Anti-Bullying Policy

April 2019 - April 2021
Rationale

Sidney Stringer Multi-Academy Trust is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our academies, whether it is in an academy or on off-site activities. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING Academy Trust. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

All members of the Academy Trust - staff, students and parents - should have an understanding of what bullying is and what the Academy’s procedures are for responding to bullying. As a MAT, we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that we do not tolerate bullying and that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

1. What Is Bullying?

1.1 Bullying is the use of deliberate aggression with the intention of hurting another person either physically and/or emotionally in a variety of ways. Bullying is persistent and results in pain and distress to the affected person.

1.2 Bullying can be:

- **emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- **interference** with possessions;
- **physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- **racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- **sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- **sexist** – controlling and/or demanding behaviour towards someone because of their sex;
- **homophobic** - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- **directed towards someone with Special Educational Needs** – because of learning or physical disabilities;
- **verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.;
- **cyber** - all areas of internet use, such as e-mail and internet chat room /social media misuse;
- **Mobile Phone** threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.
2. Why is it important to respond to bullying?

2.1 Bullying hurts. No one deserves to suffer from bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students and staff who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

2.2 We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

3. Signs and Symptoms

3.1 A Student may indicate by signs, words or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the student this may simply be a feeling that ‘things aren’t quite right’. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student

- does not want to walk to and from the Academy;
- does not want to use public transport or the Academy bus;
- insists that they are driven to and from the Academy;
- is made to feel uncomfortable by somebody else when traveling to school
- changes their normal routine;
- begins to truant for no apparent reason;
- becomes withdrawn or displays a sudden lack of confidence;
- is reticent to speak to other peers or teachers;
- self-harms e.g. cutting or scratching;
- attempts or threatens to commit suicide;
- runs away from home;
- is upset at night and has displayed a disruptive sleep pattern, possibly linked with increased nightmares;
- is continuously complaining of feeling unwell in the morning and at school;
- displays a downturn in their academic standards;
- has possessions and clothes which are torn or damaged or go missing;
- asks for money of steals money (to pay bully);
- loses dinner money on a regular basis;
- has a sudden increase in bruises or cuts which the pupil finds difficult or is unwilling to explain;
- comes home hungry (money or lunch has been stolen);
- stops eating;
- suddenly displays unusual aggressive and disruptive behaviour;
- starts to bully other peers or family siblings;
- is reticent or unwilling to talk about what is going wrong;
- displays a sudden reduction in their use of the mobile phone or internet chat rooms.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.
4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Principal/Head Teacher

The Principal has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students. (Procedures to be personalised to academies)

The Principal /Head Teacher will:
• ensure that all staff have an opportunity to discussing strategies and review them;
• determine the strategies and procedures;
• discuss development of the strategies with the Academy Leadership Team;
• ensure appropriate training is available;
• ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students;
• report annually to the Academy Council.

4.2 Senior Vice Principal (Inclusion), supported by Assistant Principal (Pastoral) will:
• be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
• ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both those being bullied and the bullies;
• keep the Principal/HT teacher informed of incidents as appropriate
• arrange relevant staff training;
• determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems;
• Report data to Headteacher/Principal and Governors termly.

4.3 House Heads will:
• be responsible for ensuring that the Academy’s positive strategies are put into practice;
• know the Principal’s /HT procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.

4.4 Form Tutors will:
• be responsible for liaising with House heads over all incidents involving students in their form;
• be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.

4.5 Classroom Based Staff will:
• be responsible for ensuring that the Academy’s positive strategies are put into practice;
• know the and deal with any incidents that are identified/reported.
• be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.

4.6 What the Academy will do to prevent Bullying

We will ensure that everyone understands what bullying is and how to deal with it through:
• communication of this policy to parents, students, staff and governors;
• lessons, assemblies and the Tutorial Programme
• induction programme for new students;
• regular reminders about kind, courteous and respectful behaviour in normal lessons and everyday activities within the Academy grounded in the Academy Values of Respect, Determination and Integrity/ school expectations and rules;
• publication of advice through Student Voice
• one to one counselling of victims and perpetrators
All incidents of bullying will be seen as important and will be dealt with in a sensitive, consistent and urgent matter. Sanctions and counselling will be put in place. Students will be encouraged to feel able to report ALL incidents of bullying and to support each other when witnessing incidents. Friends of victims will be encouraged to report bullying if they are aware of it, even if the victims ask them not to. In all cases the victims will be given support to reassure them. Some incidents may be relatively minor e.g. hiding a bag or a coat or using nicknames etc and may be dealt with by reprimand, a warning and a clear statement that such behaviour is unacceptable and contravenes the values of the academy. However minor, cases will be recorded and passed to the appropriate Class Teacher/ Tutor or House Head. Restorative Justice Conversations between victim and perpetrator will be facilitated as appropriate. Repetition or serious cases of abuse or bullying will result in parents being notified and/or interviewed and in more severe cases sanctions being used with the bully e.g. fixed-term exclusion

5. Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum
5.1 The Academy will define and raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through a PSHE and Citizenship programme, Academy assemblies, the Student Council, use of tutorial time and in the national curriculum programmes of study as appropriate.

