

Anti – Bullying Policy

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1. Visions and Values

The BA Way is the foundation of our curriculum. At Bedford Academy we strive to ensure every student becomes a young person who is:

Community Minded

A responsible, thoughtful and independent member of society that takes ownership of their own actions and decisions

Driven

A confident individual that achieve their full potential and work towards success, without excuses or compromise

Aspirational

Students have high expectations of themselves and others, always aiming to improve, succeed and excel

2. Aims

This policy outlines what Bedford Academy will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

Bedford Academy is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

The BA Way clearly outlines the expectations of every member of school community in demonstrating resistance and the reporting of any forms of bullying.

3. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Behaviour and discipline in schools
- The Equality Act 2010

It is also based on the special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice, DfE guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' July 2017 and supporting documents. It considers the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2018. The school has read Child net's 'Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools'.

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassments Act 1997
- The malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Equality Statement

Bedford Academy encourages, celebrates and values the diversity of all our community. We actively promote the principle of equality for all. We aim to ensure that everyone within our community is treated fairly, with respect and dignity. We seek to eliminate any form of inequality, bullying or discrimination. We work together to resolve our differences, and offer support where required to overcome challenges, obstacles and barriers that stand in our way of making progress as individuals and a community.

5. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Local Governing Body (LAB) to monitor and review this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly and consider their role in making the wider school community a safe place for all stakeholders.
- Parents/Carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

6. Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is 'behaviour by an individual or group, repeated overtime that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally' (DFE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying', July 2017).

Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed on line, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Bullying can be a form of peer on peer abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

7. Forms of bullying covered by this policy

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

- Bullying related to race, religion, nationality or culture.
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability).
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying).
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying.

8. School Ethos

Bedford Academy community recognizes that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental well-being. By effectively preventing and talking bullying, our school can help create a safe, disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Bedford Academy:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships, to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice everywhere.
- Utilises support from other organisations when appropriate.

9. Responding to Bullying

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the Form Tutor and Head of Year/Assistant Head of Year will be contacted as soon as possible to deal with the situation and to record the incident on Bromcom.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making as appropriate.
- The designated member of staff will interview all parties involved.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will inform other staff members, parents/carers as appropriate.
- Sanctions will be implemented in line with the school's Behaviour for Learning policy.
- Support for individuals will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including early help or children's social care (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm).
- Where bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying) the school will investigate and act in line with the school's Behaviour for Learning policy. The students at Bedford Academy are expected to act in an appropriate manner and inside and outside the school gates.
- The school cannot act toward a bully where parents/carers have involved themselves in appropriate messaging or other contact with the child. It is possible that in doing so parents/carers may have committed a criminal offence of which the school has a duty to inform the police, and will do so if deemed required by the Headteacher.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the school, along with student statements. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

Responding to Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act promptly when the incident is reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation. Without sight of messages, pictures or videos received it is not possible to fully

investigate an incident of this nature. Single witness statements provided by an alleged victim will be investigated to identify further evidence but alone provide insufficient evidence from which sanctions can be given, a record will be kept in case further evidence emerges in future.

- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - Looking at use of school systems
 - Identifying and interviewing witnesses
 - Asking parents/carers or bill payer to contact the service provider and the police if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Supporting reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or unable to delete content.
 - Confiscating and searching student's electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law. 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 of staff who has been formally authorised by the head, 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. In instances of Cyber Bullying, the school will seek evidence on children's mobile devices. Where evidence is found, numbers and applications may be deleted from the device. If there is a refusal to comply with the searching of mobile devices, the mobile device will be handed to the police and may also be handed to the police if evidence is found that might constitute a criminal offence.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence is committed or suspected
- Provide information to staff and students regarding the steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - Advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply
 - Providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists
 - Helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain

The school is clear that parents/carers should be upholding their parental responsibility to monitor/check their child's on-line activity, including social media, gaming and other activities to ensure they are age and content appropriate, used responsibly and safe. The school can provide support and information to parents/carers on how this is best achieved, or parents can use the NSPCC website

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety>

(Further useful links and supporting organizations are found in section 13).

After an investigation the school provides support and advice to the victim to keep themselves safe and this may include deleting or blocking contacts. If this advice is deliberately ignored the school cannot take further responsibility for investigating subsequent incidents.

10. Supporting Students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the student and providing continuous support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their head of year, the designated

safeguarding lead or their form tutor.

- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self – esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local / national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Students who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude of and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/contents to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns) and fixed term or permanent suspensions/exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further help or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

11. Supporting adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by students, parents and other staff member is unacceptable.

Adults (staff and parents who have been bullied or affected will be supported by):

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and / or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice or guidance.

Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.

- If online, requesting that content be moved.
- Investigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice – driven bullying.
- Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

12. Policy and support

- The whole school community will:
- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up to date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Taking appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the school’s attention, which involves or effects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

13. Education and Training

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school’s policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school / student council, etc.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students’ social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self – esteem.

14. Involvement of Students

The school will:

- Involve students in decision making, to ensure they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they have to play to prevent bullying. This will be led by our Student Voice Team.
- Canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying, usually through PCD lessons and student surveys.
- Ensure that all students know who to express worries and anxieties about bullying through a weekly safeguarding slide that is issued to all form tutors every Monday.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaged in bullying. Conduct and Standards assemblies may inform students about exclusion or suspension trends in year groups, where deemed relevant.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

15. Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

The school will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parent/carers in a variety of formats.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school in order to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

16. Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate the mechanisms to ensure that the policy is constantly being applied.

- Any issues identified will be incorporated within the school's action planning.
- The Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The Headteacher will report on a regular basis to the local governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

17. Useful links and supporting organisations

Anti-bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

MindEd: www.minded.org.uk

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
PHSE Association: www.phse-association.org.uk
Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
The Restorative Justice Council www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

SEND

Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities:
www.cafamily.org.uk

DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

Childnet International: www.childnet.com
Digizen: www.digizen.org
Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS): www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis

Race, religion and nationality

Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org
Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrtc.org/educational

LGBT

Barnardos LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related