



# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Date of Issue: April 2019**

## **Rationale**

This policy and procedure shall apply to all employees and volunteers of St George's Academy.

This policy and procedure outlines the manner in which instances of bullying behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with DfE guidance, July 2017 (Preventing and Tackling Bullying) and the Equality Act 1 (Public Sector Equality Duty)

Part 1 Keeping Children Safe in Education/Working together to safeguard children

## **Responsibility and Implementation**

It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to this policy and wherever possible to resolve issues swiftly and effectively. The implementation of this policy on an operational level is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **Introduction**

The Equality Act 2011 requires all academies to have due regard of the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Academy will endeavour to provide inspirational, happy and comfortable environments, which positively encourage students to want to come and learn.

Our values are crucial: especially respect and tolerance. Everyone, students and staff, has a right to maintain their dignity and their values. Everyone is expected to acknowledge, understand and respect every other individual.

## **Objectives**

- To provide a caring and supportive environment for all students.
- To enable all students to develop the personal skills necessary to deal with bullying if they encounter it.
- To enable students to recognise actions that may lead to bullying and therefore prevent bullying behaviour.
- To encourage students to take appropriate action if they see bullying behaviour.
- To promote positive strategies to combat bullying.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of policies and procedures related to bullying behaviour.
- Adopt a definition of bullying that is agreed across the Academy (see Appendix A).
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- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur.
- Raise awareness of bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect.
- Provide support for all members of the school community who may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying.
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexual orientation and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds.

### **Our School Community**

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensures that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that students feel safe to learn; and that students abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations, when appropriate.

### **Forms of bullying covered by this Policy**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy and procedure covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to special educational needs.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation.
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.
- Cyber bullying.

### **Safeguarding of children who have been bullied**

If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, **significant harm** because of bullying, the school will consult and refer such instances immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) in that school.

Even when safeguarding is not an issue, the school DSO may consult and work with external agencies to support students who are being bullied, or involved in bullying behaviour.

### **Harassment**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassment or threatening behaviour or communications could be criminal offences under the following Acts:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988

- The Communications Act 2003
- The Public Order Act 1986

If the school DSO feels that an offence may have been committed, they may seek assistance from the Police.

For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety; or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender. (See guidance on cyber-bullying and e-safety in Appendix B.)

### **Bullying Outside of School Premises**

The school has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives schools the authority to regulate students' conduct when they are not on The Acorn Free School premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff.

This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops or in a town or village centre.

When bullying outside the school is reported to staff, it will be investigated and acted on. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police or Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator in the local authority of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the Police must be informed.

### **Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying**

Clearly the best way to deal with bullying is to prevent it occurring. The Acorn Free School actively seeks to prevent bullying.

We will:

- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying, including through the curriculum, through displays and through peer support
- Train all staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying.
- Actively create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable children and young people.

### **Involvement of Students**

We will:

- Regularly canvas students' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in school.

- Publicise the details of helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied.
- Work with students who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have.

### **Liaison with Parents and Carers**

We will:

- Ensure that parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Ensure parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.
- Ensure parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.

### **Responsibilities**

This policy and procedure only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.

It is the responsibility of:

- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- Governors, the Principal, Senior Managers, teaching and support staff to be aware of this policy and procedure and implement it accordingly.
- The Principal to communicate the Policy and Procedure to the school community.
- Students to abide by the Policy and Procedure.

### **Students who have been bullied may be supported by:**

- Being provided with an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Being reassured about the circumstances of their situation.
- Being monitored by the appropriate staff to provide a programme of support to restore self-esteem and confidence.
- Reporting to Children's Services when a child may be suffering or likely to suffer harm.
- Involving other external agencies to support when appropriate.

### **Students who have bullied others may be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened and how to resolve the situation.
- Discovering why the students became involved.
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.
- Informing parents, carers or guardians to help change the attitude of the student.
- The implementation of a programme that aims to foster positive interpersonal skills. This may involve work with specialist outside agencies.

### **The following disciplinary steps may be taken:**

- Official warnings to cease offending.
- Removal from lessons.
- Isolation.

- Fixed-term exclusion.
- Major fixed-term exclusion.
- Closure of Place

**Records**

Careful records must be kept of all reported incidents; the advice and support given and the response of the bully and the bullied person.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair, Governing Body

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher

### DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

It can take the form of physical or verbal harassment and involves an imbalance of power (a group of children can gang up on a victim or someone who is physically bigger or more aggressive can intimidate someone else, for instance).

Bullying behaviour can include name-calling, teasing, insulting someone (particularly about their weight or height, race, sexual orientation, religion or other personal traits), pushing, hitting, or excluding someone.

Relationships between young people can and do break down from time to time. To minimise the number of times these differences lead to bullying requires each individual to respect others.

Bullying can be by a single person or by a group.

Bullying usually, but not exclusively, has three common elements:

- It is deliberately hurtful.
- It is repeated, often over a long period of time.
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

## CYBER-BULLYING – GUIDANCE

The Acorn Free School has a duty of care to all students and staff to ensure they are safe to work, learn and develop unimpeded by fear.

Where bullying is found to have taken place by any means, whether on-site or off-site, including cyber-bullying, robust action shall be taken to protect the well-being of students and staff. We reserve the right to contact the police or CEOP where appropriate.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member staff who has been formally authorised by the Principal, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

In all our communications, whether written, spoken, texted, emailed or published on websites, we must treat other people with respect. Even if we disagree with another person, fall out with them, or become angry with them, we should state our case clearly and respectfully.

- If you feel you are being bullied by mail, text or online, do talk to someone you trust.
- Never send any bullying or threatening messages. Anything you write and send could be read by an adult.
- Serious bullying should be reported to a member of staff: in some cases the school will inform the Police, for example threats of a physical or sexual nature.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent and note any details about the sender.
- **Don't** reply to bullying or threatening text messages or emails – this could make matters worse. It also lets the bullying people know that they have found a 'live' phone number or email address. They may get bored quite quickly if you ignore them.
- **Don't** forward abusive texts or emails or images to anyone. You could be breaking the law just by forwarding them. If they are about you, keep them as evidence. If that are about someone else, delete them and don't reply to the sender.
- **Don't** ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.
- **Remember** that sending abusive or threatening messages is against the law.