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Responsibility Deputy Headteacher Pastoral

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

Good relationships form the basis of a creative and successful school community in which common sense, civilized behaviour, consideration for others and good manners all have a part to play if its members are to thrive and achieve, and pupils are to enjoy their educational experience. A happy society promotes the self-confidence that is essential to an individual's personal and social development. The College is committed to providing a friendly, caring environment: one that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child and allows him/her to learn in a relaxed, stimulating and secure setting. A high standard of conduct is expected from all pupils and employees.

It would be unrealistic to think that relationships at the College are always harmonious and that bullying never takes place. It will be found in every school and is in fact ubiquitous: it is found amongst people of all ages, nationalities and cultures and in all jobs and professions. Every child in every school has the right to learn free from the fear of being bullied, whatever form the bullying may take, and those involved in a child's education must work together to defend that right.

At Epsom College in Malaysia bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All pupils should be able to recognise it when it does occur and know that incidents of bullying will be dealt with promptly, fairly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is taking place needs to have the confidence to be able to report it to the appropriate member(s) of staff. The College does not support in any way the view still expressed occasionally by some that bullying is an inevitable (even desirable) part of growing up and that bullied children should be encouraged to stand up for themselves rather than seek help.

This policy document, which aims to raise awareness of bullying at Epsom College in Malaysia, and outlines the steps taken to prevent and deal with it when it does occur, is written for the benefit of governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents. It has been developed in consultation with pupils and staff, and draws on guidance contained in the following UK government publications:

Preventing and Tackling Bullying DfE July 2017

Screening, searching and confiscation DfE Jan 2018

Behaviour and discipline in schools DfE Jan 2016

Online abuse and bullying prevention guide NSPCC (Home Office) March 2015

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying review Natcen GEO DfE Oct 2014

The College acknowledges that bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyberbullying methods. The guidance set out in this document focuses on the bullying of pupils, although much of it applies also to other kinds of bullying. The College recognises that staff who are bullied can suffer from stress and breakdown and acknowledges its protective duties towards staff.

The College's stance on bullying is addressed (in brief) in the 'Guidance for Pupils' Booklet (section 7.4) given to all pupils at the start of the academic year.

1. Policy Statement

This policy applies to all pupils and staff at the College irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the School when or if bullying behaviour occurs. While this policy focuses mainly on the bullying of pupils by other pupils, it is recognised that other forms of bullying may occur and this is addressed in section 5.

2. Objective

The governors and staff of Epsom College in Malaysia seek to eliminate all forms of bullying from the community and in the conduct of its pupils in their personal and professional lives beyond the College.

3. The Legislative Framework

Schools have always had a duty of care for pupils under common law, but legislation[1] imposes statutory duties on schools, including the requirement under the **UK Education Act 2002** that schools "safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school". **Standard 12 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools** requires schools like Epsom College in Malaysia to have "an effective policy on countering bullying and to promote positive behaviour, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice".

Under the **UK Children Act 1989**, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm". **The UK Children Act 2004** affirmed that schools need to work with other agencies to safeguard children.

4. Equality

This covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. This College, as all schools, is required to have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

It is unlawful for the responsible body of any school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil

[1] Education Acts 2002 and 2011, The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003, Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the Equality Act 2010.

access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment. Epsom College in Malaysia complies with this legislation.

Lastly, although the term 'bullying' is not recognised as a criminal offence in Malaysia, if an act causes somebody harm or to do something against their will, it is considered 'Criminal Intimidation' under the Malaysian Penal Code. Furthermore, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications may be criminal offences**.** For example, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender. With so many Smart phones owned, and the ease of other technology, cyberbullying is on the increase. The College will involve the police where it is believed a criminal offence has been committed.

5. What is Bullying?

This definition and the explanation that follows have been accepted by members of the College community:

> **Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. Bullying is a form of abuse and is generally difficult for victims to defend themselves against. It undermines self-esteem and can induce feelings of helplessness, subjugation and isolation. Severe and protracted bullying can have lasting effects on a victim's social and emotional development.**

The College is not likely to regard as bullying the mistreatment of one individual or group by another unless the following *three* criteria are *all* met.[2]

The action or conduct:

i) was deliberate: the person(s) responsible acted with intent;
ii) would be regarded by a reasonably fair-minded, detached and impartial observer as being aggressive, offensive, unwarranted and altogether unacceptable; and
iii) caused the person(s) on the receiving end to suffer[3].

