Academy Preventing Bullying policy

The Burgess Hill Academy

This policy was adopted on 18th May 2021
This policy is due for review on July 2023

1. Introduction

1.1 Bullying hurts and no-one deserves to be bullied. In our academy we recognise that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devasting effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to learning and have serious consequences on mental health. Bullying which takes place at school can have a lasting effect on a young person's life into adulthood. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

1.2 We aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly climate for learning for all our students to allow them to improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect, to feel welcome, secure and happy. We also aim to produce an inclusive environment for all students which openly discusses differences between people and celebrates diversity.

1.3 We expect students to act safely and feel safe in the academy, including that they understand the issues relating to bullying and that they feel confident to seek support from the academy should they feel unsafe. We also want parents to feel confident that their children are safe and cared for in the academy and incidents when they do arise are dealt with promptly and well.

1.4 The academy has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying and all incidents will be treated seriously. When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for:
- Promoting the understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour and the effects that this can have;
- Identifying clear procedures for the reporting and investigation of incidents;
- Ensuring consistent and appropriate sanctions are in place for those who bully;
- Ensuring support mechanisms are in place for children who are bullied and for those who bully;
- Academy monitoring of all incidents to identify both wider trends and potential safeguarding issues for individuals;
- Training and support of staff in identifying bullying behaviour and supporting children who are bullied and those who bully.

2.2 By creating this framework our objective is to tackle and prevent bullying.

3. Definitions

3.1 The language used around bullying can be very emotive and can 'label' children, suggesting permanence. Instead of 'victim' say person (child) who is being bullied, and instead of 'bully' say person (child) who is using bullying behaviours/doing the bullying. In this way it is the behaviours and roles that are being labelled, not the children.

3.2 Friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting and unpleasant but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

3.3 Friendship problems may be an occasional incident where both pupils disagree and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental, where both children make an effort to resolve the problem. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour.

3.4 Bullying involves dominance of one student by another, or a group of others, is premeditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour. It is behaviour which is intended to hurt, threaten or otherwise intimidate another person and can result in pain and distress to the victim in a physical or mental form.

3.5 Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful;
- Repeated, often over a period of time;
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

3.6 It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, and taking another's belongings;
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of rumours in any form
- Cyber – name calling, insulting others, spreading rumours or images.
- Psychological bullying - defined as any kind of intentional and purposeful mental abuse.

3.7 Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which the victim may belong. Within school we will pay particular attention to:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying;
- Sexual and gender-based bullying;
- The use of homophobic language including biphobic and transphobic references, including deadnaming;
- Bullying of students who have special educational needs or disabilities.

3.8 Students may become involved in bullying because they:

- want to dominate others and improve their social status
- have low self-esteem
- have a lack of remorse or fail to recognise their behaviour as a problem
- feel angry or frustrated
- struggle socially
- have been the victim of bullying themselves

4.   Preventing bullying

4.1   Strategies employed with our students

- Regular promotion of anti-bullying in assemblies.
- Use of CCTV within the school grounds to help with the prevention of bullying.
- A duty rota for staff so they patrol key areas before school, break, lunchtime and after school
- Annual questionnaires to research student views on how safe they feel in school
- Anti-bullying training for the Pastoral Leaders
- PSHC lessons on anti-bullying
- One to one counselling or wellbeing mentor to support students.
- Strong teacher-student relationships so students feel comfortable in reporting any issues
- Information talks from the School Police Liaison Officer CEOP training for staff (Child exploitation online protection)

4.2   Cyberbullying

The ever increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school.

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:
- hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice / hate messages
- Impersonating someone on line
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

4.2.1   We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our online safety policy) and encourage good online behaviour.

4.3   Strategies employed with our staff

All staff employed in the school have annual safeguarding training and updates and preventing bullying issues are highlighted during this training. The term staff includes teachers and support staff. We all have a duty to implement the school policy on preventing bullying. Every complaint of bullying must be taken seriously.

4.4   Strategies employed with our parents

4.4.1   Parents have a responsibility to support the academy's Preventing Bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the academy community.

