Anti-bullying policy – appendix

Retford Oaks Academy

September 2024

Diverse Academies

Contents

1   Objectives of this policy

Retford Oaks Academy Anti Bullying Policy outlines what it will do to prevent and tackle bullying in years 7-13 inclusive.

2   Underlying principle

Retford Oaks Academy is a caring community where the well-being of each of its member is a prime concern. All students have the right to expect that school will be a safe, caring place where they will not experience mental or physical harm e.g. humiliation, fear, peer or adult abuse. The Academy ethos acknowledges that we have mutual responsibility for each other. Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated.

We will promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Actively promoting the values means we challenge opinions or behaviours in our school that are contrary to fundamental British values.

The school is aware of its legal obligations including the Equalities Act 2010. We are aware of our role within the local community supporting parent/carers and working with other agencies outside the school where appropriate.

3   Policy development

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from;

- Members of staff (through regular agenda items at staff meetings, consultation documents and surveys)
- Governors (discussions at governor's meetings, training)
- Parent/carer (parents will be encouraged to contribute by taking part in written consultations, parents meetings and parent focus groups producing a shorter parent's guide)
- Children and young people (students contribute to the development of the policy through the school council, circle time discussions etc. The school council will develop a student friendly version to be displayed and/or go in planners)
- Other partners (visiting external providers in school and external providers off site (24-19 curriculum), breakfast clubs and after school providers. Representatives from the local community, police etc)

This policy is available:

- In the school prospectus
- From the school office
- Child friendly versions are on display, in welcome packs for new pupils
- A shorter version is available for all parents/carers.

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- It is usually persistent/reparative.

4   Our Academy Community

- Discusses, monitors and reviews out anti-bullying policy on a regular basis
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying
- Encourages students and their parents/carers to report all types of bullying (real and/or perceived) appropriately.
- Ensures that students are aware that all bullying concerns are dealt with sensitively and effectively so that students feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/carers in turn work with the academy to up-hold the anti-bullying policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from relevant organisations when appropriate.

5   Roles and responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parent/carers, LA and outside agencies and appointing an Anti-bullying co-ordinator who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

The Anti-bullying Co-ordinator in our school is the Vice Principal

A nominated Governor is responsible for Anti-Bullying (Behaviour)

Their responsibilities are:

- Policy development and review involving students, staff governor, parent/carers and relevant local agencies.
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and co-ordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Co-ordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

6   Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally

Our philosophy is summed up in our STOP campaign which defines bullying as 'Several Times on Purpose'.

Retford Oaks Academy will work to ensure that there is a common understanding of what constitutes bullying and to inform the whole school community about the anti-bullying stance the school takes. The school will endeavour to ensure that students, as well as staff and other members of the school are fully engaged in developing and reviewing anti-bullying work and that all pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of the bystander.

Teachers have the power to disciple pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside local shops, or in a town or village centre. Typically, this would include such incidents when pupils were in school uniform or representing the school in some other way.

This does not mean that the school has responsibility for the behaviour of students on mobile devices/social media and outside of school hours, during the school holidays or at the weekends. During this time, young people are the responsibility of their parents.

Bullying can include:

- Name calling (including the use of derogatory nick-names), taunting, mocking, making offensive comments: which can be construed as racially, sexually, homophobic or physically motivated.
- Any physical harm caused by deliberate or reckless behaviour: kicking, hitting, punching, tripping up, hair pulling, scratching etc.
- Threatening demeanour towards others who are younger, smaller or more sensitive.
- Taking belongings
- Deliberate exclusion from groups and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours.
- Sending inappropriate text messaging and electronic messaging - including through websites, social networking. **Where this type of bullying occurs out of school we will endeavour to work with parents and the police to address the issue. However, it is the sole responsibility of parents, to be aware of and monitor their children's use of the internet.
- Taking photographic images and downloading them for publication on social networking sites. Sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet. **Where this type of bullying occurs out of school, we will endeavour to work with parents and the police to address the issue. However, it is the responsibility of the parents, to be aware of and monitor their children's use of mobile phones and the internet.
- Producing offensive graffiti.

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required.

7   Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- Age
- Being or becoming a transsexual person
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or having a child
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy, Roma Travellers
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
  These are called 'protected characteristics'.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to the local authority for monitoring purposes.

Other vulnerable groups include:

- Bullying related to appearance of health
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Prejudice Related Language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic transphobic and disablist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friend, family member or their parent/carers.

