



Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

Linked policies (non exhaustive list) include:

- Behaviour for Learning
- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-Racism
- Equality
- Extremism and Radicalisation
- FCAT Garstang Community Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1) Statement of Intent

- To ensure a positive learning environment is created in which all stakeholders feel safe.
- To encourage an ethos of respect and support for all.
- To raise awareness of what is considered bullying behaviour and ensure that students are equipped with the skills to deal confidently and positively with incidents of bullying if they occur.
- To engage with all members of the GCA community to ensure that we create a learning environment in which bullying will not be tolerated.
- To update and review our practices regularly, informing parents/carers of any changes made to our anti-bullying policies or procedures, and signpost them to any useful resources.

2) Defining Bullying

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

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. For example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between students, or perceived differences.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. ([Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies. - Department for Education](#))

The various types of bullying are:

Verbal bullying - involving name calling or making use of written notes, e-mails or mobile phone messages, pictures or video clips (so called 'cyber bullying'); this bullying may include threats of physical violence, racist insults or threats, sexual insults or threats or other prejudice based behaviour.

Physical bullying - consisting of deliberate jostling, bumping, pushing or shoving or sexual touching. Those responsible may maintain that it was accidental when first detected, but it is a criminal offence if it involves assault, actual bodily harm or wounding. This type of bullying may involve theft or damage to property, accompanied by the threat of violence. Not all theft or damage is bullying, but it is where it is repeated and the intention is to create fear or to intimidate.

Indirect bullying - involving the manipulation of social networks with the intention of belittling an individual or individuals or excluding them or marginalising them from their friends and normal relationships; this can be by spreading rumours or making malicious accusations and might involve cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying can be multifaceted and therefore the following protection is in place:

- an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that includes clear statements about e-communications
- assemblies highlighting cyber bullying and CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)
- a multi-agency service dedicated to tackling the exploitation of children.

Bullying is not:

- A one-off comment said in anger in which there is no evident power imbalance between the students involved
- An argument between two students where both have been guilty of similarly offensive or threatening remarks
- A physical altercation between two students in which both have been willing participants.

The above examples will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with GCA's behaviour policy.

At GCA we understand that sometimes there is relational conflict between students. This is not defined as bullying where there is a balance of power. However, where there is unkindness between students the Inclusion Team will endeavour to support students and re-emphasise our core values of Grow, Care, Achieve.

3) Prevention

"A school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. The best schools develop a more sophisticated approach in which school staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

([Department for Education - Preventing and tackling bullying, July 2017](#))

Preventing bullying behaviours can be possible through a range of proactive measures. At GCA, we look for every opportunity to prevent bullying type behaviours from happening. Some of the actions we take to prevent bullying include:

- Bullying is addressed through the GCA/PSHE and RSE programme
- Structured Form Time and Assembly programmes support the CARE strategy which reinforce British Values and the ethos of our school
- Anti-bullying week is dedicated to raising awareness of bullying and reminding staff and students of their responsibilities to report it
- Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones around the school. This is partly to prevent cyber-bullying
- Duty staff are vigilant and look out for any bullying type behaviours, no matter how small
- Seating plans in lessons are carefully considered using any relevant information about the relationships between specific pupils
- The Inclusion Team regularly considers new ways to prevent bullying
- External speakers are used to raise awareness of key issues
- Working with the wider community such as the police/children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent to send a strong message that bullying is unacceptable within our school community.

GCA recognises that specific groups of students are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), young carers, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), those who are, or thought to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersexual, asexual or pansexual (LGBTQ+). As such, prevention of bullying considers the specific patterns of discrimination these groups face.

4) Procedures for Reporting Bullying Incidents

All students are encouraged to feel that it is right to tell someone if they are being bullied or if they think someone else is being bullied. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with quickly and appropriately. Whilst it is the responsibility of all staff within the academy to reinforce the anti-bullying strategy and support the victims of bullying, the Inclusion Team will lead investigations and arrange appropriate support and intervention.

Therefore, incidents of bullying should be referred to the Inclusion Team as quickly as possible. All behavioural concerns from the school day are reviewed and discussed during the Daily Inclusion Team Meeting to ensure all appropriate actions have been taken.

