

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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Bullying is anti-social behaviour, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is only when all issues of bullying are addressed that all members of the academy community will be able to fully benefit from opportunities offered to them.

We strive to ensure that a framework is created where each member of the academy community can talk about their feelings and feel that they have someone to whom they can talk if they are being bullied or are aware of others being bullied.

At all times, we wish to stress that it is the bullying behaviour that is unacceptable and not the persons themselves. We have a programme of support and guidance to improve the behaviour of those responsible for bullying.

### **DEFINITION:**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, both physically and emotionally, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to stand up for themselves. Underlying most bullying behaviour is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate.

Bullying is not an inevitable part of academy or working life. No one person or group, whether staff or student, should have to accept this type of behaviour and only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will all members of Fairfax Academy be able to benefit from the opportunities available.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour:

- Physical: eg hitting, kicking, theft, damaging belongings
- Verbal: eg name calling, insulting, repeated teasing, homophobic, religious, racist, sexist, directed towards physical/social disability/learning difficulty eg dyslexia, dyscalcula
- Indirect: spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups

- Implemented through technology: eg text messaging, e-mails, inappropriate filming by camera phone, BBM messaging, cyber bullying, sexting.
- Threatening behaviour: eg extorting money with the threat of violence

Bullying behaviour can be very subtle where once a bullying relationship has been established, the person/s responsible for the bullying may only have to look threateningly to reinforce their victim's fear.

#### **WHAT TO LOOK FOR:**

- Changes in behaviour: eg becoming shy, nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences.
- Changes in work or attendance and lack of concentration

#### **KEY POINTS:**

- Each member of the academy community must be encouraged to report bullying
- All staff working in the academy must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it.
- The sanctions for bullying of any kind should be brought to the attention of students, staff and parents/carers.

All incidents of unacceptable and bullying behaviour will be recorded and an agreed range of graded sanctions will be applied to demonstrate to the individuals involved how seriously the matter is taken. Parents/carers will be informed of all serious incidents.

#### **STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION OF BULLYING:**

Awareness of bullying can be raised through;

- a) The curriculum
- b) A whole-academy approach
- c) Tutor-time discussions
- d) Assemblies

#### **a) The Curriculum:**

The aim is to give bullying as high a profile as possible with all faculty areas incorporating a focus on bullying wherever possible to promote an anti-bullying ethos.

Each faculty is required to be familiar with and operate the policy and, in addition to this, to identify their own issues specific to the faculty to reinforce academy policy.

#### **b) A whole-academy approach:**

An anti-bullying ethos is emphasised through all assemblies, but through year assemblies in particular. Work is done with staff on Training Days, modules in the Guidance programme,

student voice, with parents/carers and with governors. National Anti-Bullying Week has a high profile in the academy with assemblies and activities co-ordinated and led by Heads of Year and Peer Mentors.

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, reinforce the policy through all areas of academy life and as an academy we strive to:

- Organise the academy community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying eg increased supervision at break and lunchtimes.
- Deal quickly, firmly and sensitively with any complaints, involving parents, where necessary.
- Review the anti-bullying policy and its degree of success via student questionnaires.
- Have a firm but fair discipline structure with **one** rule which is simple to follow and easy to understand. (Each member of the academy community is expected to treat every other member of the community, both inside and outside academy, with respect at all times).
- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy links with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- Encourage students to discuss their relationships with others and to form positive attitudes towards others through tutor time discussions
- Treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our academy (Please see Behaviour and Discipline policy and Exclusions Policy).
- Ensure that all areas in the academy are safe for all students via feedback from Peer Mentors, Sixth Form prefects . Provide areas for more vulnerable students to use eg Library, Homework Clubs, lunchtime nurture clubs.
- Involve students in policy decisions and reviews.

**c) Tutor time:**

- Regular, planned whole-group discussions regarding forming positive relationships and how to react to bullying situations.

### **REPORTING BULLYING:**

Students are to be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying to their parents and House Tutor wherever possible, or to any other member of staff.

