



PREVENTION OF BULLYING POLICY

Aims

The Academy aims to provide a safe, secure and positive environment in which children can learn and develop to their full potential. To this end the academy promotes equality and cohesion and operates a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying and prejudice. This policy aims to prevent bullying and to address the causes of bullying by:

- raising awareness of bullying;
- bringing about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen;
- ensuring a whole school approach to bullying;
- reducing and, where possible, eradicating instances of all types of bullying.

Principles

- bullying is incompatible with a healthy learning environment, social cohesion and respect for the individual;
- all bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it;
- the behaviour of children relates to their developmental phase;
- the academy's policy for the prevention of bullying must be sensitive to these developmental phases;
- the way in which children relate to bullying is significantly affected by the behaviour of the adults around them;
- a whole-school approach to the prevention of bullying, involving parents and carers as well as the students themselves, is the most effective way of cultivating a bullying-free environment;
- the academy staff are committed to an ethos which respects all individuals: any behaviour that undermines this is unacceptable.

What is bullying?

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 and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation. It can be motivated by actual or perceived differences between children.

Cyber-bullying

Staff, parents and pupils are kept informed of the dangers of cyber-bullying. Staff are made aware of the school's policy re. mobile phone use and of the powers included in the Education Act 2011 to tackle cyber-bullying. Key staff members attend e-safety training on a regular basis in connection with Safeguarding policies and to inform the school's approach to bullying.

Bullying outside school premises

Staff are made aware of their responsibility and powers to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on in the same way as in-school incidents.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Staff should be aware of the signs of bullying. These can be extremely variable and will very much depend on the individual.

- Physical signs e.g. physical injuries, damaged clothing with no convincing explanation and general ill-health due to stress;
- Emotional signs e.g. mood swings, apparent changes in personality, constant anxiety/nervousness, depression or tearfulness for no apparent reason, lack of confidence, negative self-image, hostility and defensiveness;
- Behavioural signs e.g. withdrawn, frequent, unexplained absences, poor concentration, eating disorders, alcohol/substance misuse, evidence of self-harming and disruptive/challenging/bullying behaviour;
- General e.g. frequently "lose" money/possessions, appears tired and lethargic, avoids entering/leaving school with others.

Pupils usually become victims of bullying through no fault of their own. On occasions, however, a pupil may be subject to bullying because they:

- are new to the class;
- are different in appearance, speech or background from other people;
- suffer from low self esteem.

Prevention of Bullying

The following strategies underpin the school's approach to the prevention and tackling of bullying:

- involving pupils by ensuring that they all understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- making it easy for pupils to report bullying, including incidents which may have occurred outside school such as cyber-bullying;
- creating an inclusive and safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination;
- celebrating success as a means of creating a positive school ethos around the issue;
- involving parents by making clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and by ensuring that parents are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied;
- regularly evaluating and updating the school's approach to take account of developments in technology;
- ensuring that the consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident by implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions;
- openly discussing differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality and teaching that the use of any prejudice-based language is unacceptable;
- using specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems and drawing on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and / or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying;

- providing effective staff training to ensure that all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support;
- investing in specialised skills to help staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or disability (SEND) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) pupils;
- working with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.

Responding to Bullying

When bullying has been reported or observed the Behaviour and Learning Support Co-ordinator (BLSCo) is the first point of contact. The BLSCo will report regularly to the Principal, the Behaviour Guidance Group and the teaching staff to ensure that all responsible adults have a comprehensive picture of any such activity within the school.

The BLSCo and the relevant teacher(s) will use the following template:

- **Build a picture.** Talk to the pupil or pupils involved. All judgements should be withheld. Feelings need to be understood and respected.
- **Extend the circle.** With the permission of the affected pupil(s), involve bystanders, suspected perpetrators and colluders.
- **Consider the other.** The teacher encourages all involved to imagine how the others feel. Not an exploration of the details of the event or tribunal into what *really* happened. At no time does the teacher allocate blame to or within the group.
- **Share responsibility.** The teacher does not attribute blame but encourages all those involved to acknowledge their own part in the event.
- **Do better next time.** Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which all could feel better about themselves and the event. What would they do differently next time? What triggers need to be avoided?
- **Sanctions.** Arising from the review of how to improve in the future, teacher makes a judgement as to what sanctions may be appropriate at this stage or in the future.
- **Hand it over.** The teacher ends the meeting by passing the responsibility to all involved to address the problem to the best of their ability.
- **Review.** Within one week the teacher discusses with all involved how things have been going. What still needs to be worked on?

If the situation is not resolved after this process and the behaviour continues, then the following stages are considered:

- ✓ First step: repeat the above but also involving parent/carer.
- ✓ Second step: repeat the above but involve other agencies e.g. Behaviour Support Team, Educational Psychologist, Police (If a child is over 10 years of age they are criminally responsible).
- ✓ Third Step: Put in place a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) and inform all parties of the option of fixed term exclusion.

Recording and reporting incidents:

All bullying, hate and prejudice related incidents must be reported by staff directly to the BLSCo. A prejudice related incident is one involving for example racist graffiti or sexist language, but may not constitute bullying because it is not repeated, not intentional or not directed at an individual.

Bullying Involving Adults:

Bullying may occur between adults. Modelling best behaviour amongst adults for the benefit of the children means that *all* bullying incidents must be investigated. This includes any incident reported by a parent or a member of staff of being bullied by a child, parent or staff member. The school has an open door policy and the Principal will always strive to speak with parents to discuss any concerns immediately. Members of the school workforce suffering from or concerned about bullying can also contact their trade union or professional association for support and advice.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies e.g. Behaviour, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Child Protection, Exclusion.

External benchmarks and statutory context:

The Equality Act 2010.

Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 89.

Education Act 2011

Approved by (Print name): Signature:	Date
Review Date*:	
Designated staff member:	
Designated governor:	

*Annually reviewed