As an academy we work with our parents/carers to prevent bullying by providing advice and guidance on what to look out for as signs and symptoms of bullying. These could be:

- being frightened of walking to or from the academy
- change their usual routine
- beg to be driven to the Academy
- being unwilling to go to the Academy

- becoming anxious and withdrawn
- attempted or threatened suicide
- crying themselves to sleep at night/nightmares
- feeling ill in the mornings
- truanting
- beginning to do poorly at school
- coming home with clothes/books torn
- having possessions 'go missing'
- asking for money or stealing money
- unexplained cuts/bruises
- coming home hungry (money/lunch has been stolen)
- becoming withdrawn, lacking in confidence
- becoming aggressive and unreasonable
- bullying other children or siblings
- giving improbable excuses for any of the above

We provide useful information for parents on preventing bullying, safe use of the internet and cyberbullying via information sent home and on our website.

5. Reporting bullying incidents
Advice for students:
- You have a right to feel comfortable and safe at school, as well as on your journey to and from school. If you are being bullied, YOU MUST TELL.
- Who should you tell? Your tutor, your Pastoral Lead or another member of staff with whom you feel comfortable to speak to - you choose.
- What should you do if you are frightened to tell a teacher? Tell a friend; tell your parents. They can tell your pastoral lead.
- What should you do if the bully or bullies threaten they will hurt you more if you tell? Still tell - AND tell your Pastoral Lead about these threats.

Advice for parents:
The school is committed to working in partnership with parents to resolve bullying issues quickly and decisively. The following guidelines offer support and advice to parents.
- If your son or daughter tells you they are being bullied, keep calm. Getting angry and threatening to visit the school or the parent of the other student will terrify them further.
- Praise them for telling you and reassure them that they have done the right thing in letting you know what is happening.
- Try to find out the facts - what exactly has happened?

What bullying is - Bullying:
- ... goes on for a while and happens regularly
- ... Is deliberate. the other person wants to hurt, humiliate or harm the target
- ... Involves someone (or several people) who are stronger then the person being bullied
- All three things have to happen together to be called bullying.

Bullying is not:
- a one off fight or argument
- a friend sometimes being nasty
- an argument with a friend

6. Investigating bullying incidents

6.1 The use of the internet (Online bullying) and mobile phones to bully is a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence. In the United Kingdom there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment or threatening and menacing communications which would apply to students of secondary school age.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 and the Department for Education (2018) document titled 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation.' gives teachers stronger powers to tackle online bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate

images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. The academy will also take into account their responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 to consider any SEN of the child/ren using the bullying behaviours.

Where the member of staff conducting the search finds an electronic device they may examine the device for inappropriate content if they think there is a good reason to do so. Following an examination, if the member of staff decides to return the device to the owner, or to retain or dispose of it. They may erase any content if they think there is a good reason to do so.

When an incident of bullying is reported we:
- Make it easy for students to report bullying, by being clear that students can report bullying to any member of staff, without fear of further bullying or discrimination. In the first instance students might feel most comfortable reporting bullying to their tutor or Pastoral Lead.

- Take any reported bullying seriously and investigate it thoroughly

- Implement sanctions for any student found to have bullied another student. This might include loss of privileges, detention, internal exclusion, external exclusion or permanent exclusion, depending on the nature, severity and context of the bullying.

- Work with perpetrators using a restorative justice approach to help them to take responsibility for their actions, to repair the harm done and to ensure that there is no repetition.

- Work closely with the parents/carers of the target and perpetrator, and inform them of the outcome of the investigation

- Support the victims of bullying, by for example, making sure that there is an adult who is their first point of contact to express any on-going concerns.

- Schedule a review between the Pastoral Lead and student following the resolution of a bullying incident. The review will focus on the wellbeing of the student.

- Record any instances of bullying on Class Charts.

7.   Responding to a bullying incident

7.1   Supporting the student who has been bullied
Students will be reassured that we take all reports of bullying seriously and that the academy will:

- Reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable and that we expect bullying to stop
- Assure them that it was right to report the incident
- Affirm that it is right for students to let us know when they are being bullied
- Encourage them to talk about how they feel
- Ensure that they feel safe
- Discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe
- Engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved
- Seek to provide the opportunity for restoration and resolution

7.2   Supporting the student using the bullying behaviours

At The Burgess Hill Academy, we will support the student to change their behaviour by working with them to:

- Take responsibility – Bullying is a choice. It is not caused by something the victim said or did, and people who bully others need to learn to take ownership of these choices.
- Develop empathy – 'how would they feel in a similar situation?'