Any incident of bullying, however small, should be reported immediately, ideally by the victim(s) or friends. Students are taught that silence is the bully's greatest weapon and are encouraged to:

- Tell themselves that they deserve respect, they do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong
- To have self-respect, be proud of who they are and that it is good to be an individual
- Try hard not to show that they are upset as bullies often thrive on the fear of others
- Stay with a group as there is always safety in numbers
- Try to be assertive and walk confidently away to a teacher or to another adult
- Use the academy e-mail system to report bullying – via the Home Page of the academy website and send the e-mail to their tutor, their Head of Year/Assistant Head of Year or any other adult in the academy.
- Use the SHARP system via the home page of the Academy website. This message is immediately sent to Assistant Headteacher Student Wellbeing and to our Academy/Police Liaison Officer.
- Students will be reassured that teachers will deal with the bullying incident in a way that will end it and not make things worse for them.
- Heads of year log incidents of bullying centrally in order to draw up any recurring patterns in terms of both victims and perpetrators. All information is treated sensitively and is only used as a basis for action when appropriate.

### **PARENT/CARER LIAISON:**

If parents have any concerns about bullying issues, they are asked to contact their child's tutor or the appropriate Assistant Head of Year in the first instance. Parents are also encouraged to:

- Advise their child to report an incident of bullying promptly rather than retaliate. Fighting back will only make matters worse. Look for unusual behaviour eg suddenly not wanting to attend our academy, feel ill regularly etc
- Take an active role in their child's education by enquiring how their day has gone, how they spent lunchtime etc
- Contact the academy immediately if they feel their child may be a victim of bullying behaviour
- Some children may well feel that they are being bullied because there is something wrong with them. In most cases, parents should reassure their children.
- In a minority of cases, parents may feel concern that aspects of their child's behaviour may well be a contributory factor to the bullying they are experiencing. Parents are urged to contact the academy immediately in order to work together on alleviating this.
- Give their child the confidence to ask for help
- Sign the Home' Academy Agreement to support the policy. (All parents and students are asked to sign the agreement during the Induction process for new students)

#### **PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR INCIDENTS OF BULLYING:**

The following steps are taken when dealing with bullying incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident should be passed on immediately to the House Tutor, Assistant Head of Year or Head of Year, who will record a clear account of the incident.
- The appropriate Assistant Head of Year will liaise with both victim and bully.
- All students concerned will be interviewed, asked to write a statement, and the incident recorded.
- LT are informed, where necessary.
- Heads of Year may decide to refer either or both the victim and/or the bully to a Peer Mentor, to focus on aspects of behaviour or self-esteem.
- Parents/carers should be kept informed
- The Method of Shared Concern is used in all cases where the lead member of staff will discuss the issues behind the incident(s) with both bully and victim and try to reach a resolution for all parties
- In order to encourage a positive change in the motivation of the student who has bullied and to offer support for the victim, a Restorative Justice response is undertaken. This method involves healing emotional damage and making sure that fairness and justice prevails. Its main purpose is to ensure that the student(s) who has caused the harm understands the impact of their behaviour.
- If the above fail, punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned. (Please see Behaviour and Discipline Policy)

- All incidents dealt with by teaching staff/associate staff must be notified to Student Support Centre (SSC) via [antibully@fairfax.bham.sch.uk](mailto:antibully@fairfax.bham.sch.uk) email address which is picked up by the pastoral administrators, so they too can be logged.
- Sanctions may take the following forms
  - a) a formal verbal warning noted on student record
  - b) Detention or period in isolation issued
  - c) missing an activity which the student normally attends
  - d) parents informed
  - e) student(s) may be formally excluded from the academy premises **at lunchtime** for a period of up to 10 days.
  - e) if the bullying persists after a formal warning, a short fixed term exclusion may be issued, the LA will be informed, parents will be required to attend a return to academy interview with Head of Year.
  - f) if the bullying continues after this stage, the bully and parents will be required to appear before a member of the Leadership Team, and/or the Associates' Disciplinary Group, and may be referred to the Behaviour Support Service for in-academy support
  - g) if all the above fail, the student may be recommended for Permanent Exclusion (Please see Exclusions Policy)
- In order to encourage responsible and respectful behaviour from all students, appropriate behaviour is rewarded by:
  - a) Merit Marks/Carrot Rewards
  - b) Commendation postcards home

#### **SUPPORT:**

All members of the academy community who have been bullied should be offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with someone appropriate of their choice. They should reassure the victim and help restore their self-esteem and confidence.

#### **MONITORING AND REVIEW:**

This policy will be reviewed via bullying record books, the student questionnaire and tutor time discussions.

Feedback from this information, with recommendations, will be presented in LT meetings, Directors of Faculty and Head of Year meetings and academy council. Action from the recommendations will then be agreed and actioned by LT.