

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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1. Introduction

Airedale Academy's ethos is based upon respect and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our students can develop his/her full potential.

All students have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them. Therefore, bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination WILL NOT be tolerated. There is no justification whatsoever for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Differences including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability are absolutely not tolerated as reasons for bullying.

Bullying behaviour is a problem for both the victim and the bully and should be addressed in positive and constructive ways, which provide opportunities for growth and development for the individuals involved.

Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions.

2. Aims & Objectives

- To achieve a school ethos in which each student is safe and able to realise their full potential in an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.
- To demonstrate to parents/carers that the school takes their children's welfare seriously, by having zero tolerance towards bullying behaviour.
- To have clear and consistent procedures for responding to incidents of bullying.

3. Strategies to help us meet our aims and objectives

In order to meet our aims we intend to:

- Be pro-active in the prevention of bullying.
- Raise awareness among staff, parents/carers and students about the issue of bullying and the school's attitude towards it
- Accurately record all incidents of bullying and to monitor the effectiveness of strategies for bringing it under control.
- Make students, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of bullying has occurred.
- Reassure victims that action will be taken to keep them safe.
- Demonstrate to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and address their problematic behaviour in a fair and firm manner, and provide them with support to enable them to change.

4. Types of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person. It can take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic or Special Educational Needs and disability-related bullying. It could involve physical (including sexual) intimidation, verbal, cyber (including chat room, email, e-photos and text messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can also involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are racist, homophobic, which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. It can cause serious and lasting psychological damage and even suicide.

Physical Bullying

Physical bullying is the most obvious form of bullying. It occurs when people use physical actions to gain power and control over their targets. Physical bullies tend to be bigger, stronger and more aggressive than their peers. Examples of physical bullying include kicking, hitting, punching, slapping, shoving and other physical attacks. Unlike the other forms of bullying, physical bullying is the easiest to identify.

Verbal Bullying

Perpetrators of verbal bullying use words, statements, and name calling to gain power and control over a target. Typically, verbal bullies will use relentless insults to belittle, demean and hurt another person. They choose their targets based on the way they look, act or behave.

Relational Aggression

Relational aggression is a sneaky type of bullying that is also sometimes called emotional bullying. This is a type of social manipulation people try to hurt their peers or sabotage their social standing. Relational bullies often spread rumours, manipulate situations and break confidences. The goal behind a relationally aggressive bully is to increase their own social standing by controlling or bullying another person.

Cyberbullying

When someone uses the Internet, a mobile phone or other technology to harass, threaten, embarrass or target another person. Examples of cyberbullying include posting hurtful images, making online threats, and sending hurtful emails or texts. Cyberbullies often say things that they do not have the courage to say face-to-face because technology makes them feel anonymous, insulated and detached from the situation. As a result, online bullying is often mean and cruel.

Sexual Bullying

This is repeated, harmful and humiliating actions that target a person sexually. Examples include sexual name-calling, crude comments, vulgar gestures, uninvited touching, sexual propositioning and pornographic materials. For example, a bully might make a crude comment about a girl's appearance, attractiveness, sexual development or sexual activity.

Boys might touch a girl inappropriately, make crude comments about their bodies or proposition them. Girls, on the other hand, might call other girls names like "slut" or "tramp" etc.

Sexting can also lead to sexual bullying. For instance, a girl may send a photo of herself to a boyfriend. When they break up, he shares that photo with the entire school. As a result, she then becomes the target of sexual bullying because people make fun of her body, call her crude names and make vulgar comments about her. Some boys may even see this as an open invitation to proposition her or assault her.

Prejudicial Bullying

Prejudicial bullying is based on prejudices someone may have toward people of different races, religions or sexual orientation. This type of bullying can encompass all the other types of bullying as well including cyberbullying, relational bullying, physical bullying and sometimes even sexual bullying. When prejudicial bullying occurs, someone is targeting others who are different from them and singling them out. Any time a child is bullied for his or her race, religion or sexual orientation, it should be reported.

5. Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a student is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)

- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the doctor with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Starting to ask for money or stealing money

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

6. Scope of Policy

Harassment and threatening behaviour are criminal offences. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on Equality and Diversity, as well as with its social and moral principles.

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises or travelling to and from school. The school is not legally responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere. However, the school is always interested in the welfare and conduct of its students and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside school if it impacts on student well-being.

If there are concerns about a student's safety outside school then parents/carers would be advised to contact the local police. If information is received that a student is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents. If concerns persist then the matter will be referred to Children, Schools and Families.

If students are being bullied by students of another school the headteacher of that school will be informed and we will work together to resolve the matter.

7. Statutory duties of schools

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so.

Schools also have a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of students' (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004). Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by students ('Safe to learn' DCSF 2007).

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

Bullying outside school premises

Staff have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". 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 centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their 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 will be informed.

8. Preventive Measures

All staff involved in the education and/or supervision of students will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the Academy's policy of zero-tolerance consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported.

Staff will constantly reinforce the message to students that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

In addition, the issue of bullying will be raised with students at a number of levels including:

- **At whole school level** – through assemblies when students will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. In addition, the Academy will participate in national and local initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week and the work of Wakefield's Anti-Bullying Partnership.
- **At classroom level** – during tutor time and PSHCE lessons, these will highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable. It specifically tells students whom they should inform if they are being bullied, or are worried that another student is being bullied.
- **At individual level** – students who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance from the POD.

Airedale Academy recognises that there are particular times and places where students may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements ensure that there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents. In addition, the student toilets are fitted with large windowed areas to ensure that students are visible to staff supervising.

Students will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware.

Parents who believe their students are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future.

All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated.

Similarly, if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying child helped to change their behaviour.

In addition to the preventative measures for other types of bullying the preventative measures for Cyberbullying include:

- Expecting all students to adhere to our acceptable use policy for the safe use of the internet. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our ICT technician monitors students' use.
- We may impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.

9. Implementation

The Academy is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that its zero-tolerance policy is applied. All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of students will take responsibility for addressing incidents and will ensure that the victim receives the required support.

The bully will be informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record will be made of the incident. All students are made aware that staff need to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

Post incident responses for the victim

When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a child may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated. The nature of the response will be determined by the situation and the student's individual needs.

Responses may include:

- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- reassurance that the victim will be involved in the resolution
- action to stop the incident and secure the student's safety
- Form tutors and Progress Leaders will be kept informed and if it persists the form tutor or Progress Leader will advise the appropriate subject teachers.
- informing/involving parents/carers
- students involved will be interviewed and a detailed record will be kept. This will be held in line with the school's data protection policy/practice.
- support from an outside agency
- befriending/peer mentoring
- creation of a support group
- extra supervision/monitoring
- arrangements to review progress
- help to restore self esteem and confidence
- wherever possible Restorative Practices will be utilised in order to achieve a successful outcome.

For the bully

Airedale Academy takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way. We accept that punishment is not always helpful in managing this problem but it may be necessary in situations where other responses have failed.

Responses may include:

- discussion with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of school rules and is unacceptable
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim (provided this is safe for the victim)
- support in alternative ways of behaving
- loss of lunch/break-time privileges
- detentions
- confiscation of mobile phones in line with our Acceptable Use Policy
- withholding participation in a trip, sports or other out of school activity
- removal from class/group
- internal exclusion
- a fixed period of exclusion
- permanent exclusion (in extreme cases)

10. Parental Involvement

Airedale Academy is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator

11. Monitoring

The school will review this policy regularly and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

An annual report will be made to the Academy Council, including statistics about:

- the number of reported concerns
- monitoring information about the students involved
- motivations for bullying
- actions taken and outcomes

12. Links to other Policies

This policy has links to the following academy policies and procedures:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy (Internet Safety)
- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy