

# Bradfields Academy



Excellence & Enjoyment

## Anti-Bullying Policy



Working together to make Bradfields a safe and caring place.

Policy Adopted :	July 2013
Chair of Governing Body	PMa
Principal	MSL

Process:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
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## Foreword

Our Academy Aims state the following:

'Bradfields Academy aims to be a leading centre of excellence in the Special Education Sector where students can thrive and fully develop their cognitive, social and emotional skills in order to take a full, active and responsible role in their local community and beyond as Global Citizens and Ambassadors for students with disabilities.'

In order to achieve this all members of staff and governors aim to achieve a number of actions which include:

- To provide the highest standards of teaching and learning
- To have high expectations of student work and behaviour
- To develop self-motivation through praise
- To develop the confidence to be curious, imaginative and take calculated risks
- To develop personal rights respecting views and responsibility through opportunity and modelling
- To develop a sense of personal pride and self-worth that can be sustained with increasing confidence
- To develop and maintain a safe and healthy lifestyle
- To develop academic potential and the ability of students to transfer those skills to everyday life and work situations
- To develop positive social and emotional skills and levels of emotional intelligence as an integral part of the learning process
- To create a happy, safe and supportive working environment.

Our Values Statement include references to creating the following for our students:

- They are respected and valued
- They can develop their self-esteem
- They feel part of a caring community and are safe
- They take responsibility for their own actions and develop their awareness of those actions on others
- They are happy, purposeful, confident and independent.

As such, we aim to create a learning environment where all students feel safe, cared for and free of oppression so they can grow and thrive as happy, thoughtful and responsible individuals in our academy and the wider community.

We recognise that from time to time some students may have difficulty with their social skills and not be able to display socially acceptable behaviours. Where this occurs we aim to ensure that such behaviour does not lead to bullying. We do not see bullying as acceptable or having a place in our academy daily life. We will work tirelessly to remove such actions from student behaviour and replace it by developing their resilience and positive self-esteem.

We understand that for bullying to exist all that is needed to be done is nothing. As an academy we will do everything to help anyone who is a bully and/or a victim find responsibility and safety in our academy.

## Introduction

This Anti-Bullying Policy is part of the suite of Safeguarding Policies which also includes :

- ✓ Child Protection
- ✓ Equal Opportunities
- ✓ Race Equality
- ✓ Photo/Video Images

This Anti-Bullying Policy was first constructed in February 2013 following research and consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, and consultation and advice from the Pastoral Team [consisting of Medical Staff, Parent Carer Partnership Manager, Speech & Language Occupational Therapy Physiotherapy Assistant, Play Therapist and Counsellor] along with Pastoral Managers and PSHCE & Citizenship Teachers.

Students have also contributed through their representatives on the Student Council. They request and deserve a caring, friendly and safe environment so that they can learn in a secure and enclosed atmosphere. Our students believe bullying of any kind is unacceptable in their academy.

Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and people who bully need support too.

Research into existing policies within other schools/academies was undertaken along with published material from KidScape.

## Objectives of this Policy

We believe the following points are key to our Policy:

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the academy policy on bullying is and should follow it when bullying is reported
- All students and their parents/carers should know what the academy policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises
- All students and their parents/carers should be assured that the academy takes bullying seriously and that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- All students in the academy feel able to tell a member of staff or mentor when they have experienced or seen bullying, knowing that the actions taken will not only be prompt but sensitive to their concerns
- All staff have a responsibility to take any suspicion or disclosure of bullying seriously, no matter what the details or provenance, and should respond immediately
- All outside agencies, such as the police, social service, etc. should be consulted and their help enlisted where and when such an action is deemed appropriate.

## What is Bullying ?

Bullying is deliberately harming someone with the intention of causing emotional and/or physical pain. It is usually *calculated* and *persistent* and can take many forms:

**Emotional** – *being unfriendly, excluding from peer groups, and tormenting i.e. hiding possessions.*

**Physical** - *pushing, kicking, hitting, other kinds of violence.*

**Verbal** - *name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, threatening, intimidating.*

**Non-Verbal** - *staring someone out, laughing at someone as a group.*

**Exclusion** – *silent treatment, avoiding contact.*

**Racist** - *racial; taunts, graffiti, gestures, name calling.*

**Sexual** - *sexual harassment (unwanted physical contact), sexual abuse/demeaning comments.*

**Homophobic** - *commenting in a nasty way about being LGBTQ.*

**Cyber** – *using emails, websites, mobile phones and social networks to torment victims.*

## Perception of Bullying

Our Academy Provision is for students with Complex Learning Needs and as such it can sometimes be a challenge for them to understand the implications on another student's well-being by making certain unfriendly comments and/or taking certain unfriendly actions. It can also be relatively easy for them to misunderstand and misrepresent situations of disagreement as incidents of bullying.

Some of our students have difficulty with empathy due to their autism. There are typical ASD behaviours that could be confused with bullying behaviours. These include obsession which may seem like targeting.

