MANCHESTER ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
August 2024

Document Control

This policy has been approved for operation within:	Manchester Islamic Grammar School for Girls
Date of last review:	07/08/23
Date of next review:	August 2024
Review period:	1 year
Policy status:	Statutory
Owner	MIGSG

Introduction

Life at Manchester Islamic Schools (Manchester Muslim Preparatory School and Manchester Islamic Grammar School for Girls) is based upon the values of respect, tolerance and good manners in light of the Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammed PBUH.

Through their curriculum and pastoral system the Schools seek to educate their pupils/students to be respectful, thoughtful, emotionally robust and resilient. Discriminatory words and behaviour are unacceptable. Our pupils/students are encouraged through their whole educational experience to treat all people with equal respect and dignity, and to avoid discrimination against anyone on any basis, including age, disability, race, culture, gender reassignment, maternity, religion or sexual orientation.

Bullying behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the School. It is harmful in some way or other to all those involved - to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour and to those who support them. It can cause physical harm and, in some cases, lead to lasting emotional and psychological damage, and even suicide. It interferes with a pupil's/student's right to enjoy their learning and leisure time, free from intimidation. Bullying is contrary to all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the Schools. Consequently, we take bullying, and allegations of bullying, very seriously.

In all matters relating to safeguarding, the Schools will follow the procedures laid down by Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP), together with relevant DfE guidance, such as *Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023* (and all its updates).

Aims of this policy

This policy applies to all pupils/students and staff at the Schools, irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil/student is in the care of the School when/if bullying behaviour occurs. It should be read alongside the Schools' behaviour policies and Student Code of Conduct – General Principles (MIGSG) document.

In implementing this policy, we aim:

- To ensure that the Schools' measures designed to prevent bullying have regard to DfE guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2017), as updated* ;
- To maintain a positive, supportive and caring culture among all students and staff throughout the School and;
- To deter bullying behaviour, detect it when it occurs, and deal with it by counselling and/or disciplinary sanctions. If necessary, this could result in the permanent exclusion of those found guilty of bullying others.

This policy is available to parents of pupils/students and prospective pupils/students via the Schools' websites and is also available on request from the School Offices.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the wilful persistent communicating of a conscious desire to dominate, hurt, humiliate, threaten, frighten or otherwise causes harm or distress to someone else. It can take many forms, and be verbal or physical in nature or carried out via social media. It can happen anywhere and at any time, but always involves the intentional harming or humiliating of another person and is often repeated over time, but can be a one-off incident. It can include:

- physical violence and intimidation;
- any threat or use of violence of any kind
- verbal (including name-calling, taunting, teasing, insults and offensive remarks, whether made face-to-face or electronically (e.g. via email, social media or texting)
- comments which are racist, sexual, sexist or homophobic;
- comments that focus on religion or cultural background;
- comments relating to special educational needs or disabilities, and health or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape);
- demanding money or other tangible items of value;
- interference with the victim's personal property;
- general acts of unkindness (including spreading rumours/malicious information about someone or producing and distributing unkind and hurtful notes or embarrassing photographs);
- exclusionary behaviour - excluding someone from social groups;
- cyber-bullying (see below).

This list is not exhaustive, and the act of bullying might not be related to any obvious cause at all.

Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying can be so serious that it can cause physical, emotional and psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and to violent and threatening behaviour.

No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect. The School will support any student who is a victim of bullying. Students who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving.

Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as 'teasing' 'banter' or 'a game'. Whilst these forms of bullying are equally unacceptable, they may not

be intentionally malicious and, as a result, can be corrected quickly with advice and without the need for disciplinary sanctions. However, it should be understood that appropriate sanctions will be applied in the case of any student who does not respond to such advice appropriately and immediately.

The School regards bullying as a form of child-on-child abuse (we attach a short summary of the School's approach to child-on-child abuse below); as such, where appropriate, it will be dealt with as a safeguarding issue. Further details on the School's approach to child-on-child abuse can be found in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Child-on-child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse is a form of harmful behaviour inflicted on children by other children and occurs when children are singled out for ridicule and abuse by other children. These acts of bullying and abuse are designed to induce a sense of powerlessness, helplessness and humiliation in victims.

Examples of child-on-child abuse include, but are not limited to:

- violence and other forms of physical abuse;
- sexual harassment and violence;
- emotional harm;
- online bullying and manipulation;
- teenage relationship abuse.