Staff suspecting an incident of bullying should:

- reassure the young person that their concerns are being taken seriously and will be investigated
- avoid labelling students as 'a bully' and 'a victim' – after an incident both students may need support to rebuild and reinforce self-image and esteem or restorative facilitation
- contact the Inclusion Team as soon as possible with details of the incident
- record the incident details on Bromcom

All reported incidents of bullying should be investigated using the following procedure:

- appropriate students will be interviewed by a member of the Inclusion Team and statements will be taken
- any additional supporting evidence will be gathered, such as viewing the CCTV footage
- details of all actions taken will be recorded on Bromcom

The recipient and perpetrator of any bullying incident will be monitored by the appropriate member of the Inclusion Team, including arranging any necessary follow up meetings. Parents/carers of both parties will be contacted at the time of the incident and updated on progress made and any support/interventions that have been put in place.

5) Roles

The Inclusion Team will:

- provide advice, support and assistance to any student who reports bullying. Where wider family support is required, it will be delivered through the Early Help process or increased Pastoral support via school
- accept referrals from members of academy staff on individual students who are causing concern (both recipients and perpetrators of bullying)
- ensure that any incidents of bullying are discussed during the Daily Inclusion Team Meeting and the bi-weekly line management meets of the Year Leaders. These will focus on the issues presented during the term to ensure appropriate tracking and intervention for all students
- where appropriate (if the perpetrator and victim are in agreement), use restorative practice strategies to allow the victim to explain the consequences of the perpetrator's actions to them face to face. Where used, this will be conducted in a safe and supported environment with an appropriate member of staff. Agreements would then be reached which would allow a new relationship to be established
- where appropriate, assign fully trained anti-bullying ambassadors to support both the victim and the perpetrator
- refer vulnerable students to appropriate services, e.g. counselling, Mental Health Practitioner, ACE Counsellor, Life Coach
- run discussion groups and work with students who have been identified as perpetrators of bullying in order to reduce the number of bullying incidents on the academy site
- in collaboration with all staff seek opportunities to promote the anti-bullying strategy at GCA, e.g. via assemblies, structured tutor time and the CARE strategy, GCA lessons, displays and promotion of national awareness campaigns.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- respond to student and parent voice to review and amend anti-bullying practices where appropriate
- monitor, review and update the anti-bullying policy and incidents of bullying in order to ensure the safety of all members of the academy community
- ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the GCA anti-bullying policy
- ensure that the policy is implemented through Inclusion Team, Year Leader and Form Tutor meetings
- strive to enhance the quality of safeguarding work in relation to bullying.

Governors will:

- ensure that an effective anti-bullying policy is in place and is reviewed annually

Parents and carers will:

- regularly speak to their child in order to promote a social conscience and awareness that reporting bullying is the right thing to do
- be aware of and support the academy's anti-bullying policy and procedures and use these to assist their child in understanding bullying behaviour
- support the academy's actions in dealing with proven cases of bullying
- work with the academy in order to support their child in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the academy's anti-bullying procedures
- engage in the Early Help process if wider support is required
- be responsible for monitoring their child's e-communication and social media use. Should cyber-bullying occur, parents are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate reporting mechanism is used. For example, the report feature on Facebook, red flag on Youtube or report to the local police.

6) Promoting the Anti- Bullying Policy, Culture and Ethos

GCA has a clear protocol for sustainable promotion of the anti-bullying policy and developing an academy-wide culture and ethos which supports tackling bullying. This is multifaceted through:

- appropriate citizenship embedded as part of the GCA/PSHE and RSE curriculum, students will be shown that bullying in any form is unacceptable
- the use of structured tutor time, CARE strategy, GCA's ethos of Grow Care Achieve, GCA/PSHE and RSE lessons, all of which develop discussion, raise awareness of and understanding of the impacts of bullying
- anti-bullying week activities which take place throughout the year with anti-bullying ambassadors and Student Leaders promoting the anti-bullying message throughout the GCA community.

7) Links

The websites listed below offer direct links to other sources of information for parents and young people:

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

A unique coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve our vision to: stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Useful information and links on LGBTQ issues.

ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk

Primarily a helpline for children but has useful information and links on bullying. Chips (Childline in Partnership with Schools) encourages schools to support students in setting up anti-bullying projects.

The Children's Society: www.childrenssociety.org.uk

'Bullying! Information for parents on how to help your child' – leaflet giving information and practical guidance.

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Advice for children, parents and teachers as well as training and sample policies.

8) Document Control

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