



## Aspire Academy Anti-Bullying Policy 2024-25

### Aspire Academy recognises 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 (cyberbullying), 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 (all sexual incidents and all but very minor physical incidents constitute abuse and must be dealt with in accordance with child protection procedures).
  - prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying

### In addition:

- “Children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse) and it can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is important that all staff should be clear as to the school’s or college’s policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
- Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage

relationship abuse’); physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment. (Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2024).

- It can happen both inside and outside of school and online.
- 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 academy and in the community, 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 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, Attendance Office, lunch clubs) for students to access.

### **How to report bullying:**

We want all of our students and parents/carers to be able to share any concerns they have with a member of staff. You could talk to:

- Form tutors
- Class teachers
- Caseworkers
- Teaching Assistants
- Senior Leadership Team
- Any member of staff you feel comfortable talking to.
- You can email any concern through to: [admin@aspire.fcat.org.uk](mailto:admin@aspire.fcat.org.uk)
- There is a link on the main page of the website called 'Raise My Concern'. Parents/carers and students can use this link to raise any concern they have.

All of our staff have had safeguarding training and know who to pass your concerns on to. Please don't suffer in silence. We will respond to your concerns within 24 hours.

### **When bullying occurs, we will respond to it by:**

- We will do everything we reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made;
- 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 pastoral team and, where relevant, the local PCSO.
- Arranging support for victims and/or perpetrators from outside agencies.

## **Staff training**

- All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in school, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child on child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).
- It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. Therefore:
- The Academy advises staff and the Local Governing Body 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 Welfare 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.

- Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) can be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.

## **Promoting anti-bullying behaviour**

### **The Academy:**

- Makes transition arrangements for new pupils.
- Actively promotes anti-bullying through the Personal Development programme which includes form 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 bullying and 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 Edukey Safeguard my School & 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/Carers evening in June and at all mid-year admissions parents are informed of the Academy anti-bullying practices.
- Parents/carers 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/carers 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 Headteacher with responsibility for behaviour or any

other senior leader - ultimately to the Headteacher, Executive Headteacher, and Local Governing Body-

- There is a link on the Academy's website giving parents/carers advice and answering FAQs.
- There is a link on the main page of the website called 'Raise My Concern'. Parents/carers and students can use this link to raise any concern they have. A member of staff will respond within 24 hours.
- 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.

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](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 Local Governing Body.
- Bullying incidents are logged and analysed in ClassCharts. This allows the information to be shared and closely monitored with key staff including form tutors, the pastoral team and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Further information can also be found in the Safeguarding Policy 2024-25.
- This policy will be reviewed every year. The next review is due September 2025.

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