5.2 The Senior lead for Inclusion is responsible for initiating and developing, with appropriate colleagues, an anti-bullying programme as part of the PSHE and Citizenship course and Directors of Teaching and Learning are responsible for introducing anti-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate.

5.3 Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the school.

6. Anti-Bullying Procedures:
Parents
6.1 If parents suspect their child is being bullied they should contact the Form tutor or House Head. Parents should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying.

6.2 Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves could, potentially, make the matter worse.

6.3 Parents should encourage their child to talk to their Form tutor /House Head or another member of staff in the first instance.

7. Students
7.1 If a student thinks they are being bullied they must tell an adult, parent, Class Teacher/Form Tutor/House Head or another member of staff and be prepared to explain what form the bullying is taking and how it affects them.

7.2 Students who witness bullying or strongly suspect bullying must tell an adult, parent or any member of staff.
8. Staff
In cases of reported or suspected bullying staff will:
• make it clear to students that bullying is unacceptable;
• teach students how to co-operate in controlling bullying e.g. posters, newsletters etc.;
• respond immediately if a student reports an incident of bullying by referring it to the student’s Head of House;
• interview the victim(s) and friends to get a written account: Class Teacher /House Head;
• interview the bully and friends to get a written account: House Head;
• report on CPOMS for both parties
• discuss the incident with the victim and the bully together to resolve the situation if possible House Heads or Learning Mentors;
• inform parents of the victim and the bully of the incident and the actions taken;
• meet with the parents of the victim and bully if necessary;
• exclude the bully if appropriate;
• refer the bully to the Governors if appropriate;
• involve the Police if appropriate;
• involve Social Care, if appropriate
• record all actions on CPOMS
• record on SIMS Behaviour Record of perpetrator
• try to make sure that the bullying is prevented by being vigilant and proactive on duty before and after school, at break and lunch time and during lesson changeovers;
• deploy strategies for improving the self-esteem of and offering care for the victim e.g. inter-agency work, resolution meetings, rewards, listening and valuing what the victim says, giving direct access to pastoral support/ Tutors, House Heads, Learning Mentors and the Academy Leadership Team, providing opportunities for confidential conversations with learning mentors etc.;
• deploy strategies for changing the behaviour of the bully e.g. inter-agency work, resolution meetings, behaviour support plans, mentoring etc.;
• follow the normal procedures of the behaviour referral system unless there is a need for ‘fast-track’ action to help the victim or the bully.
• offer an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with form tutor /House Head/Learning Mentor or member of staff of their choice;
• reassurance;
• offer continuous support with a designated member of staff;
• restore self-esteem and self-confidence;
• refer to a Peer Mentor if appropriate;
• refer to a counsellor, if appropriate;
• offer parents support and advice;
• provide information about the outcome of the investigation into concerns.

10. Students who have bullied will be helped by:
• discussing what happened;
• discovering why the student became involved;
• establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change;
• informing parents to help change the attitude of the student;
• referral to a counsellor.
Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the positive strategies used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

11. Sanctions
Students who have bullied will be punished appropriately in response to their behaviour, in accordance with the Academy’s ‘Behaviour and Rewards’ policy. For persistent offences or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression, a student may be permanently excluded and/or reported to the police.

12. Complaints
If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the nature or swiftness of a response made by the Academy following a reported incident of bullying, he/she may wish to make a complaint. The complaints procedure for a case of bullying follows the guidance of the Academy’s Complaints Policy. The underlying principle of the policy is that any concerns raised should be handled, if at all possible, without the need for formal procedures. If however the informal procedures are unsuccessful and the complainant wishes to take the matter further, formal measures will have to be taken.

13. Equal Opportunities
In implementing this policy all members of staff must take into account the Academy’s Equal Opportunities policy. Staff must ensure that no student involved in any incident of bullying, is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

14. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review
The Sidney Stringer Multi Academy Trust will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Date for review – April 2021