

# Ashton Community Science College

## Addressing Bullying Policy

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# Ashton Community Science College

## Policy for Addressing Bullying

**Ashton Community Science College does not support any behaviour which causes distress to students; this is evident in all the documents produced by the school and is reflected in our aims. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and staff must work together to counter it. All reports of bullying behaviour are taken seriously and are recorded. All members of the school community have the right to feel safe.**

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying falls into two categories:

- i) emotionally harmful behaviour, such as taunting, spreading hurtful rumours and excluding people from groups, or cyber bullying and
- ii) Physically harmful behaviour, such as kicking, hitting, pushing or other forms of physically abusive behaviour.

The agreed Ashton Community Science College definition of bullying is as follows

The behaviour constitutes bullying if it is:

- **Persistent**
- **Intentional**
- **Targeted**

Specific types of can bullying include but are not limited to:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- bullying related to home circumstances
- bullying related to sexual orientation (HBT)
- sexist or sexual bullying

It is also important to acknowledge that bullying behaviour can and does occur **anywhere** and **everywhere**; in school, within the home and the community. As a school we actively promote anti-bullying initiatives, ensure students can recognise bullying behaviour, encourage a philosophy where it's ok to tell and we respond to all allegations of bullying.

### **When this policy applies**

The provisions of this policy will be applicable in relation to behaviour outside school, on school business (for example school trips, sports fixtures, work experience etc), and also where there is a clear link between the behaviour and the maintaining of good order and discipline within the school. In appropriate circumstances, the provisions of the policy will also extend to cover the conduct of students when they are not on school premises and not under the control or supervision of a member of staff.

### **Bullying outside school premises**

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Head teachers the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not at school. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is

reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. If the misbehaviour could be a criminal or pose a threat to a member of the public the police should always be informed.

### **Recognising bullying behaviour**

"Bullying behaviour includes: name-calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; pushing; taking belongings; inappropriate text messaging and emailing; sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups; and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours."  
(DCSF Guidance Safe to Learn p11 paragraph 1.7).

### **Responding to an allegation of bullying behaviour**

Any allegation of bullying behaviour should be dealt with as thoroughly and as quickly as possible. For many students the disclosure that he/she is being bullied is an intense step, and one that fills the student with anxiety. Adults should try to remember that the student might well be concerned about the response the adults will make. Students often fear they will not be believed or that there will be reprisals from the aggressor.

- Never ignore suspected bullying
- Don't make premature assumptions
- Listen carefully to all accounts
- Adopt a problem-solving approach
- Follow up repeatedly.

All students are encouraged to tell a member of staff if they, or if someone they know is being bullied.

Whilst it is the responsibility of all staff to reinforce anti-bullying and support victims of bullying, incidents will be referred to the Pastoral Team to be investigated and dealt with swiftly.

### If a parent complains about bullying

When a parent/ carer first raises a concern about bullying behaviour it is important that the school responds quickly and in a positive way. Even if a concern is reported informally by a parent/ carer e.g. at the school gate, the member of staff should still notify the student's Progress Leader and it should be logged on Synergy. Support should be offered to the parent/ carer as to how they might support their child.

### **Responding to a clear incident of bullying behaviour**

Staff suspecting an incident of bullying should:

- Reassure the student that their concerns are being taken seriously and will be investigated
- Contact the student's Progress Leader so the incident can be investigated. The Progress Leader will be the student's key person unless the student disagrees.

The Progress Leader will then follow these guidelines.

1. Obtain 'version of events' from the victim, perpetrator and anyone who witnessed the event.
2. The Progress Leader will record the incident on Synergy copying in the DSL.
3. The Progress Leader will contact the parents of the student who is being bullied and also the perpetrator.
4. Both the victim and the perpetrator will be given support.
5. If bullying has taken place the perpetrator will receive a sanction and this must include reparation and an apology if the victim is happy with this.
6. Sanctions applied will depend upon the individual incident but may include:
  - Alteration to seating plans in classes

- School detentions
- Restricting access to areas of the school
- Isolation
- Transfer of teaching class or form
- In serious cases the school may use a suspension
- In the most serious cases a managed move may be considered

Attempts must be made to help the perpetrator change their behaviour. This may require a referral to an outside agency.

### **Responding to incidents of cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying and the majority of cases can be dealt with anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy. However, students, staff and parents should recognise the ways in which cyber bullying differs from other forms of bullying and reflect that in how they respond to it. In addition to considerations about the invasiveness of cyber bullying, the size of the audience, and other such factors, cyber bullying yields potential 'evidence' in a way that other forms of bullying do not.

There are other additional reporting routes other than through school which victims of cyber bullying may use, for example through mobile phone companies, internet providers and social network providers. The person being bullied should keep examples of texts or emails received as these may help the investigation.

The student will be advised on steps they can take to avoid the reoccurrences, for example, not to reply to any messages, block or remove people from their friendship list.

Steps will be taken to identify the person responsible for the bullying. For example, looking at IT monitoring systems and computer logs, speaking to possible witnesses and with police involvement obtaining user information from the service provider.

Once the person responsible for the cyber bullying has been identified as in other cases of bullying sanctions will be applied. Steps will be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully. They will also be made aware of the policy for internet and mobile phone use.

### **Responding to incidents of HBT bullying**

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying (HBT) will be dealt with in the same way as any other incident of bullying.

### **Preventative measures**

Attempts are made to prevent bullying by including work on self-esteem, friendship and bullying in every Year Group's PSHE programme. We have an annual anti-bullying week, assemblies, thought for the week, and an annual On-line safety week to ensure anti-bullying has a high profile in the academic year.

The school operates an 'open door' and 'OK to tell policy'. We are an anti-bullying school.

### **Monitoring the policy process**

Data from the Student On-line Questionnaires will be used for establishing baseline data on which the monitoring process will be built. The School Council is also another way students can voice their opinion. The DSL and Progress Leaders will monitor the number and types of bullying incidents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- On-line Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Travel Policy