



2020-21

We recognise that:

- Bullying is “behaviour, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally”.
- One person or a group can bully others.
- Bullying can occur either face to face between individuals or groups or online, using information technology, such as computers or mobile phones.
- Bullying can include:
 - verbal teasing or making fun of someone;
 - excluding children from games and conversations;
 - pressurising other children not to be friends with the person who is being bullied;
 - spreading hurtful rumours or passing round inappropriate photographs/images/drawings;
 - shouting at or verbally abusing someone;
 - stealing or damaging someone’s belongings;
 - making threats;
 - forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous;
 - harassment on the basis of race, gender, sexuality or disability;
 - physical or sexual assault (although all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection procedures).

In addition:

- “Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; upskirting, sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals” (Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2020).
- Bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person’s mental and physical health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm.

- We all have a role to play in preventing and putting a stop to bullying.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To prevent bullying from happening in our organisation, as much as possible.
- When bullying does happen, to make sure it is stopped as soon as possible and that those involved receive the support they need.
- To provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

1. Developing a code of behaviour that sets out how all members of Blackpool Aspire Academy are expected to behave, both in face-to-face contact and online.
2. Assisting new members of the academy community through caseworker support.
3. Allocating SEND students an additional key worker from the SEND department who are available to speak to regarding any concerns including bullying.
4. Delivering an assembly programme to make all students aware of who and where to go in the Academy for support and by providing a clear message that bullying will not be tolerated.
5. Making it clear that any form of bullying including examples such as upskirting, sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up and not 'just banter'.
6. Holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who are linked to Blackpool Aspire Academy to ensure that they understand our anti-bullying policy. These discussions will focus on:
 - everyone's shared responsibility to look after each other and uphold the behaviour code;
 - giving people a chance to discuss their feelings and be listened to;
 - respecting the fact that we are all different;
 - making sure that no one is without friends;
 - dealing with problems in a positive way;
 - identifying the most appropriate form of support that is available.
7. Ensuring that complaint and escalation procedures are clear.
8. Making sure that staff, volunteers, children and young people, and parents and carers have clear information about our anti-bullying policy, complaints procedure, code of behaviour and anti-bullying procedure.
9. Appointing Anti-bullying Ambassadors to work with students across the Academy to promote a zero-tolerance culture.
10. Identifying a lead member of staff to coordinate and support the Anti-bullying Ambassador team.
11. Providing safe spaces (Library, Student Services, lunch clubs) for students to access.

When bullying occurs, we will respond to it by:

- Having easily accessible support for students and families
- Having a clear anti-bullying procedure in place;
- Providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying;
- Addressing the issue from the point of view of the person being bullied, the bully, any bystanders and Blackpool Aspire Academy as a whole;
- Reviewing the plan developed to address the bullying, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved;
- Avoiding any punishments that make the individuals concerned seem small, or look or feel foolish in front of others.
- Ensuring that all incidents are reported accordingly.
- Quickly addressing any issues that are reported.
- Dealing with incidents consistently.
- Ensuring that everyone involved provides a written account where appropriate and provides copies of any relevant evidence, such as emails, screenshots etc.
- Ensuring that any relevant information is documented in the student files.
- Sanctioning perpetrators appropriately and signposting relevant support with the intention of preventing any reoccurrence and helping them to understand the error in their actions. We recognise that bullying may often be a manifestation of the perpetrators' own problems, which the Academy will endeavour to offer support on as it does for all students.
- Increasing the sanctions issued to any student who is a persistent perpetrator, which may include exclusion from the Academy.
- Using a restorative justice system for victims and perpetrators which should be facilitated by the student caseworkers and, where relevant, the Academy PCSO.
- Arranging support for victims and/or perpetrators from outside agencies. These could for instance include council youth workers

Staff training

- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. Therefore:
- The Academy advises staff and the Academy Council of their responsibility to intervene in and/or report bullying incidents.
- The Academy ensures that all staff are sufficiently equipped to deal with bullying, including identification of potential signs of bullying such as victims being persistently late, having mysteriously lost belongings, being careless in their work, appearing isolated from peers or acting withdrawn.
- All members of the Student Support team are trained in restorative justice.

- Staff are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.
- Members of the Student Support team have had CEOP training regarding cyber bullying and deliver this to assemblies and as part of the PSHE curriculum carried out in form tutor time.
- Our Academy motto, “Don’t assume we know”, is displayed on the form room notice boards and form tutors refer to this regularly to keep it in the minds of the students and explained in assemblies.

Promoting anti-bullying behaviour

The Academy:

- Makes transition arrangements for new pupils.
- Actively promotes anti-bullying through tutor time, assemblies, Aspirational days and student voice.
- Ensures that areas where bullying may occur outside of class time are adequately staffed.
- Maintains a zero-tolerance approach to violence.
- Trains students as anti-bullying ambassadors.
- Provides a safe space in the Library for students to speak to the Anti-bullying Ambassadors.
- Offers students with an interest in anti-bullying the opportunity to access relevant external courses such as the Diana Trust Anti-Bullying sessions.
- Completes regular surveys with pupils to obtain their opinions on the success of anti-bullying work.
- Celebrates differences and promotes respect, for example, Diversity club.
- Staff record incidents of bullying on ClassCharts, which allows a member of staff from the Student Support Team to investigate the incident immediately. ClassCharts allows this information to be shared with key staff including form tutors and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Encourages and rewards good behaviour.

Parental involvement

- The Academy promotes a whole-Academy approach to bullying by communicating this policy to staff, students, parents, and the wider community.
- At the annual New Parents evening in June and at all mid-year admissions parents are informed of the Academy anti-bullying practices in the form of a leaflet.
- Parents reporting bullying incidents either by telephone or email (using the information on the website) are dealt with promptly and feedback on progress and actions are provided within 24 hours, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

- Parents of perpetrators are contacted and their support sought to prevent further incident.
- The police are consulted if necessary.
- Initial contact with home is via Student Caseworkers. Where relevant, matters can be referred on to the Assistant Principal with responsibility for behaviour or any other senior leader - ultimately to the Principal, Executive Principal, and Academy Council.
- There is a link on the Academy's website giving parents/carers advice and answering FAQs.
- The website has a section on e-safety, including cyber-bullying, aimed at parents/carers.
- Information is given via handouts to new Year 7 parents/carers and to parents/carers and students at non-routine admissions.
- Parent e-safety updates are sent out with newsletters and are available on the website.

Online bullying during COVID pandemic

COVID-19 isolation and social distancing have pushed online bullying figures higher than ever before as children are spending more time in front of screens, whether for online school work or on social media. This has inevitably meant that children are more vulnerable to be bullied online at a time when they may already be suffering from enhanced anxiety and stress due to confinement, illness or unemployment in the family. Unfortunately, children have also been cut off from their normal support systems they have in school.

The government have produced 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying':

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

Additionally, there is a variety of cyberbullying advice from the National Bullying Helpline:

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/cyberbullying.html>

Other sources of information can be found on the E-safety section of the Aspire website.

Monitoring and review

- Regular feedback is given to the Academy Council.
- Bullying incidents are logged in ClassCharts. This allows the information to be shared and closely monitored with key staff including form tutors and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- This policy will be reviewed every year. The next review is due September 2021.

September 2020