

Anti-bullying Policy
Implementation: November 2008
Review: November 2009



1 Introduction

- 1.1 We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our Academy, whether it is in the Academy or on off-site activities. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* Academy. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.
- 1.2 All members of the Academy Council, staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and what the Academy's procedures are for responding to bullying.
- 1.3 As an Academy we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that we do not tolerate bullying and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

2 What Is Bullying?

- 2.1 Bullying is the use of deliberate aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying is persistent and results in pain and distress to the effected person.
- 2.2 Bullying can be:
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
 - Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
 - Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
 - Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
 - Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
 - Special Educational Needs – because of learning or physical disabilities
 - Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.
 - Cyber - all areas of internet use, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse
 - Mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

3 Why is it important to respond to bullying?

- 3.1 Bullying hurts. No one deserves to suffer from bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students and staff who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
- 3.2 We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

4 Signs and Symptoms

- 4.1 A Student may indicate by signs, words or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the student this may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a Student:
- Is frightened of walking to or from school

- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- Insists on being driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or unexpectedly go missing
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 Academy Council

The nominated Councillor will liaise with the Chair, the Principal and a designated teacher over all anti-bullying strategies and individual cases where appropriate.

The Academy Council will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies on the initiative of the nominated Councillor, and in any case will discuss the Principal's annual report on the working of this policy.

5.2 The Principal

The Principal has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students.

The Principal will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them;
- determine the strategies and procedures;

- discuss development of the strategies with the Academy Leadership Team;
- ensure appropriate training is available;
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students; and
- report annually to the Academy Council

5.3 Deputy Principal (Pastoral) will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both those being bullied and the bullies;
- keep the Principal and designated teacher informed of incidents
- arrange relevant staff training;
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems; and
- make a termly report to the Principal.

5.4 Heads of Year (or Heads of Department) will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the Academy's positive strategies are put into practice; and
- know the Principal's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

5.5 Learning Guides/Mentors will:

- be responsible for liaising with Head of Year/Department over all incidents involving students in their form;
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution; and
- take part in the anti-bullying programme in the PSHE and Citizenship course.

5.6 All Staff will:

- know the policy and procedures;
- be observant and to ask students what is happening to them;
- deal with incidents according to the policy;
- never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity; and
- participate in the PSHE and Citizenship course.

6 Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

- 6.1 The Academy will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through a PSHE and Citizenship programme, Academy assemblies, the Student Council, use of tutorial time and in the national curriculum programmes of study as appropriate.
- 6.2 The Deputy Principal (Pastoral) is responsible for initiating and developing with appropriate colleagues an anti-bullying programme as part of the PSHE and Citizenship course; and Heads of Department/subject heads are responsible for introducing anti-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate.

- 6.3 Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the school.

Anti-bullying Procedures

7 Parents

- 7.1 If parents suspect their child is being bullied they should contact the Learning Guide/mentor. Parents should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying.
- 7.2 Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves will inevitably make the matter worse.
- 7.3 Parents should encourage their child to talk to their Learning Guide/mentor or other member of staff in the first instance.

8 Students

- 8.1 If a student thinks they are being bullied they must tell an adult, parent, Learning Guide/mentor or other member of staff and be prepared to explain what form the bullying is taking and how it affects them
- 8.2 Students who witness bullying must tell an adult, parent, Learning Guide/mentor or other member of staff.

9 Staff

- 9.1 If bullying is reported to a member of staff they will record the details as presented to them and pass these on to the affected student's Learning Guide/mentor.
- 9.2 Following a reported incident staff will investigate using the following strategies, with the support of other members of staff as appropriate:
- Reflection – What has happened? Could it have been different?
 - Resolution – How can we try to ensure this doesn't happen again?
 - Reconciliation – How we put things right between those involved?
- 9.3 In cases of serious bullying, staff will record the incidents.
- 9.4 In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- 9.5 If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- 9.6 Time out/ reflection time may be used if deemed appropriate. The level of time out will be determined by the success of the 3Rs process (7.2) and at the discretion of the member of staff involved.

10 Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with Learning Guide/Year Leader or member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the student
- Offering continuous support with a designated member of staff
- Restoring self-esteem and self-confidence
- Referral to a Peer Mentor if appropriate
- Referral to a counsellor
- Offering continuous support and advice to parents
- Being informed about the outcome of the investigation in to their concerns

11 Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the student
- Referral to a counsellor
- Attend a mediation (restorative justice) meeting with the effected student to resolve issues and prevent recurrence

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

12 Sanctions

Students who have bullied will be punished appropriately according to their behaviour, in accordance with the Academy's 'Behaviour for Learning' policy. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression, a student may be permanently excluded.

13 Complaints

If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the nature or swiftness of a response made by the Academy following a reported incident of bullying, he/she may wish to make a complaint. The complaints procedure for a case of bullying follows the guidance of the Academy's Complaints Policy. The underlying principle of the policy is that any concerns raised should be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. If however the informal procedures are unsuccessful and the complainant wishes to take the matter further, formal measures will have to be taken.

14 Equal Opportunities

In implementing this policy all members of staff must take into account the Academy's Equal Opportunities policy. Staff must ensure that no student involved in any incident of bullying, is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

15 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 5.1 The Oasis Community Learning Board will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.