The third point is important: whether action or conduct is bullying depends above all on the effect it has on the recipient(s) and not so much on what was being done.

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[2] "Preventing and tackling Bullying" Departmental advice Oct 2014 DfE

[3] These first three criteria are *necessary* (in that unless all three are met, whatever incident took place could almost certainly *not* be regarded as bullying) but not *sufficient* (since there will be other decisive factors that have to be taken into account to establish beyond all doubt that bullying did occur).

In addition, one or more of the following criteria are *likely*, but not *necessarily*, also to be met.

The action or conduct:

iv) was unprovoked: there had been no incitement;
v) was directed at a particular individual or group and not applied indiscriminately;
vi) had as its basis an imbalance of power, e.g., a perceived difference of age, standing, strength, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc., which the perpetrator(s) saw fit to exploit;
vii) did not elicit any retaliation (other than self-defence or other instinctive and immediate countermeasures);
viii) may not have been the first occurrence of its kind.

Bullying may be inflicted by any of the following means:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions
- Verbal: name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting or demanding money
- Exclusionary Behaviour: intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group
- General Unkindness: spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, mobile phone texts or emails, distracting another person from their work;
- Cyberbullying: using the internet, mobile phones, social networking sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, WhatsApp, Google + etc.) to deliberately upset someone else (see section below);
- Sexual: talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way.

Bullying may also be:

- Sexual: talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way ;
- Sexist: related to a person's gender or orientation;
- Racist, or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture;
- Related to a person's age or home circumstances;
- Related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance;
- Related to a person's academic, sporting, musical or other ability.

6. **Intervention and other strategies for preventing bullying**

Effective supervision of pupils and frequent communication of an anti-bullying message are key factors in establishing a non-bullying ethos. But it is also recognised that pupils who are purposefully occupied and thereby develop self-esteem seldom bully others or feel the need to do so; and rarely are they bullied by others or perceived to be a target for bullying.

Teaching staff should have a firm and fair discipline structure within and outside the classroom. It is their responsibility to take positive, affirmative action in support of the College's anti-bullying policy and when bullying is suspected of having occurred. In addition to the common law duty of a teacher to take such care of the children in his/her charge as a careful parent would take of his/her own children, there is a statutory duty imposed on teachers to promote the general progress and well-being of individual pupils or groups or classes assigned to them, to maintain good order and discipline among the pupils

and to safeguard their health and safety [4]. This duty includes ensuring as far as possible that pupils are free from bullying and harassment

In order to minimise bullying the College will ensure that:

- governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents have an accepted and agreed understanding of what bullying is, including an understanding of the safe use of electronic communication, so that all are alert to e- safety and the dangers of internet, smartphone and other such tools for abuse
- governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents are given access to the College's Behaviour policy, and this policy on bullying, and are thereby able to know how they should behave, recognise instances of bullying and know how they can and should respond;
- an open climate prevails in which pupils have the confidence to report instances of bullying;
- teaching staff are aware of their legal obligation to act on indications of bullying;
- every pupil is encouraged to develop his/her self-esteem through challenging and stimulating activity at which competence and attainment are continually sought and encouraged, and — if possible and where appropriate — assessed;
- pastoral care of the highest standard is provided within all Houses and throughout the College;
- due consideration is given, when developments in the College are planned and carried out, to creating an environment in which bullying becomes less likely to occur — by bearing in mind, for example, boredom, overcrowding, marginalisation and isolation;
- regular exchanges of information can take place between members of staff on aspects of school life in which a culture of bullying might inadvertently be allowed to develop, and on particular pupils regarded as being at risk;
- at formal school assemblies senior members of staff and others having pastoral responsibilities frequently reinforce key points in the College's anti-bullying policy;
- events and activities are managed in such a way that opportunities for bullying are kept to a minimum — by, for example, increasing supervision at occasions when large numbers of pupils are expected to gather;

Pupils also have a key role to play in helping to establish and uphold an ethos in which bullying is rejected. Respect for other pupils, be they younger, older or of the same age, and tolerance of their differences are of fundamental importance. All pupils should be prepared and willing to accept encouragement, advice and direction from teachers, especially house staff, and prefects.

