



## MOWDEN HALL SCHOOL

### ANTI-BULLYING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

As part of our Anti-Bullying Policy (which can be viewed on the website), Mowden Hall aim to involve and inform parents by ensuring they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying, and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Accordingly, the purpose of this leaflet is to share relevant information with parents. Much of this information is regularly discussed with the children, most recently in a whole school assembly.

Bullying is not tolerated in our school, but we would be foolish to pretend it doesn't happen here. It can happen in any school and national studies show that bullying occurs more than anyone might think. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and who can get drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of growing up; but neither does it usually sort itself out. We hope you will agree with us that we all need to be active and work together to make school life happy and secure for all children.

Mowden Hall acknowledges that prevention is better than intervention. The issue of bullying is covered in form time and PSHEE lessons and also through assemblies. We will use various methods for helping children to be aware of and to prevent bullying. The reasons for bullying will vary from case to case; it would not be appropriate to use the same strategies on every occasion. Our aim is for the bully to recognise and stop his/her behaviour. We all need to be active and work together to make school life happy and secure for everyone.

#### What is bullying?

1. Bullying goes on for a while... or happens regularly.
2. Bullying is deliberate. The other person wants to hurt, humiliate or harm the target.
3. Bullying involves someone (or several people) who are stronger in some way than the person being bullied – older, stronger, more of them, know a secret about them.

THESE **THREE** THINGS HAVE TO HAPPEN TOGETHER FOR SOMETHING TO BE CALLED 'BULLYING'.

#### The following is **NOT** bullying:

- A one-off fight or argument.
- A friend sometimes being nasty.
- An argument with a friend.

#### What to do if you are being bullied, or are a witness to someone being bullied:

- Tell a friend
- Tell a family member
- Tell a senior pupil
- Tell a member of staff

- Tell an adult
- Write a note for the report a problem box
- Send an email to a member of staff

**What does Mowden Hall do about bullying?**

- Make sure we all mean the same thing when we talk about bullying.
- Help pupils understand how bullying feels for the person being bullied.
- Makes sure pupils feel ok about telling an adult when they know bullying is going on.
- Make sure all pupils know what to do if they are being bullied.
- Mowden Hall takes bullying very seriously and imposes proportionate sanctions.
- Mowden Hall record all instances of Bullying in both the Pre-Prep and Prep School.
- For more information, please see the Mowden Hall Behaviour and Discipline Policy, which is available on the School website.

**Why do witnesses not tell?**

- Nine times out of ten bullying involves witnesses, so why don't they stop it, or tell?
- They worry they will become targets themselves.
- They do not want to be seen as a snitch!
- It is hard to go against the crowd.
- **And yet evidence shows that the more people tell about any bullying they see going on, the less it happens.**

**Why do people bully others?**

- They want to fit in with others.
- It feels like fun – they don't realise how much it hurts.
- They dislike or are jealous of someone.
- It makes them feel powerful.
- It gets them something they want (money, sweets).
- They are bullied themselves and want to take out their hurt and anger on someone who won't fight back.
- They have problems in their life that make them feel bad.

**Cyber-Bullying – Top Tips:**

- Always ask before you send a picture or information that could be shared with other people. Remember you don't know what will happen to any pictures or information you let people have. What you think of a joke may be really upsetting to someone else.
- Think before you send a message about yourself or other people. It doesn't take long for it to be shared with every single person you know!!
- Never give out personal information when it can be shared with others – you may trust your friends, but you don't know their friends.
- Treat your password like your toothbrush – don't let anybody else use it!
- If you receive nasty messages, texts, comments etc., block the person sending them and always report it to an adult (parent, teacher).
- Don't reply to a bullying message but do keep it – whether it is a picture, message or online communication.

**INFORMATION FOR PARENTS:****How do I know if my child is being bullied?****Look out for the following:**

- Behaviour changes.
- Withdrawal.
- Be unwilling to go to school.
- Lots of stomach-aches, headaches or non-specific illness.
- Belongings missing or torn clothes.
- Frequent bruises or other signs of physical harm.
- Refuse to say what is wrong.
- Begin to do poorly in school work.

**My child is being bullied! What can I do?**

- If your son and daughter tells you they are being bullied, keep calm. Getting angry and threatening to visit the school or the parent of the other pupil will terrify them further.
- Praise them for telling you and reassure them that they have done the right thing.
- Listen and reassure – they will feel vulnerable and their self-esteem will be low.
- Talk to school and raise your concerns.
- Talk to your child about the reasons why people become bullies.
- Look at our Anti-Bullying Policy – this will explain how Mowden, as a school, deals with incidents of bullying.

**Good advice to give your son/ daughter if they are being bullied:**

- Avoid the people doing the bullying (not always easy).
- Stay with friends.
- Ignore the bully and try to stay calm.
- Encourage them to talk to an adult they trust, put a note in the *report a problem box*, or email an adult they trust.

**My child is a bully! What can I do?**

- In a 2013 survey of about 1000 parents, about a third of parents suspected their child may be a bully.
- Stay calm and ask the school to provide all the details about what has transpired. Ensure the school knows you want to work together to achieve a positive outcome.
- Speak to your child, and ask in a calm, firm tone what has happened, and why they have behaved in that way. Listen, and avoid blame.
- Help your child understand how their behaviour has affected another person – use questions like, 'Is what you did respectful?', 'did it hurt someone?', 'Would you want someone to behave that way to you?'
- Help your child understand they are accountable for their actions. Ensure that consequences are followed through.
- Don't be afraid to ask school for help.

**EXTRA INFORMATION:**

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)

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