



Including local arrangements in annexes for:  
**OAK TREE SCHOOL**

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## Oak Tree School

Oak Tree School recognises that young people with disabilities remain, in general, a vulnerable group in society. Young people who attend Oak Tree School may, therefore, encounter bullying in both the community and their living situation. It is vital that staff are aware of this potential, given the cumulative effect of negative experiences that any one young person may suffer. Bullying is frequently described by young people on the Autistic Spectrum Condition and those with associated complex needs, as the main reason for negative behaviour as a retaliation, resulting in exclusions and changes in school placement.

### Definitions

Bullying is any act carried out by a group or individual, repeatedly over time against a target who cannot defend themselves, that intentionally causes harm, either physically or emotionally.

Harassment is unwanted behaviour which you find offensive or which makes you feel intimidated or humiliated. You do not need to have previously objected to something for it to be unwanted.

Bullying behaviour may be direct or indirect. Direct forms include physical violence and threats; verbal assaults and taunts; the destruction of property; extortion; unwanted sexual interest or contact. Examples of indirect forms of bullying include ignoring and the withdrawal of friendship; excluding; malicious gossip and spreading rumour; abusive or oppressive graffiti (this includes cyber-bullying and sexting).

Harassment is direct and includes spoken or written words or abuse, offensive emails, tweets or comments on social networking sites, images and graffiti, physical gestures, facial expressions, jokes.

Maiden Erlegh Trust takes all forms of bullying and harassment seriously and is particularly concerned to take action in relation to any incidents which involve identity-based bullying – relating for example to culture, country of origin, sexism, disability, giftedness, homophobia or circumstance (e.g. Young Carer, Adopted, LAC). In such cases these issues will be specifically addressed with the bully (and his/her parents where appropriate) in the course of post incident management.

The Anti-Bullying Procedures have been drawn up with reference to the DfE publication: Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017 and The Equality Act 2010.

### Rationale

There is no justification whatsoever for bullying or harassment and it will not be tolerated in any form. Prejudice of any sort is absolutely repudiated as a reason for bullying or harassment.

Bullying or harassing behaviour is a problem for both the perpetrator and the target and is addressed in positive and constructive ways which provide opportunities for growth and development for the bully and target alike.

We believe that taking proactive, preventative action is key. This is best done through the development of a school ethos based on mutual respect, dignity of the individual, inclusion, fairness and equality.

Effective management of bullying and harassment is a shared responsibility and strategies involve school staff and parents working together (sometimes with other professionals) with students who are the targets or perpetrators of bullying or harassment.

## Principles

All members of staff and all students have a right to carry out their work in a supportive, safe and positive environment.

Every student has the right to learn, to experience success and fulfil his/her potential.

Every teacher has the right to teach, to experience success and fulfil his/her potential.

Every member of the school community has the right:

- To feel valued
- To feel supported
- To feel safe and secure and protected from harm, humiliation and abuse
- To a healthy, pleasant environment
- To be treated with respect
- To be treated with dignity
- To be treated fairly

## Aims

- To promote an atmosphere in which there is a respect for others, recognition of others' achievements and differences are valued.
- To promote an atmosphere which is conducive to learning.
- To promote behaviour which is in the best interests of all members of the school.
- To promote good manners towards all members of the school community, to visitors and to members of the community outside the school.
- To eliminate intimidating and aggressive behaviour in line with our ethos of providing a secure, caring community where bullying and harassment is not tolerated in any form.
- To clarify to stakeholders our methods for responding to incidents of bullying and harassment and for fulfilling our statutory responsibility to respect the rights of students and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

## Scope

This policy applies to incidents of bullying and harassment which take place on school premises, on the journey to and from school (while students are in uniform), on off-site activities organised by school and while using school equipment.

The School is not **legally** responsible for bullying or harassment which takes place elsewhere and the School owes no general duty to its pupils to supervise their activities after they have left its charge, since it is not directly in control of them. (Bradford Smart v Sussex County Council 2002).

Maiden Erlegh Trust will, however, respond positively to any information it receives about bullying or harassment outside school thus:

1. If a student is responsible for bullying or harassing other students outside school, including cyber-bullying, then this matter will be investigated. The bully's parents will be informed so they can take appropriate action. The school will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police.
2. If a student is found to be the target of bullying or harassment outside school then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The target's parents will be informed so they can take appropriate action.
3. If there are more general concerns about student safety outside school then the local police will be contacted and their help sought in making the area around the school premises more secure.
4. If information is received that a student is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will usually initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist then the matter will be referred to the Children's Services.
5. If a student is being bullied by students of another school the Headteacher of that school will be informed and asked to deal with the matter.

