



Bexhill
Academy

FRIENDSHIP AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Adopted: October 2020
Next Review: October 2021

FRIENDSHIP AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

For Bexhill Academy

This policy was adopted on 1 October 2020
This policy is due for review on 1 October 2021

BULLYING: OUR ACADEMY'S VALUES AND BELIEFS:

Bexhill Academy is an 11-16 academy. The school serves the coastal town of Bexhill on Sea with most students living locally within the catchment area, travelling to school by foot or public transport. As the main community comprehensive in the town, the town's problems are our problems. The other comprehensive is an 11-16 Roman Catholic College, which has a wider catchment area. Employment and unemployment rates in the area are both below the national average, as the area has an above average proportion of retired residents.

Local data, (including the Health Related Behaviour Survey for the academy) indicates that whilst 63% of students (60% East Sussex average) feel that they have someone they could talk to or report issues to at the academy. Therefore, we recognise the need to further support our students and ensure there is someone they can always go to for support. To develop this work, the policy was reviewed in 2020 with a group of Year 8 students to get their views and ideas.

All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included.

Pupils and staff have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear.

All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable.

Pupils who experience bullying will be supported.

We recognise the effects that bullying can have on pupil's feelings of worth and on their school work, therefore our community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

OUR DEFINITION OF BULLYING:

We acknowledge that both friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be unpleasant and upsetting but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Friendship problems may be an occasional incident where both students disagree and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult intervention. It is unlikely to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental, where both students will be encouraged to resolve the problem using restorative practices. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour.

Bullying involves dominance of one pupil by another or a group of others, is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour.

Bullying is,

“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face to face or through cyberspace.”

The Anti-bullying Alliance states that:

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful;
- Repeated, often over a period of time;
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings;
- Verbal - name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours;
- Cyber - All areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

Behaviour that is classed as cyber bullying includes:

Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made over the internet or using other digital communications – this includes internet trolling.

Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm and/or humiliation.

Hacking into someone else's email, phone or online profile to extract and share personal information, or send abusive or inappropriate content while posing as that person.

Creating specific websites that negatively target an individual or group typically by posting content that intends to humiliate, ostracise and/or threaten.

Blackmail or pressurising someone to do something online that they do not want to do.

Cyber bullying will be treated with the same intolerance and in the same ways as of any other form of bullying in the College.

Cyber bullying can be reported through the same channels of communication outlined further on in this policy.

There is more advice in the On Line Safety policy and also on the academy's Information and Advice section on the website

The academy will educate pupils about cyber bullying through PSHE lessons, assemblies and tutor activities.

The Academy will endeavour to keep up to date with the internet technologies being used by pupils both within and outside academy.

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within the Academy we will pay particular attention to:

WHY ARE YOUNG PEOPLE BULLIED?

Children and young people are most commonly bullied because of a real or perceived difference:

- **Racist bullying** based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices,
- **Homophobic bullying** based on sexuality or gender identity.
- **Disabilist bullying**, the bullying of pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- **Sexual bullying**, unwelcome sexual advances, remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.
- **Discriminative bullying** based on any perceived weakness such as children in fostering or care homes, young carers, those with disabled siblings or parents, single parents families, low economic backgrounds, etc.

- **LGBT parents** based on the children of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender couples.

THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING

The effects of bullying are severe and can often continue long into adulthood. Children who are bullied are more likely to:

- have low self-esteem;
- develop depression or anxiety;
- become socially withdrawn, isolated and lonely;
- have lower academic achievements;
- be unable to form trusting, healthy relationships with friends or partners in the future.

CREATING AN ANTI-BULLYING CLIMATE IN THE ACADEMY

The academy has a legal duty under the Education Act 2002, the Education and inspections Act 2006 and the Equalities Act 2010 to prevent and tackle bullying.

Our aim is to promote appropriate behaviour through direct teaching, and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where these skills are learned and practiced. Our aim is to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the College community.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 states that “**Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges.**” This includes, “**the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.**”

To address these additional challenges, Bexhill Academy will consider extra support for children with SEN and disabilities, including increased access to the AEN Provision when required.

THE ACADEMY'S STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

- Vigilance by all
- Befriending
- Mediation and Restorative Practice by Adults
- Active Listening
- Sanctions as listed in our Engagement for Learning Policy
- Mental Health First Aiders
- Social Use of Language Programme

- Nurture Groups
- ACE Provision

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS WHEN THEY OCCUR

Pupils who have been bullied should report this to any member of staff. You can talk to **anyone** you trust in the first instance – but be sure it is reported to an adult

Pupils who see others being bullied should report this to any member of staff.

Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied must report this to the Pastoral Team and also log the issue on SIMS.

Reports of bullying will be logged by referral which will be placed in the victims and bullies file.

Where bullying is a racist, homophobic or hate attack, a report will be made to the police if required in liaison with the student and parents/carers.

Where required the academy will report incidents to external agencies such as Children's Services via the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Guidance on bullying for teaching and support staff is provided in the Induction process.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by the Head of House, Pastoral Manager or Form Tutor.

We will provide support to pupils who are bullied:

- They will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault.
- We will assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We will encourage them to talk about how they feel.
- We will try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- We will try to ensure that they feel safe.
- We will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.
- We will affirm that the bullying can be stopped and that our academy will persist with intervention until it does.
- We will listen to their version of events.
- We will interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying.
- We will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying.