All MIGSG staff are alert to the risk of child-on-child abuse and understand their role in preventing, identifying, and responding to it. MIGSG staff know that children are capable of abusing other children and they never dismiss abusive behaviour as a normal part of growing up, or 'banter', as this can create a culture permissive of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. MIGSG takes a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse and views it as seriously as abuse by adults. All staff also understand that child-on-child abuse can happen outside of school and online and it may involve students from multiple schools.

How will the School respond to child-on-child abuse?

The School actively seeks to prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by educating students and staff, challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse, encouraging a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the school community. All cases of child-on-child abuse and any cases of bullying (no matter how trivial) will be addressed promptly and appropriately by the School. If any member of staff believes a student is at risk of abuse from another child or young person, or that a child may be abusing others, this concern should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. If any child perpetrates significant harm on another child, or is at risk of significant harm, a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the police will be made.

The School will investigate the behaviour and will where necessary take any immediate steps to ensure the safety of the victim(s) or any other child. The School will also consider appropriate disciplinary sanctions. All incidents will be considered on a case-by-case basis but more serious cases of bullying and abuse may be considered under the Permanent Exclusions policy.

Where bullying can occur:

- Playground
- Elsewhere in the school e.g. toilets
- Classroom
- On the way to and from school
- On school trips
- After school clubs
- Online (at home or anywhere else)

Bullying which occurs on school trips or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on school premises. The School will, where appropriate, discipline students for misbehaviour outside school premises and outside school hours.

Recognising the signs of bullying

Changes in behaviour which may indicate that a student is being bullied include:
- unwillingness to return to school;
- fear of walking to or from school;
- displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- unwillingness to say what is wrong;
- failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go 'missing', or are damaged;
- asking for money or begin stealing money (to pay the bully), losing money;
- change to established habits (e.g. giving up hobbies, change to accent or vocabulary);
- diminished levels of self-confidence, developing a stammer;
- frequent visits to the office/first aider with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- stopping eating
- unexplained cuts, scratches and bruises;
- frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;
- choosing the company of adults rather than other children;
- displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares;
- running away from home or school;
- self-harm, talking of or attempting suicide.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/recorded as appropriate (see below).

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The School is always particularly vigilant where concerns relate to children with special educational needs and disabilities, as additional barriers can exist in identifying abuse and bullying in this group of children:

- care should be taken not to assume that indicators of bullying such as anxious behaviour, low mood and injury relate only to a child's disability without further exploration;

- it is recognised that children with SEND and other disabilities can be more vulnerable to and harmed by abusive behaviour such as bullying, even when they don't exhibit any obvious signs of distress;
- it is recognised that children with SEND and other disabilities may experience barriers in communicating their concerns about bullying and may need specific additional support.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a particularly unpleasant and insidious form of bullying which uses information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to, and does, cause tremendous distress to victims and their families.

Social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites and chat rooms such as Facebook, XBox Live, Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat can all be used for cyber bullying. Parents should be aware that the minimum age for account holders on most social media sites including Facebook and Snapchat is thirteen.

Cyber bullying can happen at all hours a day, especially away from school, at home, at evenings, weekends and holidays. It involves communications by various electronic means, including:

- texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- the use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- using email to message others in a threatening or abusive manner;
- hijacking/cloning email accounts;
- sending information about another person that is fake, damaging and untrue.
- sharing photos of someone for the purpose to ridicule, spreading fake rumours and gossip;
- sharing personal information about another or tricking someone into revealing secrets, including private images and videos, and forwarding them to others.
- intentionally leaving someone out of an online social/messaging group

The School takes very seriously any incidents of cyberbullying, whether during or outside school hours, and whether committed on or off-site. It is committed to ensuring that the scope for cyberbullying is limited on site by preventing access to social media sites and inappropriate websites, and denying students access to their mobile phones whilst on school premises. The School manages access to the internet via the School's networks through the use of firewall and content filtering software. The technical aspects of this and the list of blocked sites are managed by the IT Manager. The school has an Acceptable Use Policy which is designed to support both its safeguarding and anti-bullying systems. The AUP seeks to:

- combat cyber-bullying by preventing misuse of the school's computers and electronic equipment;
- promote e-safety amongst students and staff;
- facilitate a system for reporting instances where electronic devices have been misused.

Cyberbullying – preventative measures

For the prevention of cyberbullying, the School:

- expects all students to act in accordance with the School's rules and its policies on Acceptable Use, E-Safety and mobile phones;
- blocks inappropriate sites and material via its filtering system
- imposes disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet
- issues all students with their own personal school email address;
- prevents students from accessing social media and non-school, personal email using the School's network and wi-fi;
- offers guidance on the safe use of social media and cyberbullying in PSHEE lessons;
- offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- implements a strict policy on the taking of images and does not allow the use of cameras or mobile phone cameras in any part of the school premises.

Mobile Phones and other Digital Technology

Students are not allowed to use mobile phones and other digital technology in any part of school premises. They are only allowed them for the purpose of contacting parents if travelling to and from school independently. Any messages to or from parents during the school day must go through the School Office. Mobile phones are handed in to form tutors during morning registration and collected during the afternoon registration at the end of the school day, and must be switched off at all times whilst on school premises.

The School's Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

All students are given clear guidance by the School on how to report bullying.

The School ensures that all instances of, or concerns about, bullying and cyberbullying, whether on or off-site, can be easily reported and are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying are monitored to enable the school to identify patterns of behaviour and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

A student who is being bullied, or who is worried about another student being bullied, whether inside or outside school, should share their concerns immediately in any of the following ways:

- inform a responsible adult (whether a parent, Form Tutor, Head of Year, a member of the office staff, a lunchtime supervisor or any other member of staff she feels she can approach), or a responsible older student;
- contact Childline (0800 1111) – contact details are in the school diary;
- inform one of the School's DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Student Action:

If a student consider she, or another student, is being bullied then they should tell their Form Tutor, Head of Year or any other member of staff immediately, as soon as the concern arises.

Parental Action:

Parents who are concerned that their daughter or any other student is being bullied should inform her Form Tutor or Head of Year immediately. The School values its very strong lines of communication with parents and encourages them to report any concerns they might have about a student's welfare, whether or not that student is a member of their family. In cases of cyber bullying it may also be appropriate to inform the police.

Staff Action:

Any member of staff who learns of alleged bullying behaviour must respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim. He or she must report the allegation to the Head of Year of both the victim and the alleged bully as soon as possible.

The Head of Year must record the complaint and consult with the Pastoral Lead (if applicable) to agree a strategy. Where the allegation is particularly serious, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed, and she will personally supervise the resulting investigation.

The alleged victim's Head of Year will normally conduct and make a written record of interviews with the student and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses and the alleged bully. They will reach a view of the nature and seriousness of the incident(s), taking advice from the Pastoral Lead if necessary. Where they judge that serious bullying behaviour has taken place, they will always inform the DSL. The parents of both the victim and the bully will be contacted.

When an allegation is upheld, the action will be recorded by the Head of Year. The range of possible responses would normally include one or more of the following:

- advice, and support for the victim by the pastoral team and, where appropriate, implementation of a practical action plan;
- advice and support for the bully in assisting her to change her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning. The School recognises that sometimes young people who exhibit bullying behaviours are themselves the victims of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Appropriate safeguarding action will be taken by the School in these circumstances;
- a disciplinary sanction might be imposed on the bully, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy such as a detention, internal suspension or a fixed term exclusion.

In the most serious cases, a student may be required to leave the School permanently, in accordance with the School's Permanent Exclusion Policy.

The parents of the students involved will be kept informed regarding the investigation.

Where a bullying incident gives reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, it will be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported to the relevant department of children's social care, in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

If the School believes that a criminal offence may have been committed, it will contact the police.

The situation will be monitored for as long as is necessary. Action may include sharing information with staff and students on a 'need to know' basis, so that they can monitor behaviour and provide reassurance and support to the victim, and on-going counselling.

Strategies for resolving incidents of bullying

The school uses a range of methods, including mediation, restorative justice, and the no-blame approach.

- **Counselling/mediation between those involved**
  The students involved are encouraged to talk issues over with the aid of a mediator and find a way forward to end the cycle of bullying.

- **Restorative justice**
  The person affected is given an opportunity to meet with the bully face to face in a safe and supervised setting and talk through the impact that the bullying has had, or is having, on them. Restorative justice is designed to empower the persons affected and to help the perpetrators understand the human consequences of their behaviour.