All pupils must recognise that:

- prevention of bullying is a collective concern which has to involve all pupils as well as teachers;
- thoughtlessness and insensitivity can so easily lead to bullying: impertinence and rudeness shown by youngsters to older pupils and others in authority can provoke an unwanted response;
- participation in purposeful group activity reduces the likelihood of individual separation and marginalisation, with which bullying is habitually associated;
- their own conduct can attract untoward attention that leads to bullying;
- outdated and manifestly illegal practices such as demanding money, food, mobile phone access, personal tasks, etc. from another pupil are forms of bullying and will be treated accordingly.

[4] 'Safeguarding' is the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables them to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully. *Working Together to Safeguard Children* — HM Government March 2015.

With bullying, there is no such person as the innocent bystander. A pupil who witnesses an incidence of bullying can act in one of several ways. Every pupil should take time to consider which of the following responses would most nearly coincide with his/her own; to what extent misplaced loyalty to friends would prevail over making and acting on a clear distinction between right and wrong.

A pupil who witnesses an incidence of bullying might:

- help the bully by joining in;
- support the bully by watching, laughing and shouting encouragement;
- take out a phone and record an image of the incident to pass to a senior member of staff;
- remain, but decidedly uninvolved;
- walk away, and do and say nothing;
- walk away but offer assistance later to those trying to investigate the incident;
- offer immediate and direct support to the victim by telling the bully/bullies to stop and/or fetching an adult.

Those who turn a blind eye effectively condone the activity and encourage the bully, albeit unintentionally, to carry on. They become 'accessories'. With cyberbullying in particular, bystanders can easily become perpetrators by passing on messages or images that humiliate others. Some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications may constitute criminal offences, and the College will refer matters to the police where necessary. Bullying at the College would all but disappear if the friends and family members of each bully (or potential bully) continually rounded on him/her to make clear their strong and explicit disapproval of the bullying activity.

Any pupil can be bullied. Those who show prowess in or enthusiasm for academic work are sometimes singled out by others, perhaps through envy of success or frustration at becoming conscious of their own lack of ambition or effort: not everybody thinks it is 'cool to be clever'. Pupils who excel at music and other reflective and intellectual pursuits can face the same problem. (In contrast, those who excel at sport are rarely bullied by their less able and/or successful peers.)

Certain other factors have been found to make bullying more likely to occur. Examples, none of which should ever be used as justification for bullying and will never be regarded as such, include:

- a lack or apparent lack of close friends;
- an over-protective family upbringing;
- nervousness or lack of confidence;
- belonging to a different racial, religious or ethnic group to the majority;
- some other obvious difference;
- ostentatious ownership of expensive or unusual items of equipment or clothing.

The College welcomes diversity amongst its pupils and staff. It is this very diversity, however, that some regard as a pretext for bullying. All members of the College community must guard against using and tolerating language and other forms of behaviour that can create an atmosphere in which bullying of this kind can more readily exist.

In bullying around **race, religion or belief**, a pupil is targeted for representing a group, and attacking or insulting the individual is very often designed to send a message to other members of that group. Every pupil deserves respect and a safe learning environment whatever their racial or religious background. This reflects the value modern British society places on diversity and the mutual respect its citizens are expected to show for each other. Racism exists in wider society, especially amongst adults, and racist incidents that occur in schools are no doubt direct consequences of this. Not all racist incidents amount

to racist bullying, defined as "a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status".

The law recognises the seriousness of abuse and attacks that are motivated by racism. All schools have a duty to promote race equality, and creating an ethos in which racist bullying rarely happens, and is dealt with convincingly when it does, is one way in which the College can fulfil that duty. In order to maintain that ethos, relevant and suitable themes form the basis of formal gatherings of the school community. Regularly covered are ideas of a shared humanity (similarities and universality), diversity (differences and contrasting faiths and interpretations) and interdependence (borrowing, mingling and mutual influence).

Incidents of racist bullying will be dealt with in the same way as all other types, except that pupils on the receiving end will be invited to become more involved in deciding how to proceed: whether they would like other pupils to help resolve the situation that has arisen and to what extent they would like their parents to be informed and involved.

Sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys can be victims — both bullied by girls and other boys. Sexual bullying is characterised by name calling, comments about appearance and attractiveness, sexual innuendoes, graffiti with sexual content and insensitive use of pornographic material. Teaching staff must be able to recognise and willing to challenge sexual content within verbal exchanges between pupils. Inappropriate and uninvited touching may constitute indecent assault, and should be considered first under child protection procedures.

Sexual bullying includes homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, which occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against another's **sexual orientation**. It can be experienced by pupils and others, including members of the teaching staff, who are (or are thought to be) lesbian, gay or bisexual, transsexual or perhaps have gay friends or family members. The harassment of boys whose behaviour is regarded by others as effeminate is a form of homophobic bullying. People who believe that being gay is 'wrong' — that 'boys should act like boys' and 'girls should act like girls' — are more likely to bully in this way. As with all other forms of bullying, homophobic bullying can have a long-lasting negative impact on young people.

Homophobic and other sexual orientation bullying is particularly hard to identify because it may take place covertly. Pupils' reluctance to report it (not wanting teachers or other adults to assume or know that they are gay) is a distinctive aspect of homophobic bullying. It nearly always involves verbal abuse — spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so the person concerned must be "gay". Casual homophobic language is common in schools, but if it is not challenged pupils may think that homophobic bullying is acceptable. It is therefore important that teaching staff do challenge homophobic language when it is heard. Pupils who use it must be informed that homophobic language is offensive and will not be tolerated. Staff responses should be swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective. Staff should feel able to respond effectively to incidents of homophobic bullying, and instil confidence in pupils and parents that issues will be dealt with.

Pupils with **Special Educational Needs** or **disabilities** may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other pupils. However, they may be at greater risk of being bullied precisely because of their specific difficulties. Teaching staff need to be aware that their own actions, such as drawing undue attention to differences between SEN pupils and others, can unintentionally lead to bullying.

7. **Cyberbullying**

This is the use of information and communications technology (ICT) by bullies as an indirect means by which they can harass their victims. It is a *means* of bullying, rather than a *type* of bullying — the technology is used to bully for any of the reasons stated above. A bully uses a phone, tablet or other hand held device, or the internet to send or post messages and images that taunt, intimidate, insult, abuse, stalk, embarrass or otherwise harm or cause distress to the victim. Cyberbullies can make use of e-mail, mobile 'phone and text messaging, digital photography, instant messaging, personal websites, chat rooms, blogs and social networking sites. It is the impersonal nature of ICT that leads those who might otherwise lack good communication skills to misuse it and gives them the confidence to victimise others.

It is recognised that members of staff and other adults can be victims of cyberbullying as when ridiculed, threatened or otherwise abused online by pupils.

Cyberbullying differs in several ways from the more usual forms of bullying:
- the potentially vast size of the audience of 'onlookers';
- the incredible speed with which cyberbullies can distribute messages and images to this wide audience;
- the relative ease with which cyberbullying activities can be intensified and repeated;
- the difficulty of monitoring and controlling the activities of cyberbullies, who can operate from home without restriction;
- the ease with which bystanders can inadvertently become drawn in to cyberbullying activities — by passing on to others, and thereby extending circulation, malicious messages or images without being aware of the impact their distribution has on the recipient;
- the invasive nature of cyberbullying, which can occur at any time and intrude into victims' own homes and other personal spaces that would otherwise be thought safe;
- the anonymity that cyberbullies are able to maintain (to begin with at least) — the difficulty with which they can be traced and identified; but cyberbullying yields evidence of itself, which if kept can aid investigations.

Pupils can adopt safeguards to protect themselves from being involved in cyberbulling, either as victims or inadvertently as perpetrators. By the same means pupils can protect themselves from paedophiles who make use of identity thieves, who also obtain and misuse personal details over the Internet.

To ensure safe and proper use of ICT, all pupils are advised "*Think before you post"* and:
- to refuse all requests to reveal personal information;
- to avoid putting personal information such as full name, birthday, address, mobile phone number, e-mail address, bank account details, instant messenger ID, and any images of themselves anywhere on the internet;
- to keep passwords safe — they should be hard to guess, changed regularly and never divulged to anyone else;
- not to give mobile phone numbers and personal e-mail and internet addresses to anyone other than trusted offline friends;
- to think carefully before communicating via e-mail and especially before posting messages and images on social networking sites — whatever is sent can very quickly be spread widely and could stay online indefinitely;