In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad broken or wrong. In addition to this, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language can often be targeted at students who have lesbian, gay or bisexual family members and students who do not conform to gender stereotypes or are seen to be 'different' in some way We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent uses of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying:

All staff and students are aware of behaviour, which is considered to be bullying.

- When incidents of bullying are reported they are always taken seriously.
- A wide range of strategies addressing the problems of both victims and bullies are in place to deal with any incidents of bullying along with intervention strategies.
- There is regular supervision of all areas of the school and review of where and when any reported incidents take place. This includes break and lunchtime areas, pre-school and after school clubs and activities.

- Actively create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable students.

8   Parents and the wider community

Parents of all students involved in any incidents of bullying will be informed at the earliest possible moment. Parent/carers may be invited into school if appropriate to support any restorative processes.

- We will organise workshops for parents to come and discuss issues of bullying and preventative approaches.

9   Staff Training

- All staff have annual appropriate safeguarding training.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to support students who have been bullied: both the victims and perpetrators and to ensure that all incidents are reported to the Head of House and in terms of homophobic, biphobia or transphobic bullying, reported to the LGBT Champion team.

10   Responsibilities

- All students have a responsibility to help victims of bullying by talking to them and by saying no to bullying. They should try to tell the bullies (with support where necessary) why what they are doing is wrong and should tell a teacher, member of staff or peer mentor so the appropriate support and actions can be implanted.
- Parents can support children by listening to their concerns and reassuring them that the matter will be dealt with. Concerns should be discussed with the students' tutor, Head of Year so that action can be taken, support put in place and the situation is dealt with effectively.
- Students who are the victims of bullying can deal with the situation by telling someone: a friend, peer mediator, teacher, and an adult in school or parent or by using the See it, Say it QR codes.

11   Sanctions

Sanctions may include:

- Verbal reprimand to student
- Meeting with parent/carers

- Temporary removal from class
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Other disciplinary measures (Detentions)
- Internal isolation
- Exclusion for repeated or one off serious offences

Restorative approaches may include:

- Small group pastoral/restorative support
- Buddying
- Discussion time spend with HoY/Member of staff
- Meetings with victims, bullies, parent/carers and staff
- Counselling

12 Possible interventions strategies

Below are a number of strategies that staff can suggest to students as a way of helping to deal with a bullying situation. They will have to be explained and in many cases will need to be practised.

N.B whatever strategies are tried, the member of staff MUST follow it up and check how effective (or not) it has been. Also they MUST still report the incident.

1. **Be assertive not aggressive:** If the person being bullied acts in an aggressive way, then this can make the matter worse. Practice in speaking in a positive manner can help. De-escalate do not escalate the situation.

2. **Call for help:** ask for help from anyone around. This is where the "bystander" intervention comes into place. Work encouraging all students to take an active part in helping others will be a part of the ongoing work which will be carried out throughout the year. If outside the school then draw the attention of any adult. E.g a shopkeeper.

3. **Escape:** Rehearse getting out of situation, without losing face and then talk to an appropriate person. If possible, ask for "bystanders" to help you escape.

4. **Saying NO:** everyone can learn to do this but it does take practice. Remember though not to be aggressive. Rehearse this in groups.

5. **Broken record:** choose a simple sentence and repeat it e.g. "no I don't want to". Again this must be practiced so that it can be said with confidence. A variation of this is to add another sentence to the "Broken Record".

6. **Fogging:** This means being vague and not allowing yourself to react. Bore the bully by agreeing with what they say. Use words like '"possibly" or "probably" or "You think so". This last one is useful for name calling, (Again practice will help).

7. **Positive self-talk:** role play walking through groups of people saying things about themselves that they like. This acts as a barrier to the bullying. It is not walking away but it is also not ignoring. Look the bully in the eye, but do not smile. This is in fact a non-verbal challenge.

8. **Walking away:** This is not quite the same as "Escape". Practice in groups – "No I don't want to", and then walk away to the side. This is better than backing away.

9. **Tell parents:** This should be encouraged so that everyone can work together.

The above are some suggestions that can be tried. There are others such as avoiding places where bullying can take place or always staying with others.

