

Anti-Bullying Policy



Definition

There are many definitions of bullying. Most of these consider it to be deliberately hurtful behaviour against which it is difficult for victims to defend themselves. Bullying is very often part of a pattern of behaviour, which may be repeated over a long period of time.

The three main types of bullying are physical, verbal and emotional. Examples of each of these types of behaviour are as follows:

- 1) **Physical:**
hitting, pinching, pushing, kicking or taking possessions from another individual;
- 2) **Verbal:**
teasing, name calling, writing notes; and to include email, texts, msn messages, blogs and voicemail;
- 3) **Emotional:**
exclusion from a group, spreading rumours, looks, tormenting.

Each of the lists of examples is not exhaustive. It is important to realise that people react differently and it is not always possible to judge the effects of a seemingly mild form of the behaviour outlined above.

Incidents in which bullying behaviour are apparent should be investigated in line with both this policy and the Academy's Behavior Recognition and Rewards policy.

Aims

- To demonstrate that bullying is always unacceptable behaviour.
- To raise awareness of the issue and provide a healthy and strongly supportive environment in which every individual can be free from the consequences of bullying.
- To create an atmosphere where students who are bullied, or others who may be aware of the bullying, feel able to divulge the information, knowing that the matter will be handled in a sympathetic and efficient manner. The majority of students within the Academy will not be involved in bullying themselves. However, they are likely to know when it is happening. Harnessing peers in a positive way is an important part of the Academy's approach to tackling bullying.
- To protect and support victims of bullying, in order to help them cope and reduce its impact on their confidence, wellbeing and achievement.
- To appropriately challenge students who bully, to help them avoid using bullying and other anti-social behaviour in their relationships with other young people and adults.

Procedures

Parents/Carers

If you think that your son/daughter is being bullied, please contact the appropriate Student Development Leader (SDL) immediately. It is important that swift action is taken to resolve the problem. We will work closely with you to ensure that the matter is handled swiftly and effectively in a sympathetic and sensitive manner.

Pupils

If you are, or one of your friends is being bullied, please tell a member of staff immediately. This is better than seeking retribution by taking the matter into your own hands.

It is in everyone's best interests to help the Academy to ensure that a bully is not allowed to continue with a 'reign of terror' and to prevent the continuation of the suffering of an individual student.

Staff

If you think that a student is being bullied, or if a student confides in you, talk to those concerned to try to establish the facts.

It is good practice to ask all concerned to write down their own account of events. Please alert the Form Tutor in the first instance and then the Student Development Leader, if appropriate.

It is important to be vigilant at all times, particularly during the less structured times of the day, i.e. during changeover between lessons and at break and lunchtime.

Staff should be aware that some groups of students may be more vulnerable than others to bullying. Care should be taken to ensure that these students feel safe (e.g. those with a disability or special educational needs, looked after children and other children who have experienced distressing home circumstances, students from minority ethnic communities, students who might be targeted on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation).

Teachers and Managers in all departments should, whenever possible, use the curriculum to foster a strong anti-bullying culture and promote students' social skills and emotional wellbeing (e.g. emotional literacy, encouraging healthy peer relationships, positive ways of expressing feelings, empathy for others, constructive conflict resolution). All staff are expected to model positive and supportive behaviour in their relationships with students, parents / carers and colleagues.

Senior Managers should work proactively to raise awareness of this policy and the issues it seeks to address among staff, students and parents / carers. They should promote a whole-school approach to tackling bullying and to fostering supportive peer relationships (e.g. through pastoral systems, staff training, assemblies, peer support and mentoring systems, etc.)

Responding to incidents of bullying

- The bully must be made aware that their behaviour is not acceptable and that the bullying must cease immediately.
- The perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) will be counselled in an attempt to resolve the underlying problem.
- Parents / Carers will be kept fully informed and will be told how the matter has been dealt with.
- Clear, concise records will be kept of all proceedings.
- Consideration will always be given to practical methods of reducing the contact between the students, should this prove to be necessary.
- If the bullying continues then sanctions will be applied.
- Ongoing contact, as appropriate, between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) will help ensure the problem does not occur again.
- Where appropriate the necessary Racial/Homophobic/Bullying Monitoring Form will be completed.

Supporting & Involving Parents / Carers

Managers should ensure that all staff are aware of the Academy's anti-bullying policy, so that they can respond appropriately and sensitively, if approached, by a parent / carer.

Staff should involve parents / carers at an early stage, although balancing the need for parental involvement with confidentiality is essential. For example, students experiencing homophobic bullying are often particularly reluctant to involve their parents / carers.

Staff should take steps to overcome language barriers and to recognise cultural diversity when involving and consulting parents / carers. Ongoing contact with parents / carers of both bullies and victims will help ensure the problem does not occur again.

Allegations of bullying by staff

If a serious allegation of abuse (or an allegation of serious and sustained bullying) is made against a member of staff, immediate consultation is required with the LEA's Area Children's Officer (Child Protection) based in the respective area office.

This consultation must take place prior to any form of investigation being undertaken by the Academy.

Any allegation against an employee should lead to a careful consideration of the possibility of abuse and of a referral being made of any concerns to the statutory agencies.