

Anti-bullying Strategy

Our Academy community treats all accusations of bullying as serious matters of concern.

Bullying Defined

Bullying manifests itself in a number of ways:

- Persistent physical e.g. Assaulting a person or damaging their property
- Persistent verbal. e.g. Name calling or teasing, including homophobic abuse
- Persistent sexually aggressive behaviour
- Persistent indirect e.g. Damaging the reputation or character of the victim, or socially excluding them from games or conversation.
- Persistent cyberbullying. Examples include; texting, e-mails or other digital communication, e.g. Chat rooms and social networks. (This is a particularly nasty form of bullying, as the bullying follows the victim into the home and outside school hours.)

No matter what form bullying takes, it is all abhorrent and damages both the victim and the bully to differing extents. The Academy will make use of the best information and practices available to eradicate this problem.

Bullying affects the ability of a child to fully participate in and enjoy Academy life and it is both an equal opportunities issue as well as a disciplinary offence, which the Principal, EAB Members and staff will do all in their power to resolve.

Preventing bullying

The Academy will develop a clear strategy, which it will share with all staff through a dedicated professional development programme. This strategy will then be clearly and comprehensively communicated to every member of our pupil population, their families and where appropriate with the community.

This strategy will be developed using current best practice not only from the UK, but also where appropriate, taking account of successes of schools in other countries.

The Academy will take every opportunity to demonstrate to pupils, through the curriculum (PSHE programmes and Anti-Bullying Week), pastoral programmes, displays, assemblies and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying.

The Academy will consider designating 'Special Safe Places' which vulnerable or sensitive children and young people can freely access at breaks and lunchtimes, such as dedicated pastoral spaces which will have support staff in attendance.

Expert opinion says that bullying is a response to powerlessness. We will seek to engage all our pupils through our pastoral programme and our Pupil Council.

Staff will not ignore bullying or suspected bullying. All Academy staff will intervene to prevent bullying incidents from taking place at the Academy. After initial intervention, a referral will be made to the pupil's Class Teacher / Learning Manager or in their absence, the pastoral support team/pastoral leadership team.

We will encourage pupils to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher or other adult at the Academy. Pupils will be told that they may bring a friend with them if they wish.

We will ensure that all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the Academy's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Staff will praise and encourage all children and young people when they show kindness and consideration to others.

Recognising the signs of bullying

The Academy recognises that any child or young person can be bullied but certain factors can make bullying more likely:

1. A lack of close friends.
2. Shyness.
3. Race, religion, sexual orientation or social class.
4. A disability or difficulty

Staff will suspect bullying is occurring if a child:

- Becomes withdrawn and anxious.
- Shows deterioration in his / her work.
- Starts to attend erratically.
- Has a spurious illness.
- Persistently arrives late.
- Prefers to stay with adults.

Other signs may be that the child:

- Does not want to walk to and from the Academy
- Does not want to use public transport or the Academy bus.
- Insists that they are driven to and from the Academy.
- Changes their normal routine. ☑ Begins to truant for no apparent reason.
- Becomes withdrawn or displays a sudden lack of confidence.
- Is reticent to speak to other peers or teachers.
- Attempts or threatens to commit suicide
- Runs away from home.
- Is upset at night and has displayed a disruptive sleep pattern linked with increased nightmares.
- Is continuously complaining of feeling unwell in the morning and at school.
- Displays a downturn in their academic standards.
- Possessions and clothes torn or damaged or go missing.
- Asks for money or steals money (to pay bully).
- Loses dinner money on a regular basis.
- Has a sudden increase in bruises or cuts which the pupil finds difficult or are unwilling to explain.
- Comes home hungry (money or lunch has been stolen).
- Stops eating.
- Suddenly displays unusual aggressive and disruptive behaviour.
- Starts to bully other peers or family siblings.
- Is reticent or unwilling to talk about what is going wrong.

If you suspect a child or young person is being bullied share your concerns with the pupil's Class Teacher / Learning Manager in the first instance, Learning Managers or SLT. Monitor the health and behaviour of the child carefully and be prepared to promptly deal with any deterioration. If any deterioration is noted, agree with the child's Tutor/Class Teacher and other colleagues the most appropriate support, which may involve parents/carers.

Any pupil who has knowledge of an incident of bullying must tell someone about it. This could be:

- A member of staff.
- Academy Family or Parent Liaison Officer.
- The people who the pupil lives with.
- A friend.
- A member of the Pupil Council/Junior Leadership Team.
- A peer mentor.

Bullying must never be kept a secret.

Dealing with bullying

All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable.

In dealing with bullying at the Academy, Academy staff will:

- Not ignore it.
- Not make premature assumptions.
- Listen to all accounts of the incidents.
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages pupils to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves. Restorative Justice approaches will be used where appropriate by trained staff.
- Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed.
- Ensure that all relevant personnel within school (Tutor/Class Teacher/ pastoral support team/pastoral leadership team) have been informed.
- Record the incident promptly on the appropriate proforma, as soon as practically possible after the incident, ideally within the day.
- Incidents will be reviewed to identify pupils, type, style and location of bullying. This will enable the Academy to identify patterns and to develop appropriate action plans.
- Action will be implemented as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
- Liaison with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Pastoral Leadership team must be made to ensure there is targeted support to address the underlying issues

Procedure to support a pupil who has been bullied

- Talk to the child away from other children, but with other staff close by.
- Listen to the child's account of the incident.
- Reassure the child that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do.
- Make it clear to the child that she/he is not to blame for what has happened.
- Ideally, allow the child to write a statement or make a note of what they have said.
- Explain that the child should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately.