Maiden Erlegh Trust recognises that staff can be the target of bullying or harassment. If a member of staff is the target of bullying or harassment by a student then the same protocols and procedures will apply. If they are targeted by a parent then possible actions are outlined in our document on Unacceptable Communication which can be found [here](#). In the event that the perpetrator is a member of staff this will be raised with Human Resources who will conduct an investigation.

### **Monitoring and evaluating**

Each incident of bullying or harassment falling within the school definition will be recorded. Any incidents involving race, culture, country of origin, sexism, disability, giftedness, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia will be identified.

A termly report will be made to the Headteacher and an annual one to the *Local Advisory Board and Director of Inclusion and Safeguarding*, indicating the numbers of bullying incidents and any trends which may emerge. Senior staff and *Local Advisory Board members* will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents and students (e.g.: through *School Improvement Plan*, *website*, "you said, we did" etc)

## ANNEX 1: CURRICULUM

The Curriculum addresses bullying at all Key Stages in Computing/ICT, PSHCE, Citizenship and Life Skills.

There are permanent Anti-Bullying displays around the school and peer mentors are in place to facilitate a smooth transition into the school. Anti-Bullying Week is an annual event embedded in the Collective Worship Assembly cycle; the week's anti-bullying focus culminates in a student led Anti-Bullying Assembly as well as work designed by the multidisciplinary team to be delivered by form teachers every day of that week.

The multidisciplinary team work together through Behaviour Intervention Meetings (see behaviour and exclusions policy) to address the underlying cause of bullying in each specific case.

## ANNEX 2: STAFF

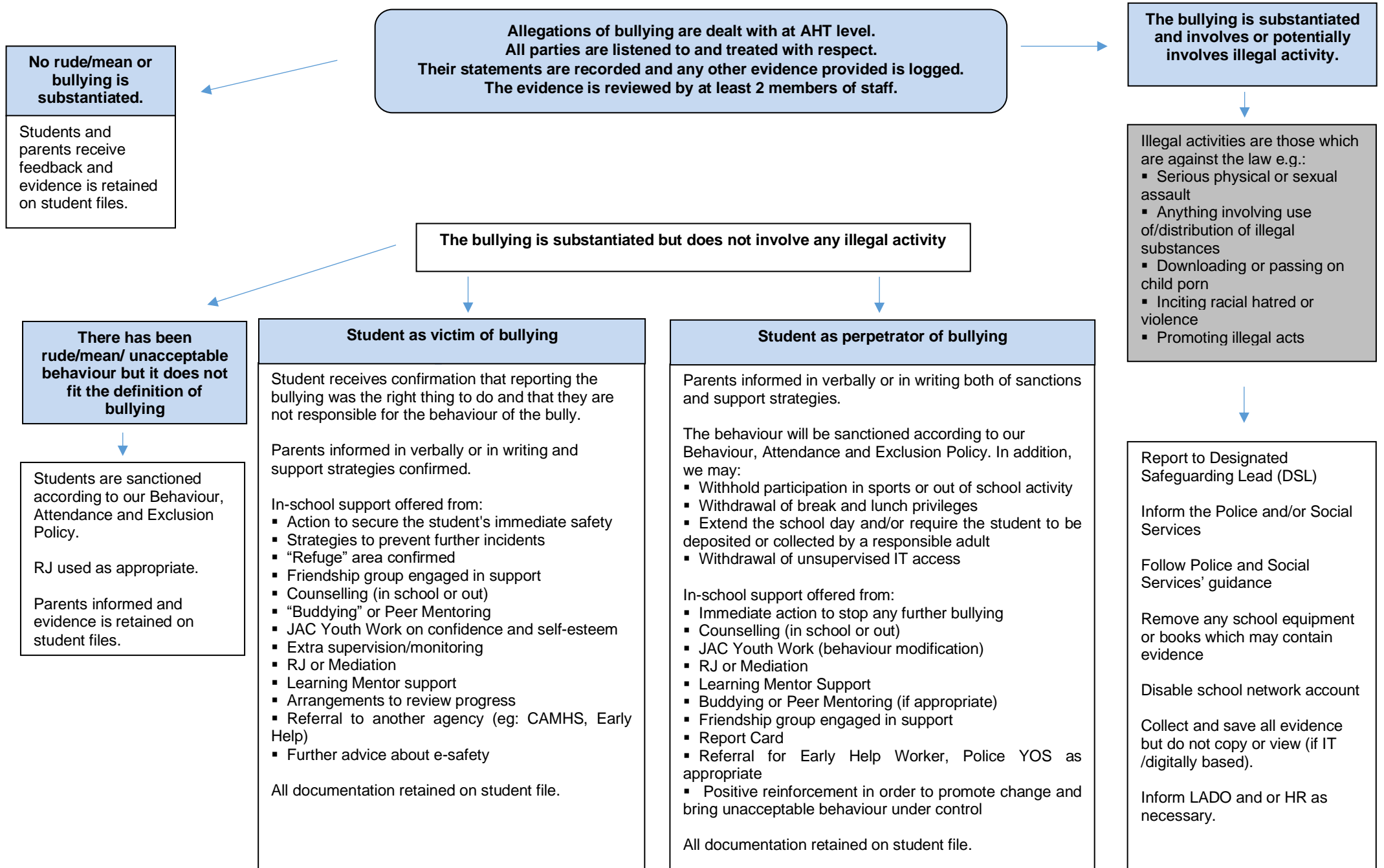
We see our staff as being the main resource we have in ensuring our young people are not bullied.

