

POLICY DOCUMENTATION
GREAT SCHOOLS ARE CONSISTENT SCHOOLS



POLICY **Anti-Bullying**
RESPONSIBILITY Vice Principal
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Anti-Bullying Policy

PRINCIPLES

The Academy is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe establishment for all of our scholars so they can learn in a positive and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in the Academy. If bullying does occur, all scholars should be able to inform staff and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

AIMS

- To prevent the occurrence of bullying.
- To create a positive and safe learning environment.
- To develop individuals' self-esteem and respect for others.
- To have a complete and consistent method for dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To resolve bullying by means of reconciliation, support, or sanctions (this is directly linked to our Behaviour for Learning Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy).
- To ensure all members of the Academy community share an understanding of what is defined as bullying.
- To ensure all staff share a consistency of response.
- To ensure staff and scholars recognise the benefit of taking a stand against bullying.
- To ensure Governors, parents/carers and other members of the local community are aware of the Academy's policy on bullying.
- To ensure a high level of awareness of the Anti-Bullying Policy and its aims is maintained through INSET (in-service training), Personal Development Studies, and the wider curriculum.

What is bullying?

Bullying is a "wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim".

Bullying can be:

Physical harm	Pushing, kicking, punching, pinching, any form of violence
Verbal abuse	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
Cyber bullying	Sending harmful or cruel text or images using any area of the internet or mobile phones
Emotional abuse	Tormenting, making fun of someone, humiliation, isolation by groups of scholars from groups or activities, destroying or spoiling work, dirty looks, spreading rumours, demanding money
Homophobic abuse	Unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, particularly related to sexuality
Sexual abuse	Unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, particularly of an inappropriate sexual nature
Racist abuse	Racial taunts or 'jokes', 'graffiti', gestures, making fun of customs, music, accents. Refusing to work with someone of a different cultural background

Bullying is often a series of apparently minor incidents. Tackling these minor incidents will reduce the occurrence of more major or persistent bullying.

Minor incidents include:

- name calling
- looks
- 'borrowing' equipment
- one scholar intimidating another in order to copy homework
- spoiling another scholar's work
- pushing in at the dinner queue
- groups of scholars isolating another by not letting him or her join in
- forcing scholars to give up their place at a computer

Cyber bullying

The Academy has a duty to safeguard its scholars from all forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. Although cyber bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are laws that can apply in terms of harassing or threatening behaviour.

- Cyber bullying can take place at any time that someone logs on or picks up a phone, and often invades people's personal time and space.
- Cyber bullying can involve a large number of people e.g. social networking sites. Images or text messages can be passed quickly from one person to another or via shared websites. This makes it hard to control.
- Cyber bullying can involve a whole range of people who may not normally engage in face to face bullying but feel that bullying through the internet gives them a certain amount of anonymity.
- Cyber bullying can also spiral from a non-bullying action e.g. sending a text to one individual that is then passed on to others.
- Many cyber bullying incidents leave an evidence trail, e.g. text messages, print screens, which can all be used as evidence.

Signs and symptoms

There are a number of possible signs and behaviours which might indicate a scholar is being

bullied: being frightened of journeying to and from school

- unwillingness to come to the Academy
- withdrawn, isolated behaviour
- take an unusual route to school
- becomes easily distressed and/or stops eating
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- complaining about missing possessions
- begins to truant
- feels ill in the morning
- attempt to self-harm
- has difficulty sleeping

- has unexplained scratches, bruises and cuts
- attempt to gain money for unusual requests (stealing is possible)
- school work begins to deteriorate
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- bullying other scholars
- refusal to talk about the problem
- damaged or incomplete work
- refusing to work in a group or with another scholar

Whatever the intensity of the bullying, staff should intervene. All staff should be vigilant at all times. Every incident, however minor it may seem, is crucial for the scholar involved. Non-intervention condones the bullying.