Ask the child or young person:

1. What happened?
2. Whether or not this was the first incident, if not how many other incidents have there been.
3. Who was involved?
4. Where it happened.
5. Who saw what happened (Staff as well as children).

6. What the child has already done about it.
7. Depending on the severity of the incident, whether parents/carers ought to be contacted

Ideally, the child should be given the time and appropriate accommodation to make a written statement which is jointly checked by the pupil and member of staff and where necessary amended to ensure clarity. This information must be passed on as soon as possible to the pupil's tutor, or in their absence, the pastoral support team / pastoral leadership team. It is usual to remove the accused bully and any witnesses from formal learning as soon as possible, to get them to write statements on their own about the incident.

Members of staff who witnessed the incident should be asked to write the relevant details down as soon as possible and give these to the staff investigating.

The victim should be consulted regarding their return to learning activity and where possible their views heeded.

Supporting children

Children who have been bullied

It is likely that the Class Teacher / Learning Manager will work with these children, but it is essential that the child is fully supported during this traumatic time through contacts with staff and with other children. Ultimately, the child or young person must make the decision who they would like to speak to. Usual choices are: child's Tutor/Class Teacher/pastoral support team/pastoral leadership team or Academy Nurse/Counsellor.

The child's own peers could have an important role in acting as counsellors or mediators. This will be developed over time.

Children who have bullied

It is also important for the bully to receive counselling, to prevent further incidents. Often, bullies themselves have been victims. Usually a member of the pastoral team will carry out this role. Procedures and practices which use Restorative Justice will be used wherever possible to resolve conflicts.

Talk to the child about how things are going, their progress and friends.

1. Ask why they acted as they did.
2. Explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy.
3. Discuss with the child how to join in with others without bullying.
4. Give the child lots of praise and encouragement for the times when she/he is being kind and considerate to others.
5. Inform and involve parents/carers when appropriate.
6. If appropriate, there could be a meeting between the victim and the bully to enable the bully to apologise / explain why, etc

Reporting and recording incidents

Bearing in mind the seriousness of these incidents it is imperative that all incidents are:

- Promptly dealt with
- Reported promptly (to the pupil's Tutor/Class Teacher in the first instance and if unavailable, the Learning Managers or other Senior Leader) well before the end of the day
- Recorded using the proforma available

- Communicated to the child's Tutor/Class Teacher at the earliest possible opportunity.

Bullying by text message, mobile phones and social media

- Children will be warned about the need for care when giving out their mobile phone number
- A record should be kept of the date and time of any offensive messages
- Children should be encouraged to show the messages to their parent/carer. If occurring within school then this should be reported to the pupil's Tutor/Class Teacher in the first instance and if unavailable, the Learning Managers or other Senior Leader
- Children who report bullying by text message will be taken seriously
- The child's family may need to contact the police
- If such bullying is carried out on a persistent basis or if there is threat of violence, it should be treated as any other serious bullying incident ☒ Malicious e-mails should be dealt with in the same manner
- Children who take photographs on their phones with malicious intent should be dealt with in the same manner

The Academy will follow the DfE guidance on safe internet use and ensure all children are taught how to protect themselves when using the internet.

Working with Parents and carers

We recognise that parents and carers have a key role to play supporting victims and counselling instigators. The Academy will work closely with parents and carers to deal with bullying

Bullying in the Academy is everyone's problem. All staff, children and parents/carers should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the Academy a happier place for everyone.

Through all Academy communications: Website, newsletters, displays and in meetings, the Academy will ensure that parents/carers are aware of our AntiBullying Policy.

Parents/carers and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.

The Academy will encourage parents/carers who suspect that a child is bullying or being bullied to immediately contact the Academy and make an appointment to see the pupil's Tutor/Class Teacher or in their absence, the Learning Manager or a member of Senior Management as soon as possible.

Parents/carers will be informed of incidents and will be involved in discussions. The Academy will discuss with parents/carers how they can work together to stop the bullying.

Reinforcement of the Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy will be reinforced effectively across the Academy via the following:

1. The Code of Conduct will be displayed on the wall of every class room to encourage positive behaviour.
2. Assemblies will focus on issues associated with bullying and in response to incidents where appropriate

3. Reference to Anti-Bullying will be included in Induction Evenings.
4. Prospective year 7 pupils will participate in Anti-bullying education as part of their familiarisation programme.
5. As part of our primary schools' transition programme, an anti-bullying element will be included to re-assure and support pupils. Pupils who primary school colleagues identify as being particularly at risk will be given additional support.

Dealing with Persistent Bullying

If counselling and other preventative measures, such as peer support strategies do not succeed, persistent bullying will be dealt with under the Academy's discipline policy. The bully may for example:

1. Be removed from the group.
2. Be put in detention.
3. Be banned from an Academy trip or other events where these are not an essential part of the curriculum.
4. Be placed in the Academy's consequence room.

In the most serious cases, exclusion or a managed move to a partner Academy may be considered if the bullying:

- Involves serious actual or threatened violence against another child.
- Amounts to persistent and defiant misbehaviour.

Putting Policy into Practice

The Academy will at the earliest opportunity ensure that the following practices are established to either prevent bullying or deal effectively with bullying incidents:

- Carry out a confidential annual bullying survey to raise pupils' awareness
- Actively promote Anti-Bullying campaigns delivered through assemblies and supported in PSHE and tutor time
- Improve communication with parents and carers, to ensure that they are well-informed of all reported incidents involving their son or daughter
- Apply consistent and firm sanctions to all aspects of bullying. Children who persistently bully others will be supported through an increasingly robust series of measures to help them resolve their problems