Sometimes bullies will use the internet and mobile phones, so here are some websites that offer advice:

http://www.childnet.com/downloads/mobilesQ.pdf

Cyberbullying:

http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/cyberbullying.aspx

Counselling:

http://www.counselling-directory.org.uk

Don't forget our bullying email contact if you are experiencing bullying of any sort. We pledge to respond within 24 hours and help you:

Anti-bullying@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

In addition, we have our specific LGBTQ email contact, for reports or questions regarding homophobic, biphobic or transphobic incidents:

LGBT@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

13 Involvement of student support for Anti-Bullying

We:

- Will canvass student views on the extent and nature of bullying;
- Will ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying;
- Will ensure that students are aware of the sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying;
- Will involve students in anti-bullying campaigns;
- Ensure the details of bullying helplines and websites are openly available;
- Raise awareness via Anti- -Bullying week annually in November
- Promote understanding of our Anti-Bullying culture via PHSE/Drop down days

- Use specific curriculum/PDE input on area of concerns such as Hate Crimes or Cyber Bullying to educate and enable discussion and understanding.

14   Liaison with parent/carers

We:

- ensure that parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying (the Academy Mentor, Head of Year or form tutors)
- ensure that parents/carers know where to access independent advice about Bullying;
- work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying;
- ensure that parent/carers know about our complaints procedure;
- We will work with parents to support victims of bullying, ensuring parents are aware;
- We will work with parents of those accused of bullying, in terms of sanction and support them to ensure it doesn't happen again.

15   Retford Oaks Academy procedure for reported incidents of bullying

- All reported incidents of bullying, actions and outcomes are recorded.
- The victim is counselled by the adult to whom the incident is reported.
- If the adult cannot deal with the situation, it is passed to the Head of Year or a member of staff chosen by the victim.
- The incident is recorded plus the action taken against the perpetrator. If a racial element to the bullying is suspected, then the Academy Principal/Nominated Assistant Principal is immediately informed. The victim is involved in the discussion regarding sanction(s).
- Sanctions are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking into account all parties.
- Parents are informed if appropriate.
- In some cases, exclusion may be appropriate.
- The perpetrator is given support and appropriate help.

The victim is 'followed up' for period of time after the incident to make sure that no further incidents have occurred.

15   Recording bullying and evaluating the policy

Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident and this will be stored on My concern for HOY to analyse. (A sample recording form is attached)

Prejudice related bullying/incidents should be reported to the local authority using the guidelines set out in Nottinghamshire guidelines for schools: Bullying and Prejudice – related incidents (August

2014) **These should be sent in electronic format, ideally encrypted, with a password sent in a separate email to** ecas@notsscc.gov.uk**.**

It is no longer necessary however, to submit a termly nil return to the team or complete a specific form. Schools are advised that a simple email to ecas@nottscc.gov.uk stating at the end of the academic year that no incidents have been reported to the school, will now suffice.

Information stored in school will be used to ensure individuals incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy. This information will be discussed by staff in regular **department** meetings (as per academy timetable).

This information will be presented to the governors as part of the annual report. (A sample sheet is attached)

Links with other policies:

Policy	Why
Behaviour Policy	Rewards and sanctions, Codes of conduct
Safeguarding Policy	Child Protection
E-Safety and Acceptable use policy	Cyber bullying and e-safety
Equalities policy	Prejudice related crime (homophobia, race, religion and culture and SEN/disability
Confidentiality Policy	Reporting and recording
Behaviour Policy	Strategies to prevent bullying
Whistleblowing Policy	Guidelines to whistleblowing
Complaints Policy	Guidelines to make a complaint if families are not happy with the school's response

16   Review

- The Academy Academic Board reserves the right to review and amend this policy statement from time to time, as appropriate
- The policy will be reviewed and updated every two years.

Useful Organisations

- **Anti-bullying Alliance (ABA**) – www.anti-bullying.org
  Brings together more than 65 organisations with the aim of reducing bullying and creating safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow and learn.
- **Mencap** – www.mencap.org

Mencap is a learning disability charity that provides information and support to children and adults with a learning disability and to their families and carers.

- **Stonewall** – www.stonewall.org.uk

  The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender charity

- **Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH)** – www.eachaction.org.uk

  Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) is a charity and training agency helping people and organisations affected by homophobia. The website gives guidance, contact details and a Freephone helpline.

- **School's Out** – www.schools-out.org.uk

- **Childnet International** – www.childnet-int.org

  Childnet International – The UK's safer internet centre

- **NSPCC/Childline** – www.nspcc.org.uk, www.childline.org.uk

  Childline is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19, NSPCC run several campaigns to support young people around bullying and internet safety

- **Show racism the Red Card –** www.theredcard.org.uk