PRACTICE

- Friendships, compromise and respect will be explicitly taught through Personal Development Studies.
- Scholars will be monitored carefully for signs of bullying especially by their advisor.
- Scholars will always be placed in seating plans in lessons and during family dining to ensure that no one scholar feels isolated.
- Diversity will be explored and celebrated during assemblies led by Senior Leaders.
- All staff must be responsive to allegations of bullying.
- It is essential that scholars have the confidence that all allegations are taken seriously and acted upon. The incident will always be investigated and recorded.
- The priority is to give protection and support to the victim.
- Staff must make it clear that the bully's behaviour is totally unacceptable – it is important that disapproval is explained in a calm and rational way – avoid bullying the bully.
- Investigations will be made to ascertain the reasons for the bully's behaviour and, if possible, action taken to alter the behaviour of the bully or bullies.
- The victims of bullying should receive support and help to develop strategies for dealing with bullying. In particular, attempts need to be made to rebuild the self-esteem of victims of bullying.
- An incident of bullying must be reported to Advisors, to inform both the bully's and victim's Advisors and also be recorded on SIMS.
- Victims of bullying may end up believing that they deserve to be bullied – they feel powerless and vulnerable – self-esteem can be badly damaged and so it is essential that self-confidence is re-established through appropriate follow-up work, including counselling (or peer mediation for minor friendship problems where appropriate).
- The bully will be supported in recognising their unsociable behaviour and offering support to modify that behaviour.
- Sanctions will be decided dependent on the individual incidents and circumstances.
- Parents/carers will always be informed of the incident and the outcome.
- After an incident, there must be "follow-up" to ensure that the problem does not re-surface. Experience suggests that bullying will not take place again if they know that there will be follow-up. This should take place some 2 weeks after the initial incident and then perhaps some further follow-up a term later.
- In extreme cases the police will be informed.

Sanctions

Depending on the severity of the bullying a range of sanctions are available.

- The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise however other consequences may also take place. If possible, the scholars will be reconciled.
- Removal from class.
- Internal exclusion.
- Withholding participation in school teams, events or trips.
- In serious cases, fixed term or even permanent exclusion will be considered.
- Police involvement.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Serious bullying incidents outside the classroom

Appropriate intervention is vital and the victims must be given support and protection. Names or recognisable features of those involved should be obtained and the victim should be allowed to leave or be taken away from the scene – it may be appropriate to take them to the medical room for First Aid. If necessary, help should be obtained from Senior Staff. Information should be recorded immediately following the Academy behavioural system. Should the bullying incident be severe, it may be helpful to seek the advice and support of the Police Liaison Officer – this must be done through the Vice Principal.

Serious bullying incidents in a classroom

If a serious bullying incident occurs in a classroom, when a teacher needs assistance, initially Heads of Faculty should be used. Sensitivity towards the victim must be exercised in order that he or she is not further embarrassed in front of his or her peers. Similarly, the bully should not be given the opportunity to become a 'hero'.

Safe havens

Scholars must be aware of places to which they can go during non-teaching time where they feel safe. Scholars can go to the Vice Principal or School office, the iBase / IN base or the medical room if they need sanctuary. They should be aware of whom they can contact for support at any time during the day. This can be any member of staff or a member of the peer mentoring team.

Parental involvement

Following any incident, parents of both bullies and victims should be made aware of the situation and how their actions could help. Advisors should involve parents/carers at an early stage whenever it appears that there may be a problem.

Academy anti-bullying strategy

Bullying at the Academy will not be tolerated and this message will be reinforced regularly. It is important that tackling bullying is seen as an on-going process which involves all members of the Academy community.

The message will be delivered through:

- year group assemblies from the Vice Principal.
- through the PSHE/PDS scheme of work, posters and advice leaflets
- every Advisor and classroom teacher
- scholars should be constantly made aware that we, as a school, will not tolerate bullying. They must constantly be told that they should not suffer and that any teacher or supervisor is prepared to help. They should always be encouraged to talk to someone.

- duty staff and lunchtime supervisors should be particularly vigilant when patrolling the school and playgrounds
- subject teachers will sometimes be able to incorporate an “anti-bully” message in their lessons, e.g. in literature, drama, discussions of current affairs etc.
- ‘confidential listening’ area in the IN Department
- positive relationship support programmes in place, e.g. positive leadership skills, anger management, assertiveness etc
- cyber bullying special assemblies and lessons – scholars to understand the risks of social networking sites and ways to report cyber bullying
- INSET for all staff

It is particularly important for scholars to be encouraged to speak to a member of staff if they experience or know of incidents of bullying taking place.

Help Organisations:

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline	0845 1 205 204
Childline	0800 1111
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk