

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour that has no place at Mount Tamar School. As an SEMH all-through provision, we recognise that many of our pupils have experienced trauma, disrupted relationships, or difficulties in managing social interactions. Every member of our school community, adult or pupil, has the right to feel safe, respected and valued, and to go home each day with their body, belongings and self-esteem intact. We take all forms of bullying extremely seriously, and pupils and families can be confident that any known incidents will be responded to promptly and appropriately.

Bullying cannot always be defined by a single action, particularly within an SEMH context where pupils may struggle with emotional regulation, communication or understanding social cues. Our school ethos promotes kindness, respect and positive communication, and we consistently challenge any words, actions or intentions that could be perceived as bullying.

At Mount Tamar, bullying is understood as *“unacceptable behaviour that happens repeatedly, on purpose, and causes harm—whether physical, emotional or relational.”*

Bullying may relate to:

- Race or ethnicity
- Gender or gender identity
- Religion or culture
- Special educational needs or disability
- Appearance, health or neurodiversity
- Home circumstances, including care experience or financial hardship
- Sexual orientation, sexism or homophobic language

Mount Tamar School is committed to reducing all forms of bullying and supporting pupils to develop the social and emotional skills needed to build positive relationships. Staff remain vigilant to changes in pupils' behaviour or presentation. Signs that a child may be experiencing bullying include (but are not limited to):

- Withdrawal or isolation
- Heightened anxiety or emotional dysregulation
- Sudden changes in mood or behaviour
- Reduced engagement in learning
- Attempts to appease or imitate more dominant peers

In bullying situations, there is usually a perpetrator and a victim, although roles can be complex and may change over time. Many of our pupils require support to understand the impact of their behaviour and to develop empathy, self-regulation and conflict-resolution skills. Pupils are encouraged to trust adults and share worries through strong, consistent relationships. Staff supervise unstructured times carefully, and classrooms benefit from high levels of adult support. We operate a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. When bullying occurs, we will:

- Always respond
- Ensure the pupil experiencing bullying is safe
- Address the behaviour of the perpetrator in line with our behaviour and safeguarding policies
- Support both the victim and the perpetrator, recognising the SEMH needs that may underpin behaviour

- Discuss the incident openly with those involved
- Involve parents and carers
- Monitor the situation closely over time

We will:

- Build a climate of trust where pupils feel confident to report concerns
- Maintain clear procedures for responding to bullying
- Keep a high level of awareness of the impact of bullying on SEMH needs
- Strengthen pupils' confidence, resilience and social skills
- Support pupils who display bullying behaviours to understand the impact of their actions and develop alternative strategies

Strategies we use to educate pupils and raise awareness include:

- Teaching pupils about respectful behaviour, emotional regulation and the impact of their actions
- Creating learning opportunities that develop empathy, social understanding and conflict-resolution skills
- Using jigsaw PSHE curriculum and class discussions to reinforce that bullying is not acceptable
- Encouraging staff and pupils to be alert around the school and to seek help when needed
- Promoting respect for all pupils, staff and visitors
- Ensuring clear reporting routes for pupils and staff
- Taking all reports of bullying seriously
- Providing opportunities for pupils to talk to trusted adults
- Using newsletters and communication with families to reinforce our stance on bullying

Our school ethos encourages all pupils to show respect for themselves, each other and our environment. Positive behaviour is regularly recognised and celebrated. Staff talk openly with pupils about bullying so they know we are committed to dealing with it. This helps build confidence and encourages pupils to share concerns about themselves or others.

Any report of bullying must be shared immediately with the class teacher, pastoral team or a senior leader. Mount Tamar School will not tolerate behaviour that is abusive, hurtful, violent or aggressive towards any member of our community. Everyone has the right to learn and work in a safe environment, and we will take all necessary steps to ensure this.