- **The no-blame or support group method**
  In this method, the person affected, or target, of the bullying is interviewed. A teacher will then hold a meeting with a group of students including the bullies, those who may have seen the incidents and others who are not directly involved. The teacher explains to the group how the person affected is feeling and the group then offers suggestions to find a solution.

  Removing blame from the process allows the perpetrators to involve themselves in finding a solution without feeling threatened or defensive. Those who were bystanders are given a chance to see that by doing nothing, they were condoning the bullying.

See Appendix 1
Procedure for interviewing alleged bully and person affected.

Record Keeping

A confidential, electronic central record of all bullying incidents is maintained with Heads of Year, with oversight by the Pastoral Lead and DSL. The register of bullying incidents is organised so that a complete historical record is maintained.

The register records how the issue was resolved and follow-up actions. The DSL and Heads of Year routinely scrutinise the register in order both to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying system and identify any patterns of bullying behaviour.

Creating an anti-bullying culture

All members of the school community are expected to uphold the rules published in the school homework diary and abide by the School's policies. Any student or member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying is expected to report it. Any complaint of bullying will be always taken seriously, and no-one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

Students are taught that bullying will not be tolerated at MIGSG and are given guidance, both on how to report bullying and how to seek support. They are encouraged to celebrate the effort and achievements of others, promote positive attitudes, share problems with staff, turn to someone they trust if they have a problem, and not to feel guilty when making complaints.

A wide-ranging PSHEE programme exists across the School in which students are taught about the differences between people, the impact of bullying, strategies for dealing with friendship issues so that they do not escalate into a bullying situation, and the importance of what to do if bullying incidents arise.

In addition, students are involved in anti-bullying work through peer mentoring, and prefects are expected to set a good example and be helpful to younger students. Bullying is the subject of assemblies, and the whole School takes part in Anti-bullying Week activities. Displays around the school promote the anti-bullying message.

Pastoral staff ensure a consistent and appropriate response to any reports of bullying. Bullying is regularly discussed in meetings, for example, the Pastoral Team, School Council, Head of Year/Form Tutor weekly briefings.

The Student Voice

The School employs a number of strategies to ensure that its students have the opportunity to express their views on bullying and give feedback on the effectiveness of the School's policies and procedures. These include School Council, occasional questionnaires and SLT discussion with students.

If parents are unhappy with the School's handling of bullying incidents
We always endeavour to address any issue of bullying. If parents feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly, they are invited to make a complaint using the School's Complaints Procedure, which is accessible via the school website and available on request from the School Office.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Assistant Head (Pastoral Lead) is responsible for the on-going monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy and its implementation, taking account of feedback from pastoral staff, students and parents.

Relevant school contacts:

Assistant Headteacher/ Pastoral Lead:	Mrs E Smart	e.smart@migsg.miet.uk
Heads of Year 7	Mrs A Suleiman	a.suleiman@migsg.miet.uk
	Mrs F Hafezji	f.hafezji@migsg.miet.uk
Head of Y8:	Mrs C Drinkwater	c.drinkwater@migsg.miet.uk
Head of Y9:	Mrs S Malek	s.malek@migsg.miet.uk
Head of Y10:	Miss B Hockwart	b.hockwart@migsg.miet.uk
Hear of Y11:	Mrs S Campbell	s.campbell@migsg.miet.uk
Head of Y11	Mrs A Suleiman	a.suleiman@migsg.miet.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Miss J Kossar	j.kossar@migsg.miet.uk
Trustees Lead: Convenor:	Mr A Kawooya	trust.office@miet.uk

APPENDIX 1: Procedure for interviewing alleged bully and person affected.

	What to do	**How, Where, Time**	**Others**
1	Listen to the person affected	In suitable place and give them time (at least 10 minutes)	Whenever possible another adult, adult witness and person affected's friend should be present
2	Ask the person affected to write down everything	Date and time on paper and they should sign	Warnings about giving false accusations
3	Listen to alleged "bully"	In suitable place and give them time (at least 10 minutes)	Possibly another adult witness and friend of student present
4	Ask alleged "bully" to write down everything	Date and time on paper and they should sign	Warnings about giving false accounts
5	Pass on to relevant Head of Year	HOY now follows "Anti-Bullying stages" above	HOY decides whether to contact both sets of parents or if necessary to invite them into school