- to take special care when using camera functions never to share images of themselves or others which could be considered sexually provocative or indecent. "Sexting" is a growing phenomenon which has hurt a number of otherwise honest and naive youngsters, and may lead to criminal prosecution;
- not to forward any defamatory or otherwise offensive message or image that is received;
- to remember that the crimes of "making" and "distributing" illegal images, i.e. of anyone under 18 considered to be sexual in nature, or bestiality or extreme adult pornography simply means clicking to open and view an image received or found, and forwarding or saving it;
- not to respond to text messages, phone calls e-mails or social networking that could be regarded as bullying in nature — those that are in any way abusive, intimidating or otherwise malicious and unwelcome;
- to report receipt of such communication immediately — the content, time, date and any caller identification (or that the number was withheld or made unavailable) should all be noted; if at all possible the whole communication should be kept and saved.[5] Most social networking sites now have a facility to report unwanted communication in real time to be wary of opening files that come from people who are not known 'in the real world';
- to regard as online friends only those who are already known as friends 'in the real world'; the Internet allows people to pretend very easily to be somebody they are not.

Pupils need to be aware that they are not granted privacy to send obscene or abusive e-mails or post malicious material on the internet from school. Neither must they do so using 3/4/5G on their own devices, which may be seized at school if under suspicion and held for consideration with parents and the police where necessary. The College retains its right to monitor e-mails and other messages sent from its own network. This is in line with practice elsewhere: most employers warn that e-mails sent from work can be read.

Responsibility for allowing offensive material to remain on an internet site rests with the person who set up and 'owns' the site as much as with the writer of the material. Pupils must accept the implications of creating an opportunity for others to post comments about a third party. The ability to insult or otherwise abuse or take advantage of other people by this remote means, in public and with the potential to reach a mass audience, is proving to be one of the most unwelcome downsides of the rapid development of electronic communications. The College will not condone such action, even when it is undertaken from the privacy of a pupil's own home.

Pupils and staff should always bear in mind that information concerning themselves and their activities that are available on the internet and social networking sites will be accessed by universities and potential employers, who will take such information into account before considering making any offer. Always use adequate privacy settings, and think whether you would be happy if an image could be seen by your mother, partner, employer or children in 10 years' time.

Pupils who feel they are experiencing cyberbullying of one kind or another should contact their phone network provider, internet service provider or social networking site. Details of how to do this are published by the Anti-Bullying Network.[6]

8. **Awareness of bullying**

[5] Anything viewed on a computer screen can be captured by pressing the *Print Screen* key, which places the contents of the screen on the clipboard. From there it can be pasted into a blank *Word* document which should then be saved.

[6] The relevant document is available on http://www.antibullying.net/cyberbullying1.htm

A pupil's behaviour or a self-imposed change of habit may provide tell-tale signs that he or she is being bullied. Any sudden change of behaviour may indicate that all is not well, but listed below are particular changes of habit or behaviour that those who maintain a special interest in a pupil's well-being (parents, pastoral staff and friends) should watch out for.

A pupil who is being bullied may:

- be frightened of walking alone around the College campus,
- be reluctant to spend time in unsupervised 'public' spaces (such as House dayrooms),
- alter his/her usual routine,
- become withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence,
- start stammering,
- run away and even attempt or threaten suicide,
- cry him/herself to sleep at night or have nightmares,
- feel ill in the morning,
- become quieter, look paler and less lively,
- get laughed at by others,
- begin to do poorly in school work,
- continually 'lose' money or possessions,
- ask for money or start stealing money (to pay the bully),
- have possessions which are damaged,
- have unexplained cuts or bruises,
- become hungry (being afraid to go to meals),
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable,
- bully other children or siblings,
- be frightened to say what is wrong,
- frequently retreat to the Medical Centre or go 'off-games',
- offer improbable explanations for any of the above.

In addition, a day pupil who is being bullied may:

- be unwilling to go to school ('school phobic'),
- be frightened of walking to or from school or of entering the house,
- not want to travel with other pupils on a school coach,
- beg to be driven to school,
- begin truanting,
- come home with clothes torn or books damaged.

These changes of behaviour could have any number of other causes, but the responsible adult to whose attention they are brought will need to consider the possibility of bullying and conduct further investigations with appropriate discretion.

9. **Dealing with bullying**

As a school the College takes bullying seriously. Pupils and parents must have the confidence to know that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Only by challenging bullying — demonstrating to all that bullying will not be tolerated and making clear to bullies that their behaviour has been unacceptable — can the College hope to fulfil its commitment to improving steadily the safety and happiness of all its pupils. Watching and doing nothing helps the bully: the College does not support in any way the 'culture of silence' prevalent amongst pupils, which merely protects and encourages the bully.