- We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop.
- We will adopt a joint problem solving approach where this is appropriate, and ask the pupils involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage pupils involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others.
- We will consider sanctions under our academy's Engagement for Learning Policy.
- When bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the pupil involved at an early stage.
- We will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them.
- We will follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again.
- If the expertise is not available within the academy we will refer to the relevant outside agencies such as CAMHS.

Support for the victim includes:

- Offering continuous support with a designated member of staff/key contact
- Referral to a Peer Mentor if appropriate
- Referral to the Listening Service, School Nurse Drop-In Project or Nurture Group if appropriate

WHEN TOUGHER MEASURES ARE NEEDED

If necessary, we will invoke the full range of sanctions that are detailed in the Academy's Engagement for Learning Policy. These may include:

- Removal from the group/form;
- Verbal warning;
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime;
- After school SLT Detention;
- Behaviour report/Contract with Year Team;
- Withholding participation in academy events that are not an essential part of the curriculum, such as playing for a sports team.

The range of strategies also includes fixed term and permanent exclusion from academy. If the bullying is in the form of a serious physical attack, the Academy will not hesitate to involve the Police.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone within the Academy is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another.
- Adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy.

Staff are expected to adhere to the aims of this policy and challenge bullying wherever they may come across it.

Trust Board members are expected to monitor the behaviour within the academy with particular regard to bullying, ensuring the academy is challenging bullying and taking steps to promote an anti-bullying climate with regular data checking to track trends and frequency.

Students are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report, including using the email Be Strong support system.
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in the Academy.

Remember if you are a **Bystander** you know:

- Know what is going on
- Will be worried about someone
- May not know what to do
- may worried about being seen as a “grass”

Parents/carers can help by:

- Supporting our Friendship and Anti-bullying policy, the home school agreement and academy procedures.
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of the Academy.

EVALUATING OUR POLICY

We will evaluate and review our Friendship and Anti-bullying policy on an annual basis or as guidance is issued. When reviewing the policy we will involve pupils, parents, Trust Board Members and staff. If concerns are raised about the policy, these will be investigated and the policy adapted if necessary. The review will be carried out using the following measures:

- The numbers of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period. This is reviewed by the Academy's Trust Board.
- Pupils' perceptions of bullying in the academy through student voice activities

- We will investigate patterns of absence to ensure that children are not taking unnecessary days off school due to fear of being bullied.

OWNERSHIP OF THIS POLICY

This policy was drawn up by a working group of staff and pupils, overseen by the Student Council.

The policy applies to all staff and to all pupils, whether temporarily or permanently on the Academy roll.

Bullying: Staff guidance

What is it?

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Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong. Within the Academy we will pay particular attention to:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying;
- Sexual bullying;
- The use of homophobic language;
- Bullying of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities.

Where is it?

Everywhere:

Classrooms, Toilets, Alleys, Buses, Playground, Library, Heartspace, Queues.

How do I spot it?

Staff are in an ideal position to see bullying. Watch for:

- Lone individuals;
- Furtive groups;
- Changes in behaviour;

- Dishevelment;
- Loss of equipment, money;
- Pupils attempting to get into safe areas;
- Pupils attempting to befriend adults;
- Pupils handing items over to other pupils.

Indicators:

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school;
- Doesn't want to go on the bus;
- Begs to be driven to school;
- Changes their usual routine;
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- Begins to truant;
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- Starts stammering;
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- Feels ill in the morning;
- Begins to do poorly in school work;
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing';
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a bully);
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost';
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen);
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- Is bullying other children or siblings;
- Stops eating;
- Is frightened to say what's wrong;
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received;

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

What can I do?

As you are walking around the Academy please be vigilant. The more eyes the better.

If you think you might be witnessing bullying, report the incident. If it looks serious the reception staff will quickly find a member of staff. All incidents are investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken in line with our Friendship and Anti Bullying Policy.

Guidance for Pupils:

All Forms of Bullying are unacceptable!

Your Rights:

At Bexhill Academy we believe that you have the right:

- to live your life in peace and safety;
- to be an individual and be proud of being different;
- to say "**no**" firmly to anything you think is wrong;
- to protect yourself by ignoring others, or by walking away;
- to tell a member of staff if someone is making you unhappy;
- not to be bullied.

Your Responsibilities:

At **Bexhill Academy** we believe you have these responsibilities:

- not to be a bully;
- not to put up with any form of bullying;
- to work with others to stop bullying;
- to inform a member of staff of any form of bullying;
- not to be afraid of reporting any incidents (doing nothing suggests you are supporting bullying);
- not to put up with bullies within your group of friends.

You do not have to put up with bullies.

Tell someone if it happens to you.

Tell if you see it happening to others.

Tell

Tell

Tell

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

The following outside agencies and organisations are available to provide further support to the school, parents, carers and pupils:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0300 0115142
www.ace-ed.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre 0808 802 0008
www.childrenslegalcentre.com

KIDSCAPE 08451205204
www.kidscape.org.uk

Family Lives 08088 002222
www.familylives.org.uk

Youth Access
www.youthaccess.org.uk

Anti-bullying alliance
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Beat Bullying
www.beatbullying.org.uk