



# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## 1. Definitions

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- physical (eg hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (eg name calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (eg spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)

The Human Rights Act (1998) states that no one shall be subject to degrading treatment and we must ensure that this does not happen in our school.

We recognise that the emotional distress caused by bullying in whatever form can prejudice school achievement, seriously damage self esteem and affect punctuality and attendance (a third of all girls and a quarter of all boys are at some time afraid of going to school because of bullying).

## 2. Aims

One of the main aims of our academy is to encourage every pupil to reach his or her full potential. Central to this is the recognition of the worth of every individual and the raising of everyone's self esteem no matter what their gender, race, religion, age, sexuality or disability. We encourage the values of tolerance, sympathy and the acceptance of differences. (See also our Inclusion Policy).

Everyone has the right to be safe in school and on the way to and from school.

It is important that everyone working within our school, pupils, staff and parents, understands what bullying is and how it can be prevented. Our anti-bullying policy encourages students not to suffer in silence. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of all of us to make sure that bullying has no place in our academy.

### 3. How do we recognise bullying?

Any child can be bullied and although none of these characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- lacking close friends in school
- being shy
- an over protective family environment
- being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority (In racist bullying, a child is targeted for representing a group, and attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Racist bullying can be defined as “any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person” Macpherson Report 1999)
- being different in some obvious respect, this can also include bullying related to sexual orientation. Students do not have to be lesbian or gay for this to happen. Just being different is enough
- behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a ‘nuisance’
- possessing expensive accessories.

### 4. Strategies for dealing with bullying

When a teacher or other adult is aware that bullying is taking place he or she should intervene or respond immediately. The appropriate Head of House or Assistant Head of House should be informed as soon as possible.

#### Key points

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Do not make premature assumptions
- Listen carefully to all accounts (several people saying the same does not necessarily mean that they are telling the truth).
- Adopt a problem solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves.
- Follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed.

#### Other strategies

- Befriending involves assigning selected student volunteers to befriend peers.
- Mediation by adults - the aim is to establish ground rules that enable those who have bullied and victims to co-exist

- Assertiveness training for particular individuals or groups
- Pro active intervention (identifying students at risk using guidance above)

Where students do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying we will take tougher action to deal with persistent and violent bullying. Sanctions available to us in our Behaviour Policy include:

- warning
- detention
- referral to HOH/AHOH
- monitoring and reporting procedures
- referral to SLT
- PSP/IEP activated
- exclusion

Guidance from the Secretary of State (August 2000) makes clear that permanent exclusion is appropriate in cases where there has been 'serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff'.

## **5. Involving parents**

The majority of parents support anti-bullying measures. A significant few do have unhelpful attitudes saying bullying is an inevitable part of growing up and encouraging bullied children to 'stand up for themselves' rather than seek help. We need to overcome this type of attitude. Useful approaches to this include:

- regular consultation and communication
- providing information about the nature and effects of bullying
- advising parent of possible consequences of their children bringing valuable items to the Academy.

## **6. What happens when a parent reports a bullying incident?**

Good practice includes

- Recognising that the parent may be angry or upset
- Keeping an open mind - bullying can be difficult to detect, so a lack of staff awareness does not mean no bullying occurs.
- Remaining calm and understanding

- Making clear that the school does care and something will be done (bullying must be one of our top priorities, tomorrow will not do!)
- Explaining the Academy policy, making sure procedures are followed.

When a case is referred (usually to the House office) the appropriate House Tutor/HOH/AHOH must be sought IMMEDIATELY. If they are absent or unavailable the incident should not be left. It should be dealt with by another HOH or AHOH. Prompt response to a parent is vital.

Parents should be invited in to discuss their concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Parents of the (alleged) bullying child should be invited in to discuss their child's behaviour. It is better to involve parents constructively at an early stage. Avoid using parents (or the threat of them) as a form of punishment for bullying. We need to build a co-operative ethos.

## **7. Monitoring**

This will be done by the HOHs and AHOHs using the Academy referral process. All staff will be required to record incidents of bullying.

The policy will have a high profile. There will be regular reminders in house assemblies and in newsletters to parents.

## **8. Evaluation**

Measures will be taken to evaluate the impact of the policy

e.g. interview

questionnaire

analysis of reported incidents of bullying etc.

The policy will be reviewed regularly by the governing body.