We expect staff to do the following:

- Challenge any young people who are witnessing bullying another person. This is to be done in a nonaggressive and non-confrontational way;
- Report incidents of bullying to their line manager/senior management;
- Ensure they record instances of bullying and the action taken on an incident sheet (CPOMS);
- Work with young people in a way that enables/empowers them to complain about being bullied by ensuring they know about the complaints procedure and who they can complain to;
- Work with young people who are bullies to enable/encourage them to alter their behaviour;
- Take time to be with young people who have been the victims of bullying;
- Work with young people to enable them to report any serious incidents to the police;
- In cases of serious and persistent bullying, managers, in consultation with Social Workers, the parents and the bully, may decide to move a young person in order to protect those being bullied;

Any staff member who is seen to be bullying young people will be disciplined. Bullying will be seen as gross misconduct and a staff member could be dismissed if found guilty at a disciplinary hearing

# ANNEX 3: ACTIONS FOLLOWING A REPORT OF A SUSPECTED BULLYING INCIDENT





## ANNEX 4: CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying may be defined as an individual or a group of people using mobile phones, the internet or other technologies to make recipients feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable.

### In what ways can cyber bullying occur?

#### Mobile phone

Sending humiliating and abusive text or video messages, as well as photo messages and phone calls over a mobile phone. This includes anonymous text messages over short distances using Bluetooth technology and sharing videos of physical attacks on individuals.

#### Email

- Sending emails that are threatening or upsetting.
- Instant messenger and chat rooms
- Sending instant messenger and chat room messages to friends or direct to a victim.
- Social networking sites
- Setting up profiles on social networking sites to make fun of someone.
- Abusing personal information
- Posting personal photos, emails or blogs where others can see them without the permission of the individual concerned. Social networking sites make it a lot easier for web users to get hold of personal information and photos of people. It is also possible to get hold of someone else's messaging accounts and chat to people pretending to be the victim.

#### Interactive gaming

Games consoles allow players to chat online with anyone they find themselves matched within a multi-player game. Sometimes cyber bullies abuse other players and use threats. They can also lock victims out of games, spread false rumours about someone or hack into someone's account.

#### Sending viruses

Some people send viruses to another person that can destroy their computers or delete personal information from their hard drive.

### How is cyber bullying different?

There are several factors that differentiate cyber bullying from other types of bullying that can make it more difficult both to detect and to prevent:

- Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- No place provides sanctuary from the intrusion of a threatening text message or an abusive e-mail.
- Young people are particularly adept at using new technology, which can seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages may make it difficult for adults to identify and address potential threats.

### What can Oak Tree School staff and managers do?

As with any other type of bullying, staff and managers need to focus on creating an ethos in which cyber bullying is recognised to be unacceptable, take steps to prevent its occurrence, support young people who are bullied, and work with young people who are bullies to alter their behaviour.

The Kidscape and further websites listed below website provides useful guidance for young people and carers about how to use technology safely and what to do if they are on the receiving end of cyber bullying.

- [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- <https://www.bullying.co.uk/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>