



Myddelton College

Anti-Bullying Policy

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The School's policy

Myddelton College believes that bullying is an inappropriate social interaction that can have a long term and damaging effect upon both the victim and the perpetrator. Bullying is defined as actions intended to hurt another, to frighten or threaten and can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, between staff, by individuals or groups, and uses a variety of methods – indirect, face-to-face or increasingly, cyber methods.

Key Principles

- No one deserves to be a victim of bullying.
- Everyone has the right to work and to learn in an environment free from intimidation and fear, and to be treated with respect.
- Everyone in the school community has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.
- The needs of the victim are paramount.
- The school will not tolerate bullying behaviour.
- Individuals who feel that they have been bullied will be listened to and supported.
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.
- The school will act swiftly and decisively.
- The school will monitor incidences of bullying.
- Bullies, as well as victims, have the right to support from the school and will be counselled to improve their behaviour.

What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time, where someone deliberately intimidates, makes unhappy, humiliates or harasses another. Bullying can include active or passive aggression which causes embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms; physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by groups of pupils. Bullying includes discriminatory activity of any form based on race, religion, culture, sex/sexuality, gender identity, special educational needs or disability.

Bullying can be:

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting at another pupil.
- Interfering with another pupil's property by stealing, hiding or damaging it.
- Using offensive names when addressing another person.
- Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family.
- Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil.
- Excluding another pupil from a group activity.
- Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.
- Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person.

Banter

Banter is defined as "the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks" in the Oxford English Dictionary. All members of the school community should exercise caution in using banter; a remark that is intended to be playful and friendly may not necessarily be taken that way by its intended recipient. Banter can easily become bullying and if there are reasonable grounds to assume that the recipient would find a remark offensive or upsetting then it will be regarded as bullying. Banter should never contain language which is related to perceived ability, race, religion, sexuality, appearance or family circumstances.

Objective of this Policy:

The objective of this policy document is to ensure, by promoting a clearer understanding of bullying, to include the consequences of bullying by the perpetrators, that we ensure bullying never occurs in our school. This policy is available to parents, staff and pupils on our website and on request.

Aims of this Whole-School Policy:

- to ensure all members of Myddelton College and their families identify bullying, in all its guises, as an unacceptable form of behaviour, contrary to the School's Safeguarding commitment,
- to safeguard pupils and staff,
- to ensure Myddelton College is a happy school,
- to educate all members of the School that bullying is wrong,
 - to give clear advice on how to deal with bullying at Myddelton College in line with the Welsh Government's guidance: 'Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Guidance 2003 circular 23/03'.

We aim to create a safe, secure and caring environment where all pupils have the right to enjoy the fullest possible benefits of the educational provision offered by the school. Anyone experiencing bullying is encouraged to report it. Any such allegations will be taken seriously, investigated and addressed. Pupils can speak to staff, senior pupils, the Independent Person, external organisations, and parents/family members to disclose or seek help.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied:

- Is frightened of travelling to and from school
- Does not want to go to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Starts stammering
- Has money continually "lost"
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Stops eating
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous or jumpy when a cyber-message is received

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

If a pupil claims to have been bullied or is suspected of being bullied, they are entitled to expect:

- they will be listened to in an appropriate setting and that every effort will be made to establish the facts,
- appropriate action will be taken to address their concerns and to ensure that there is no recurrence,

- the action the school intends to take will be made clear to the pupil and, if appropriate, the pupil's parents.

Those suspected of bullying another pupil are entitled to expect:

- to be listened to in an appropriate setting and that every effort will be made to establish the facts, •
- to know what action the school will take,
- to be supported in dealing with any difficulty which has led to their behaviour.

The school believes that parents are entitled to expect that:

- their child will be educated in an atmosphere which is safe and caring and is not characterised by violence and intimidation,
- the school will take all reasonable steps to prevent bullying occurring,
- any bullying incident that is reported will be investigated,

Prevention:

- all new pupils, boarders and day students, are briefed thoroughly on the behaviour expected at Myddelton College,
- the PSHE programme covers the topic of bullying,
- appropriate opportunities are taken within the curriculum to consider issues relating to bullying,
- all pupils are made aware that they can talk to any member of staff, the Independent Person, prefects, tutors about any worries or confide in a friend so the situation can be resolved,
- incidents of bullying are reflected upon and discussed when they occur so that lessons can be learned,
- through appropriate training and induction, all staff are made aware of the School's anti-bullying policy, including new staff and support staff,
- teaching staff, ancillary staff, and prefects contribute to a suitably deployed supervisory presence around the school,
- all staff are asked to be vigilant and to be willing to take appropriate action if they suspect that a pupil is being bullied.

Cyberbullying Prevention:

In addition to the above prevention measures:

- all students must adhere to the safe usage of internet policy – certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and we monitor pupils use,
- the College will impose sanctions due to the misuse of student devices or the internet – see the Behaviour Policy,
- guidance on safe use of social networks in PSHE lessons,
- students should be encouraged to report examples of abusive messages or images.

Homophobic Bullying Prevention:

Myddelton College will take an active approach to tackle all kinds of bullying, including homophobic bullying, and will follow the guidance in the publication 'Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-bullying Work in Schools: Preventing and Responding to Homophobic Bullying in Schools'.

Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (LGBTQ) people and can be experienced by any one of the following:

- young people who are, or who are thought to be, LGBTQ,
- young people who are different in some way and who may not act like others,

- young people who have gay friends or family, or their parents or carers are LGBTQ,
- teachers who may or may not be LGBTQ.

Homophobic bullying looks like any other bullying, but may include:

- Verbal abuse – including spreading rumours that someone is LGBTQ
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault and threatening behaviour
- Cyber bullying – using online spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them (this can include text messaging, including picture and video messaging)

Staff will also challenge casual homophobic language and will ensure anyone who makes persistent remarks is removed from the classroom and made to understand the consequences of their behaviour in terms of sanctions.

Myddelton College will ensure staff and students can openly discuss differences between people which could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. We will also make it clear to students that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.

Whenever necessary, Myddelton College will invest in specialised skills to help staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.

We will also work with the wider community, such as the Police and Children's Services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. We will work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside our School.

Bullying by text message and mobile phones and devices:

- Students will be warned about the need for care when giving out their mobile phone number.
- A record will be kept of the date and time of any offensive messages. Students will be encouraged to show the messages to a member of Myddelton College staff.
- Students who report bullying by text message will be taken seriously.
- The student's family may need to contact the police if the cyber bullying is serious and if a potential criminal offence has been committed.
- If such bullying is carried out on a persistent basis or if there is a threat of violence, it will be treated as any other serious bullying incident.
- Malicious emails will be dealt with in the same manner.
- Students who take photographs or videos on their phones or tablets with malicious intent will be dealt with in the same manner.

Procedures for dealing with reported bullying:

- A written report of the bullying incident must be written by the staff member who witnessed the event or who received the allegation.
- The incident must be reported to appropriate member of the pastoral team and senior staff.
- The victim and the bully will be interviewed individually and asked to write a short version of their events.
- The victim will be interviewed by a member of the pastoral team and given support and guidance; the parents will be called to inform them; House staff will be asked to counsel the victim individually and set up a support network.
- The person causing distress will be dealt with in a variety of ways which will include contact with parents, removing them from the victim as much as possible and, where necessary,

counselling from a variety of sources. The ultimate sanctions would include suspension from school and possible exclusion.

- Staff will put a monitoring and review strategy in place to resolve the issue; both parties will be encouraged to meet to put a close to the episode.

Looking to the future:

To ensure that Myddelton becomes a bullying-free environment we will:

- Monitor and update the policy document on a regular basis to be readily available for all staff, parents and pupils.
- Take part in anti-bullying week to raise School and individual awareness.
- Ask pupils and their parents to look out for any signs of bullying and to inform a member of staff of their suspicions, at the earliest opportunity.
- Record all incidents of bullying, placing a copy on pupils' files, and keeping parents of both parties informed.
- Be consistently on guard to ensure that the school or individuals do not condone or accept bullying through either/both generic or individual behaviour, manner or attitude.
- Every individual and group (to include Staff, Prefects, School Council members, captains of teams, for example) share a corporate and individual responsibility to reflect on their own behaviour and responses and ask the challenging question, 'What more can I/we do to support the School's ambition of stopping bullying?'

Strategies for Pupils

Research has shown that girls bully in more subtle ways to boys i.e., excluding a person from a friendship group. The pupil may not recognise their actions as bullying or intimidation. Look at ways in which you can help prevent bullying in your class and in school.

- Are you trying hard to work cooperatively with everyone else in your class, including those who are not your close friends?
- If you accidentally offend or upset someone do something about it – be big enough to say sorry.
- Include new pupils in your group.
- Try to get to know all people in your class and appreciate their good qualities.
- Seek help if you know someone is being bullied.
- Encourage each other to not get involved in unpleasant behaviour.
- Get help to deal with a situation before it gets out of hand.
- Never join in bullying or encourage it in any way.
- Don't accept name calling.
- Express your disapproval when you see someone doing something unkind.
- Treat others as you would like them to treat you.
- Share any problems by telling someone – your parents, a teacher, your friends, an older student, matron.
- Remember the school will investigate claims of bullying in a sensitive way.
- Support those who experience bullying.
- Help eliminate bullying by reporting incidents you see.
- Value people's individuality

Advice for Parents

Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with the school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with the school to deal with the issues

- Fall-outs and changes of friendship groupings are not uncommon, however, efforts should be made to ensure this does not result in individuals becoming isolated

- It is important that you do not advise your son/daughter to fight back. It will usually make matters worse. Parents should advise their son/daughter to seek help from a member of staff, prefect or friend.
- Make sure your son/daughter is aware of the school policy concerning bullying, and that they should not be afraid to ask for help.
- If you have a complaint regarding the action taken by the school to a bullying incident please refer to the Complaints Procedure.

Help Organisations:

Family Lives (formerly Parent Line Plus) Parenting and Family Support - Family Lives (Parentline Plus)

Family Lives KIDSCAPE Help With Bullying (kidscape.org.uk)

Childline – 0800 1111 and Childline | Childline

Complaints' Policy and Procedure:

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures (found on the website) if they feel that their concerns about bullying are not being addressed properly or promptly.

Related policies:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Behaviour Policy

Child on Child Abuse Policy

Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

Independent Person Policy