Staff will always be mindful of the individuals involved in incidents and will be able to offer the best support and advice in these situations.

Incidents may be resolved by educating the perceived victim about the complex needs of the perceived perpetrator.

## What are the symptoms of Bullying ?

Staff and Parents/Carers should be aware of when a child is possibly the victim of a bully. Symptoms may be:

- Frightened to use transport to and from the academy
- Is unwilling to go to academy (academy phobic/academy refuser)
- Begins to truant
- Frequently complaining of being unwell both at home and at academy
- Becomes isolated and withdrawn
- Begins to do poorly in academy work
- Has clothing and belongings that get damaged or go missing
- Has physical bruising or other evidence of assault
- Have dinner and/or other monies that are frequently 'lost'
- Refuses to attend particular lessons
- Hangs round a particular teacher or stays in the classroom at breaks
- Becomes aggressive or unreasonable

- Stops eating
- Runs away or threatens/engages in self-harm
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could have other causes, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Within the academy all staff are in a position to recognise potential bullying situations. There are, however some additional staff with increased opportunities to identify potential situations:

- Medical Staff will be able to report if students are spending an increased time in the medical rooms
- Therapists and Counsellors will be able to report all claims of bullying that arise from sessions
- Parent Carer Partnership Manager will be able to report back any claims from Parents/Carers
- Form Tutors will be able to report any notes, letters and comments that come in to academy in a morning.

This detail will then be acted upon by the respective Pastoral Manager and/or Assistant Principal for each Zone.

## Who can bullying involve ?

**Student to Student:** This is the most common perception of bullying in academies, where a single student or group target other students.

**Adult to Student:** It is possible to have the situation where a student feels bullied by an adult. This may be in the academy or at home. If this situation arises then a decision has to be made as to whether to deal with it under the guidance from this policy or whether it is appropriate to use the Child Protection Policy.

**Student to Adult:** Situations can arise where repeated behaviours from students towards adults can be construed as bullying. If any member of staff at Bradfields Academy should feel bullied by a student or students, then they must immediately consult their line manager and an action plan for resolution should be devised.

**Adult to Adult:** In everyday working situations it is possible for a situation to arise where one member of staff feels bullied by another. Although rare these situations need to be resolved quickly and to everybody's satisfaction. If the situation cannot be resolved between the two parties then the Academy's Complaints Procedure should be followed.

## Dealing with Bullying

### 1. Prevention and Education

Any academy that claims to be completely free from bullying is potentially failing to recognise the reality of life.

Bullying happens in all walks of life and it is the academy's responsibility to ensure that it is a safe place for all of the community.

The following strategies are in place to ensure that the correct ethos towards bullying is established and that students are prepared and can act confidently should bullying occur:

- The academy's policy on bullying is known to governors, parents/carers, staff and students. This policy is reviewed and re-issued annually.
- All staff, students and parents know what to do if bullying occurs. A simplified 'code' of actions is issued to students and parents/carers in their Student Planners. This simplified plan will also be displayed in classrooms.
- All students know that bullying is totally unacceptable in the academy. They should also know that if they are bullied it is not their fault. Students should be encouraged to tell, even if they are not personally involved.
- The Student Council has and will receive regular sessions with regard to bullying.
- As part of their induction new members of staff are given Initial Safeguarding Training which includes anti-bullying procedures.
- The PSHCE & Citizenship and SEAL/Character Strengths programmes include opportunities for students to discuss 'bullying and the bully' and explore feelings and attitudes.
- Teachers are made aware, through memos and briefing announcements, of potential difficulties between students and will take them into consideration in seating plans and general classroom management.
- Staff on duty actively engage with students and remain vigilant.
- The academy provides 'quiet' areas along with break time activities which are supervised, so that students can go somewhere/join in and feel completely safe.
- The academy regularly surveys students and parents/carers so that judgements can be made about how safe students feel and how satisfied parents/carers are.
- The Pastoral Team regularly reviews those students that they feel could be potential victims of bullying and those students who could be at risk of becoming bullies. Targeted work can then be undertaken with those students to try and prevent this being the case.

## **2. What Parents/Carers Should Do?**

- All parents are made aware of the academy's policy when their child joins the academy through the detail within the Student Planner ; and, they are reminded at varying times during the academy year.

In addition, parents are reminded through academy communications that if they think their child is being bullied they should:

- Reassure their child that it is not their fault and the matter will be dealt with sensitively
- Reassure their child that he/she has done the correct thing in 'telling'
- Contact their child's form tutor or Key Stage Pastoral Manager.

## **3. What Students Should Do?**

Students are regularly reminded that the academy will not tolerate bullying and that if it occurs they should:

- Inform someone immediately, at home or at the academy, even if they are not personally being bullied but have seen it with others
- Use 'safe' areas and strategies within the academy during break times until the matter comes to the attention of an adult.