Not all hurtful behaviour is intentional. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing", "banter", "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without

disciplinary sanctions. A bully who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions would ultimately have to leave the College.

A pupil who is being bullied should:

- try to stay calm and appear to be as confident as possible;
- not blame him/herself for what is happening;
- address the bullies and tell them firmly and clearly that he/she would like them to stop;[7]
- move away from the situation as quickly as possible;
- report the incident to a teacher as soon as possible;
- tell parents and trusted friends.

A pupil reporting an incidence of bullying must be clear about:

- what happened;
- who was involved;
- who else saw what was happening;
- where it happened;
- what action, if any, has already been taken;
- how often the same sort of thing has happened before.

Some allegations of bullying may turn out to be false or exaggerated. However, whatever may have occurred before regarding similar incidents, perhaps involving the same pupil(s), all reported cases of bullying will be treated seriously and not dismissed without at least some investigation being carried out.

Parents who contact the College, occasionally in some distress, to report that their child has been bullied must also have their concerns taken seriously. The member of staff with whom contact is made — usually the Housemaster/mistress — must recognise that the parent may be angry and upset, and will need to keep an open mind: bullying can be hard to detect, so a lack of staff awareness should never be taken as proof that there has been no bullying.

10. Procedure

- Allegations of bullying would in the first instance normally be brought to the attention of the pupils' Housemaster/mistresses ("HMM") or Prep School class teacher, who will report all but petty and inconsequential differences of opinion to the Deputy Headteacher Pastoral/Head of Prep School.
- After conducting preliminary clarifications the Deputy Headteacher Pastoral)/Head of Prep School will refer the allegations and his/her own findings to the Headmaster.
- A full account of what took place will be obtained through interviews and discussions, normally with Housemasters/mistresses of the pupils involved in attendance. A written record of all such interviews and discussions will be made.
- Parents of the pupils involved will be kept informed of the progress of clarifications and may be invited to attend a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher Pastoral)/Head of Prep School and/or Headmaster.

[7] Use of a simple statement such as "*I have had enough; I want you to stop doing/saying that*" is sufficient to make it clear to the bullies that their actions amount to harassment and are not at all welcome. It may not bring about a stop to the bullying, but it will make the process of dealing with it later far more straightforward.

- When dealing with serious cases of bullying that could amount to criminal action (usually defined as offences against the person) the College reserves the right to invoke the child protection procedures, and involve the police.
- The Headmaster will be involved in any decisions that have to be made concerning sanctions and other preventative measures.

11. Outcomes

- Support and guidance will be offered to pupils who have been bullied with the aim of restoring confidence and self-esteem, developing assertiveness and preventing any recurrence.[8]
- The bully (bullies) may be asked to offer a genuine apology in private, never in public.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour. It is important that pupils see themselves as a key part of the solution to the problem.
- Appropriate sanctions will be meted out, which for serious cases could include temporary or even permanent exclusion[9].
- If possible and where appropriate, the pupils will be reconciled and action taken to repair damage done.
- Relationships between the pupils will be monitored to ensure that bullying is not repeated.

12. Recording

The Deputy Headteacher Pastoral keeps a log of all incidents that are brought to his attention. The Deputy Headteacher Pastoral will meet regularly with Mr Francis Minah (College Safeguarding Governor appointed 2019) to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's approach and to enable any patterns to be identified.

13. Outside organisations that offer advice on bullying

Parents and pupils may find some of the following links to outside organisations that deal with bullying issues, but should note that the College cannot accept responsibility for the content or availability of any of these sites. They are offered without any particular recommendations, though some carry more governmental authority than others.

ChildLine **15999**
Malaysian Department of Welfare **03 8000 8000**

UNICEF Malaysia
https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/stories/standing-together-curb-bullying

Cyberbullying

Cyber Security in Malaysia
https://www.cybersecurity.my/en/index.html

[8] Supporting children and young people who are bullied: Advice for schools DfE 2014
[9] Behaviour and Discipline Policy: Misconduct - levels and Sanctions hierarchy. Exclusion, Removal and Review Policy.

Most of these organisations will offer advice over the telephone but have different contact numbers for children, parents and others. With the obvious exception of an emergency call to ChildLine, the website of each one is the best place to start.

It should also be noted that there are many people within school that pupils or parents can talk to if they wish. A full list can be found in 'Guidance for Pupils'.