

Anti-Bullying Policy



Introduction

As an anti-social activity, designed to instil fear in the victim, bullying sabotages any attempt to provide a safe learning environment. Bullies only thrive within a community that is prepared to be secretive.

The academy aims to equip its students with the skills and confidence to be open and assertive and to provide opportunities to make it as easy and safe as possible for people to tell someone if they are being bullied. Thorough investigation and appropriate intervention will follow any disclosure and the intervention will be targeted at both the victim and the perpetrator.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is

- to inform students, parents, staff and all stakeholders of what constitutes bullying
- to demonstrate how the school aims to keep the school community safe and prevent bullying
- outline how to seek support, either for self or others
- to advise what to do if you are being bullied or know of someone who is being bullied
- to outline what will happen when bullying is reported or suspected

Definitions

What do we mean by bullying?

Bullying is a deliberate and persistent act of aggression with the intention of hurting another person and results in distress to the victim/s. Bullying gives a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully.

Bullying can be:

verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
emotional	excluding, tormenting, being unfriendly
racist	taunts, graffiti, gestures
sexual	unwanted physical contact, abusive comments
physical	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, any violence.
cyber	uses internet, mobile phone, ICT communications (See Cyberbullying Policy for further details)

Many students will encounter difficulties within their relationships and most frequently this, though upsetting, does not constitute bullying, but will still be responded to with support and intervention.

For bullying to be proven, the perpetrator must be conscious of doing it and it must consist of ongoing, repeated acts which are targeted at a specific victim or victims, with the intention of causing harm.

What are the boundaries and jurisdiction of the school?

Clearly the school site at all times is included but this is not exclusive. It also includes situations in which students who are deemed to be on the way to or from school and throughout lunchtime, in the vicinity of the school. All school trips and functions are also included.

Prevention of bullying

Despite the fact that appropriate action occurs whenever bullying is reported, witnessed or suspected, prevention of bullying in the first place, is infinitely more desirable than simply reacting to it.

It is well known that bullies only thrive within a secretive atmosphere, so a major thrust of our work lies in encouraging students and parents to tell us if bullying is taking place.

To these ends we

- speak to parents during the Induction Programme prior to the students coming to the school advising them to observe their children and contact the school if bullying is suspected
- post our Anti-Bullying Policy on the school website
- advertise details of helplines and websites available to students to combat bullying
- deal with the issue of bullying in tutorials and Activity Days and in all year groups
- raise the issue termly in assembly
- advise students to report to tutors, Year Managers, any teacher, any non-teaching member of staff if they feel under threat or unsafe in school
- display available Anti-Bullying Literature in easily accessible areas of the school e.g Library and Learning Zone
- expect all staff teaching and non-teaching to model non-bullying behaviour at all times
- supervise movement and patrol the school site throughout the school day

What happens when an incidence of bullying is reported?

To a member of staff

The Year Manager of the victim and the bully are immediately informed verbally of the bullying by the member of staff and a written account follows as soon as possible afterwards.

The victim is immediately made safe either in school or, if there is a potential for violence to erupt, parents are contacted and the child is taken home escorted by a responsible adult.

A thorough investigation follows, managed by the Year Manager(s), and within the shortest timeframe practicable.

The alleged bully is questioned and, if necessary, is removed from having any possible direct influence over witnesses by being held in isolation or, if the situation demands, after contacting a parent, being taken home by a responsible adult.

Once the fact base is established the school acts appropriately as determined by the Year Manager or Year Managers involved, if appropriate, under the guidance of the Assistant Headteacher: Pastoral.

Parents of the children involved are updated on proceedings by the Year Manager, managing the case.

The Investigation

A systematic investigation is carried out, under the management of the Pastoral Manager(s) concerned.

Key points are established in the investigation in order to determine the best action to take.

Pertinent questions are:

What type of bullying is it?

verbal teasing __ ostracism __ threats of violence __ extortion __ cyber __ violence

How long has it been occurring?

minutes – hours – day – days – week – weeks – month – months – year – years

How frequent?

once _____ occasional _____ persistent

How aware is the perpetrator of the effect of the actions on the victim?

unknown _____ known

Why is the victim being singled out?

physical ____ intellectual ____ difference _____ racist ____ sexual

Is the perpetrator acting alone or in concert with others?

individual _____ group

What is the perpetrator's attitude to discovery and how ready is he / she to learn?

admitted _____ not admitted

What is the perpetrator's record of bullying?

first offence _____ known bully

Have parents sought police involvement?

no _____ yes

Sanctions and Appropriate Responses

Sanctions up to and including exclusion can result if bullying is proven.

The school takes firm action whenever bullying is discovered and the involvement of parents of perpetrator and victim takes place in all cases.

The school has regard for the victim in any action or response made by the school and pastoral support is provided.

The school communicates regularly with the parents, particularly of the victim, to assure them that this is a matter of the highest priority and informs them of progress made.

The information is recorded and logged on the school's anti-social behaviour database by the Year Manager.

The Year Manager monitors the situation in the aftermath or until the situation is clearly normalised

The victim requires reassurance, support, careful monitoring and opportunities to learn how to avoid being a victim. The Year Manager manages this provision internally and, if necessary, advises parents on accessing external support agencies.

The victim is made aware of how to communicate if bullying is going on or is continuing, and must make a commitment to do so.

The perpetrator is given clear messages that bullying behaviour is totally unacceptable and learns about its damaging effects upon the victims and the consequences to themselves.

The Year Manager has a range of sanctions/responses available to deal with the perpetrator ranging from counselling by tutor, Year Manager, or a named teacher through to recommending exclusion.

The Headteacher alone has the right to exclude students who bully others from school and does so with the full support of the School Governors.

Complaints

If the policy has not been adhered to or if parents are not satisfied by the response of the school to incidents, then the first step is to contact the Headteacher in writing, stating the nature of the complaint. The Headteacher will then investigate the complaint through the Assistant Headteacher: Pastoral. A senior leader will meet with parents as soon as possible to try to resolve the issue/s. If parents are still not satisfied then contacting the Chairman of the Governors in writing is the final recourse.

This policy is reviewed by Governors annually.

Next review date: March 2018.