#### 4. What Academy Staff Should Do?

If a student discloses bullying to a member of staff they should deal with the matter immediately. The child may have worried over their problem for some time and will want it to be dealt with quickly. As such the responsibility is on staff to:

- Take all disclosures seriously, even if, as adults, they do not think the incidents described are 'real' bullying or very serious
- Remember that children have a very different perception of what may or may not be serious
- Be aware that insensitive handling of a bullying incident might result in more not less difficulty for the victim. If staff members are unsure how to proceed they should always take advice
- Ensure that information is shared with other key members of staff. This will include other members of staff who teach the students concerned.

Different circumstances may require different approaches but usually they will include the following:

- Both the victim and the bully/bullies will be interviewed and counselled by appropriate members of staff.
- Contact will be made to both sets of parents/carers.
- The victim will be given a 'safe haven' if required for break times until the matter is resolved and coping strategies for the short term.
- The consequences of further aggression by the bully, if substantiated, will be made clear and the sanctions that the academy will enforce will be outlined.
- The 'bully' should give some undertaking of how he/she can improve the situation.
- Where appropriate the two parties will meet face to face to discuss the situation and how it may be resolved.
- Both 'victim' and 'bully' will record their view of events. Staff may need to scribe for the students.
- The member of staff should make a written record for the Key Stage Pastoral Manager and/or Assistant Principal as appropriate.
- Advice and support for both the bullied and the bully will be sought through members of the pastoral team and an action plan developed to work with both parties. This could involve therapeutic input, restorative practices etc.

#### And then .....?

**If the problem persists:** Both sets of parents/carers will be seen in the academy. A strategy to move forward will be discussed separately. At this point external support or advice may be considered.

Contracts will be drawn up with the students and parents agreeing to the course of action.

**If the situation is not resolved:** Then the incidents will be passed to members of the Senior Leadership Team where more severe sanctions would be considered including fixed term exclusions.

At all times, staff dealing with bullying incidents should ensure that:

- Parents/carers are fully involved and informed of the actions the academy has taken.
- Written records are kept of meetings, decisions and actions. These are recorded in SIMS in line with the behaviour policy.

- Students are monitored i.e. by daily report during the restorative period.
- The 'victim' is never isolated from lessons because of the potential actions of others. If any student needs to be withdrawn because of a potentially threatening situation it should be the aggressor.

If there is any real and immediate threat to a student's safety, senior staff will be informed so that more radical, preventative action can be taken.

## Anti-Bullying: A Checklist of Procedures for Staff

### **1. Take all complaints, observations about bullying seriously.**

- All parties involved should be interviewed - notes taken and retained for records. Full details of witnesses should be obtained.
- Record all notes on SIMS.

### **2. Appropriate action should be taken against the bully / bullies.**

- They should always be spoken to and the academy's approach to bullying made clear.
- Sanctions should be given as appropriate.
- Parents/Carers should be informed. It is important to be able to provide them with the complete detail.
- Cases of repeated bullying should be treated with the utmost seriousness and referred to the Assistant Principal for the Zone concerned.

### **3. Where a bullying incident has been identified, staff must speak with the victim.**

- They should be told what has been done.
- They should know to report any further bullying events [bullies can hide behind the fear established by the victim's silence].
- They should know what they can do to avoid further incidents. They could be given some common sense hints.

### **4. As general rule, Pastoral Managers/Assistant Principals/staff should contact the parents of bullied students to let them know what has happened.**

- They should give full detail including any input from the medical members of staff.
- They should be reassured that the bullying is taken seriously and that it is being dealt with.
- That they can contact the academy if they have any concerns now or in the future.

### **5. Involve the Tutor at all times.**

- In particular, they have a key role in checking periodically with the victim of bullying that everything is alright.

### **6. Remember that :**

- Investigating bullying incidents, particularly name-calling, is time-consuming and may seem not particularly rewarding.
- For our policy to be effective, the above procedures must be followed.

## ANTI-BULLYING COMMITMENT PLEDGE

Bradfields Academy is an inclusive academy that embraces the right of all students to be valued for who they are and be given the opportunity to thrive as a person in their own right.

Fundamental to this is to be free from oppression and bullying.

As an academy we recognise that bullying can happen and if it does there can be impact on individual's sense of well-being and their ability to perform to their potential. We will work with students, staff, and families to help make them **AWARE** of the definition of bullying and the impact it has on people.

As an academy community we **PLEDGE** to tackle all types of bullying.

As an academy we will work with students through Tutorial SEAL sessions, PSHCE & Citizenship and all subjects to **EMBED** the promotion of happiness and well-being. Where appropriate this work will be extended into the family.

As an academy we will work to **CREATE** a culture of mutual respect between staff, students, and families. We will ensure that our staff are equipped with the knowledge and strategies to tackle bullying and educate students appropriately to take their place as responsible citizens in society.

As an academy we recognise the value of teaching students how to be happy, safe, and considerate. We **COMMIT** to educating students on the benefit of such qualities.



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