- Manage their anger - Many teens who bully others struggle with anger management. We will help the person engaged in bullying to learn to recognise their anger triggers and develop healthy solutions for dealing with that anger
- Improve their self-esteem - Some students who engage in bullying target others because they lack self-esteem. To combat self-esteem issues, we will work with the person bullying to enhance their strengths and improve their weaknesses.
- Develop respect for others - When someone who bullies others begins to recognise that everyone deserves respect, they are less likely to engage in bullying.
- Seek to provide the opportunity for restoration and resolution with the victim

7.3 Sanctions

Where necessary, we will invoke the full range of sanctions:

- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Withholding participation in school events that are not an essential part of the curriculum.
- Behaviour contracts which sets the student clear targets around anti-social behaviour.
- Involve the support of the school police liaison officer
- It may also include fixed term and permanent exclusion from school.

8. Bullying outside of academy premises

8.1 Principals have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the academy premises. This can relate to any bullying incident occurring anywhere off the academy premises such as on public transport or on the way to or from the academy.

8.2 The bullying may be done by students from our own Academy, by students from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a student or parent tells us of bullying outside of the Academy premises we will, as appropriate:
- Talk to students about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of the Academy;
- Talk to the Principal of another school whose students are bullying;
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses;
- Use community links to set up restorative meetings;
- Talk to the police and community team to gain external help and advice.

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 The Local Board have defined responsibilities for the monitoring of pupil/student welfare and will receive regular reports on racist and homophobic incidents through the termly Principals report.

9.2 All bullying incidents are recorded for students on Class Charts and this data is monitored on a class/year group/academy-wide basis to identify areas for action and trends. The aim is to have a clear picture of bullying incidents through effective record keeping.

We will work with students to prevent future bullying incidents by:

- Advising students responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that bullying stops; and ensure that those involved know that we have done so
- Following up after incidents to check that the bullying is not repeated. We will do this within two weeks, and again within the following half term. The pastoral lead will be there for the student to report to at any point whist the school is open.
- Asking students to report immediately any further incidents to us.

10. Legislation and associated policies

10.1 Legislation

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014
- Children Act 1989

10.2 This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans including:

- Trust ICT Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
- Staff Code of conduct
- Academy Behaviour policy
- Academy Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Academy online safety policy
- Curriculum policies, such as: Computing, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- Trust Data Protection policy
- Trust Photography and image sharing policy
- Trust Social media policy
- Trust Complaints policy

11. Further sources of information

11.1 The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including the social, mental or emotional affects caused by bullying.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

The ABA has also put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools and young people from the anti-bullying sector which can be accessed here.

The Diana Award: Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

Cyber-bullying and online safety
ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves. Website specifially includes new cyberbullying guidance and a practical PSHE toolkit for schools.

Digizen: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

Internet Matters: provides help to keep children safe in the digital world.

Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has produced a range of resources for schools, colleges and parents about how to keep children safe online, this includes advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of 'sexting.'

LGBT

Barnardos: through its LGBTQ Hub, offers guidance to young people, parents and teachers on how to support LGBT students and tackle LGBT prejudice-based bullying

EACH: (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia): provides a national freephone Actionline for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.

Metro Charity: an equality and diversity charity, providing health, community and youth services across London, the South East, national and international projects. Metro works with anyone experiencing issues related to gender, sexuality, diversity or identity

Proud Trust: helps young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities through youth groups, peer support, delivering of training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.

Schools Out: Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.

Stonewall: An LGB equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGB bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

SEND

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

Changing Faces: Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.

Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources: Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.

Information, Advice and Support Service Network: Every Local area has an information, advice and support service, providing information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents.

Mental health

MindEd: Provides a free online training tool for adults that is also available to schools. It can be used to help school staff learn more about children and young peoples mental health problems. It provides simple, clear guidance on mental health and includes information on identifying, understanding and supporting children who are bullied.

PSHE Association – guidance and lesson plans on improving the teaching of mental health issues

Race, religion and nationality

Anne Frank Trust: Runs a schools project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.

Educate Against Hate: provides teachers, parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.

Show Racism the Red Card: Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.

Kick It Out: Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.

Tell MAMA: Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA) allows people from across England to report any form of Anti-Muslim abuse, MAMA can also refer victims for support through partner agencies.

Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group: Independent members of this group are representatives from the Muslim community and will assist and advice on all relevant issues.

Please note that internal servers may block access to some of these sites. Schools wishing to access these materials may need to adjust their settings

Sexual harrassment and sexual bullying

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): A Guide for Schools. This guide from the End Violence Against Women Coalition sets out the different forms of abuse to support education staff to understand violence and abuse of girls, warning signs to look for, and how to get your whole school working towards preventing abuse.

Disrespect No Body: a Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is. This website includes teaching materials to be used in the classroom.

Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying.