

## Anti-bullying Strategy

### Aims

The academy is a member of the Delta Academies Trust. It works closely with other DAT academies and with members of DAT's Core Team and other personnel to ensure that this policy is fully implemented.

The academy has clear aims for its anti-bullying policy:

- To create an environment where bullying is not tolerated, where every student is recognised, welcomed and valued
- To ensure that all students are aware of their rights and responsibilities and know how to seek help if those rights are infringed
- To encourage our students to work collaboratively together, develop positive relationships and offer each other mutual support and respect
- To encourage our students to act respectfully and considerately at all times
- To raise awareness and provide our students with the skills, knowledge and confidence to deal effectively with all instances of bullying, through a co-ordinated programme involving PSHE, collective worship, pastoral support and peer mentoring approaches.
- To use the processes around Restorative Justice
- To review and monitor the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy on an annual basis

Bullying, in whatever form, detrimentally affects the ability of our students to achieve and progress to the best of their ability, their well-being and will not be tolerated in any form, or to any degree.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DfE guidance **Tackling bullying of children with SEN and disabilities** - Guidance for schools on tackling bullying involving children with SEN and disabilities published in May 2008.

**Key objective: We will work hard to ensure that bullying plays no part in our community by proactively working with all students, their families and our staff to eradicate it and promptly dealing with all reported incidents.**

**Purpose of this policy:** This policy will provide clear guidance for staff on dealing with bullying incidents and the process by which the academy will seek to eradicate this issue.

## **Bullying Defined**

Bullying manifests itself in a number of ways:

- Physical e.g. Assaulting a person or damaging their property
- Verbal. e.g. Name calling or teasing, including homophobic abuse
- Sexually aggressive behaviour
- Indirect e.g. Damaging the reputation or character of the victim, or socially excluding them from games or conversation.
- Cyberbullying. Examples include; texting, e-mails or other digital communication, e.g. Chat rooms and social networks. (This is a particularly nasty form of bullying, as the bullying follows the victim into the home and outside school hours.)

No matter what form bullying takes, it is all abhorrent and damages both the victim and the bully to differing extents. Rossington All Saints Academy will make use of the best information and practices available to eradicate this problem.

Bullying affects the ability of a student to fully participate in and enjoy academy life and it is both an equal opportunities issue as well as a disciplinary offence, which the Principal, Governors and staff will do all in their power to resolve.

## **Preventing bullying**

Rossington All Saints Academy has a clear strategy, which it will share with all staff through a dedicated professional development programme. This strategy is clearly and comprehensively communicated to every member of our student population, their families and where appropriate with the community.

This strategy has been developed using current best practice not only from the UK, but also where appropriate, taking account of successes of schools in other countries.

The academy will take every opportunity to demonstrate to students, through the curriculum (PSHE programmes and Anti-Bullying Week), pastoral programmes, displays, assemblies and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying.

The academy has 'Special Safe Places' which vulnerable or sensitive students can freely access at breaks and lunchtimes, such as dedicated pastoral spaces which will have support staff/peer mentors in attendance.

Expert opinion says that bullying is a response to powerlessness. We will seek to engage all our students through our pastoral programme and our Student Council.

Staff will not ignore bullying or suspected bullying. All academy staff will intervene to prevent bullying incidents from taking place. After initial intervention, a referral will be made to the student's tutor or in their absence, the Assistant Principal -Inclusion.

We will encourage students to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher or other adult at the academy. Students will be told that they may bring a friend with them if they wish.

We will ensure that all staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the academy's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Staff will praise and encourage students when they show kindness and consideration to others.

### **Recognising the signs of bullying**

Rossington All Saints Academy recognises that any student can be bullied but certain factors can make bullying more likely:

1. A lack of close friends.
2. Shyness.
3. Race, religion, sexual orientation or social class.
4. A disability or difficulty
5. Differing family dynamics

### **Staff will suspect bullying is occurring if a student:**

1. Becomes withdrawn and anxious.
2. Shows deterioration in his / her work.
3. Starts to attend erratically.
4. Has a spurious illness.
5. Persistently arrives late.
6. Prefers to stay with adults.

### **Other signs may be that the 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.
- 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.
- Attempts or threatens to commit suicide
- Runs away from home.
- Is upset at night and has displayed a disruptive sleep pattern linked with increased nightmares.
- Is continuously complaining of feeling unwell in the morning and at school.
- Displays a downturn in their academic standards.
- Possessions and clothes torn or damaged or go missing.
- Asks for money or 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 are 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.

