** We actively challenge stereotypes, such as gendered toys, in a positive and friendly manner.
- **Restorative Approach:** For children who can understand, a restorative approach will be used. This includes supporting children in expressing their feelings in a safe space and encouraging meaningful apologies to foster resolution.



- **Empathy Building:** Activities that promote empathy, such as recognising emotions in others, discussing differences, and talking about kindness, will help children develop an understanding of how their actions affect others.
- **Working with Parents:** We will work closely with parents to ensure they understand our approach to bullying and relational conflict. Parents will be encouraged to look for signs of bullying and to speak with their child's keyworker if they have any concerns. Children should not be encouraged to fight back but rather to seek support from an adult.

**School addresses the issue of bullying in assemblies, PHSE activities and discussions and national initiatives such as 'anti-bullying week'. The pupils also prepare an anti-bullying guide for children.**