If you suspect a student is being bullied share your concerns with the student's tutor in the first instance or Learning Manager or Assistant Principal-Inclusion in their absence. Monitor the health and behaviour of the

student carefully and be prepared to promptly deal with any deterioration. If any deterioration is noted, agree with the student's tutor and other colleagues the most appropriate support, which may involve parents/carers.

**Any student who has knowledge of an incident of bullying must tell someone about it. This could be:**

- A member of staff.
- Academy Family or Parent Liaison Officer.
- The people who the student lives with.
- A friend.
- A member of the student council.
- A peer mentor.

**Bullying must never be kept a secret.**

### **Dealing with bullying**

All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable.

**In dealing with bullying, academy staff will:**

1. Not ignore it.
2. Not make premature assumptions.
3. Listen to all accounts of the incidents.
4. Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages students to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves. Restorative Justice approaches will be used where appropriate by trained staff.
5. Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed.
6. Ensure that all relevant personnel within school (Tutor / House Director/ Student Support Mentor /Assistant Principal-Inclusion/ Vice Principal) have been informed.
7. Record the incident promptly on the appropriate system, as soon as practically possible after the incident, ideally within the day.
8. Incidents will be reviewed to identify students, type, style and location of bullying. This will enable the academy to identify patterns and to develop appropriate action plans.
9. Action will be implemented as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
10. Liaison with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Assistant Principal-Inclusion must be made to ensure there is targeted support to address the underlying issues
11. Liaison with appropriate external agencies including the School and Young Persons Police Officer.

### **Procedure to support a student who has been bullied**

1. Talk to the student away from other students, but with other staff close by.
2. Listen to the student's account of the incident.
3. Reassure the student that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do.
4. Make it clear to the student that she/he is not to blame for what has happened.
5. Ideally, allow the student to write a statement or make a note of what they have said.
6. Explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately.

**Ask the student:**

1. What happened?
2. Whether or not this was the first incident, if not how many other incidents have there been.
3. Who was involved?
4. Where it happened.
5. Who saw what happened (Staff as well as students).
6. What the student had already done about it.
7. Depending on the severity of the incident, whether parents/carers ought to be contacted

Ideally, the student should be given the time and appropriate accommodation to make a written statement which is jointly checked by the student and member of staff and where necessary amended to ensure clarity. This information must be passed on as soon as possible to the student's tutor/house director, or in their absence, the Assistant Principal-Inclusion. It is usual to remove the accused bully and any witnesses from formal learning as soon as possible, to get them to write statements on their own about the incident.

Members of staff who witnessed the incident should be asked to write the relevant details down as soon as possible and give these to the staff investigating.

The victim should be consulted regarding their return to learning activity and where possible their views heeded.

**Supporting students****Students who have been bullied**

It is likely that the tutor or Learning Manager will work with these students, but it is essential that the students are fully supported during this traumatic time through contacts with staff and with students. Ultimately, the student must make the decision who they would like to speak to. Usual choices are: Student's tutor, or Student's House Director, or SENCo, or Assistant Principal-Inclusion or Academy Nurse/Counsellor, the Academy Chaplain or member of the Chaplaincy team.

The student's own peers could have an important role in acting as counsellors or mediators. This will be developed over time.

**Students who have bullied**

It is also important for the bully to receive counselling, to prevent further incidents. Often, bullies themselves have been victims. Usually a member of the pastoral team will carry out this role. Procedures and practices which use Restorative Justice will be used wherever possible to resolve conflicts.

Talk to the student about how things are going, their progress and friends.

1. Ask why they acted as they did.
2. Explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy.
3. Discuss with the student how to join in with others without bullying.
4. Give the student lots of praise and encouragement for the times when she/he is being kind and considerate to others.
5. Inform and involve parents/carers when appropriate.

6. If appropriate, there could be a meeting between the victim and the bully to enable the bully to apologise / explain why, etc

### **Reporting and recording incidents**

Bearing in mind the seriousness of these incidents it is imperative that all incidents are:

- Promptly dealt with
- Reported promptly (to the student's tutor/House Director in the first instance and if unavailable, the Assistant Principal-Inclusion or other Senior Leader) well before the end of the day
- Recorded using the proforma /systems available
- Communicated to the student's tutor at the earliest possible opportunity.

### **Bullying by text message, mobile phones and social media**

- Students will be warned about the need for care when giving out their mobile phone number
- A record should be kept of the date and time of any offensive messages
- Students should be encouraged to show the messages to their tutor or member of academy staff
- Students who report bullying by text message will be taken seriously
- The student's family may need to contact the police
- If such bullying is carried out on a persistent basis or if there is threat of violence, it should be treated as any other serious bullying incident
- Malicious e-mails should be dealt with in the same manner
- Students who take photographs on their phones with malicious intent should be dealt with in the same manner

The academy will follow the DfE guidance on safe internet use and ensure all students are taught how to protect themselves when using the internet. (Refer to the academy's ICT Policy for further details)

### **Working with Parents and carers**

We recognise that parents and carers have a key role to play supporting victims and counselling instigators. The academy will work closely with parents and carers to deal with bullying

Bullying in the academy is everyone's problem. All staff, students and parents/carers should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the academy a happier place for everyone.

Through all academy communications: Website, newsletters, displays and in meetings, the academy will ensure that parents/carers are aware of our Anti-Bullying Policy. A section will be included in the academy's Information to Parents' Handbook on our Anti-Bullying policy and relevant sections, to support parents/carers.

Parents/carers and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.

The academy will encourage parents/carers who suspect that a child is bullying or being bullied to immediately contact the academy and make an appointment to see the student's tutor or in their absence, the House Director or Assistant Principal-Inclusion as soon as possible.

Parents/carers will be informed of incidents and will be involved in discussions. The academy will discuss with parents/carers how they can work together to stop the bullying.

### **Reinforcement of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

This policy will be reinforced effectively across the academy via the following:

1. PSHE lessons will cover bullying in Year 7 and in response to specific incidents where appropriate.
2. Collective Worship will focus on issues associated with bullying and in response to incidents where appropriate.
3. Self esteem and assertiveness training will be carried out in PSHE.
4. The Anti-Bullying Policy will be included in the Year 7 Booklet for all new students.
5. Reference to Anti-Bullying will be included in the Year 7 Induction Evening.
6. The Anti-Bullying Policy will be included in both the Student Planner and the Staff Handbook.
7. Prospective year 7 students will participate in Anti-bullying education as part of their familiarisation programme.
8. As part of our primary schools' transition programme, an anti-bullying element will be included to reassure and support students. Students who primary school colleagues identify as being particularly at risk will be given additional support.

### **Dealing with Persistent Bullying**

If counselling and other preventative measures, such as peer support strategies do not succeed, persistent bullying will be dealt with under the academy's discipline policy. The bully may for example:

1. Be removed from the group.
2. Be put in detention.
3. Be banned from an academy trip or other events where these are not an essential part of the curriculum.
4. Be placed in the academy's inclusion/isolation unit for a fixed period.
5. Referred to the academy's police liaison officer, as part of the academy's Mini-Legal system

In the most serious cases, isolation at another DAT academy may be considered if the bullying:

1. Involves serious actual or threatened violence against another student.
2. Amounts to persistent and defiant misbehaviour.

### **Putting Policy into Practice**

The academy will at the earliest opportunity ensure that the following practices are established to either prevent bullying or deal effectively with bullying incidents:

- Carry out a confidential annual bullying survey to raise students' awareness
- Actively promote Anti-Bullying campaigns delivered through collective worship and supported in PSHE and tutor time
- Use of a confidential e-mail system for bullies and victims to be identified (Confide)

- Trained students to act as peer mentors, who are willing to give support to victims of bullying. This scheme will be facilitated and monitored by the Learning Mentor.
- Improve communication with parents and carers, to ensure that they are well-informed of all reported incidents involving their son or daughter.
- Apply consistent and firm sanctions to all aspects of bullying. Students who persistently bully others will be supported through an increasingly robust series of measures to help them resolve their problems.
- Continue to stringently use the 'Mini-Legal' system of restorative justice

### **Performance Indicators**

The academy will use a number of performance indicators to gauge the extent of bullying, in line with section 8 above:

- Student behaviour on the site
- Levels of punctuality and attendance
- Evidence of self-discipline
- Good manners and consideration for others
- Levels of exclusion
- Police referrals
- Referrals through the pastoral support programme for agency involvement
- Feedback from student councils and parental/carers questionnaires