



Anti Bullying Policy

Review Cycle: 2 Years – Spring Term

Review By: Leadership Team, Behaviour, Attendance &
Safeguarding Sub-Committee

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General introduction

Aims:

"Providing safe and happy places to learn is essential to achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community." (DfE, 2007).

At Alcester Academy we aim to provide an environment in which young people flourish both academically and socially. We aim to foster a healthy and safe community where individuals take responsibility for themselves and show respect for others emphasising the importance of positive relationships amongst all members of the academy community.

Statement of Intent:

Alcester Academy is committed to ensuring that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

Definition:

It is very important to be clear about what is, and is not, bullying. There are many definitions and perceptions of bullying, but all recognise that bullying is sustained and takes place where there is an imbalance of power.

Bullying is any behaviour, which is deliberately intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is repeated and usually unprovoked and can continue for a prolonged period of time. It always reflects an imbalance and abuse of power. It is important that it must not be confused with the usual childhood/teenage squabbles and arguments where individuals "fall out" with one another.

"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 (e.g. cyber bullying via text messages or internet) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities." **DFE "Preventing & tackling bullying" – October 2014**

Bullying can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic – because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber – all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities. Sending threatening or abusive messages, personally or anonymously through social media.

- Making insulting comments about someone through social media (eg: Snap Chat, What's App or Facebook) or online (blog or YouTube or websites).
- Making or sharing derogatory or embarrassing videos of someone via mobile phone or email or through social media eg: Tik Tok
- Disability/SEN – because of, or focusing on a disability or special educational need.
- Home circumstance – targeting individuals who are looked after children or because of a particular home circumstance.

Bullying can therefore constitute any of the above activities within the context of the definition provided. Bullying may occur to anyone and this policy is inclusive of the bullying of school staff, whether by pupils, parents or other staff. (Members of the school workforce suffering from or concerned about bullying may also contact their trade union or professional association for support and advice)

Bullying can seriously damage a person's confidence and sense of self-worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or taking unusual absences. There may be evidence in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. These signs and symptoms may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

'Sexting' is the sending and receiving of sexually inappropriate images or messages, using a mobile phone or the internet. It is illegal for children under the age of 16 to do this and will be referred to both the police and social care. An investigation will be undertaken and appropriate action taken.

It is illegal for a student to retain a sexually inappropriate image of another student and show it to other students. Again, this will result in a referral to the police and social care. It is likely that any student doing this will be excluded for a fixed period.

Reporting:

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible by the member of staff who has been approached. A clear account of the incident will be recorded and passed to LSU.

LSU staff will investigate the incident by interviewing all concerned and record outcomes on the files of those involved.

Form tutors and subject staff will be kept informed and asked to monitor the behaviour of the students concerned.

Parents will be kept informed and are discouraged from taking matters into their own hands and should not approach a suspected student but speak to a member of staff.

Each incident of actual or alleged bullying will be unique in its representation and its level of impact on the individuals concerned. Therefore, it is important that the school is given the opportunity to tailor a strategy to address the situation and to support the bullied student according to the particular incident/s.

Students who are victims of bullying will be offered the opportunity to discuss their experience with a member of staff.

Students who have bullied will be helped by; discussing what happened, discovering why the student became involved and establishing a sense of wrong-doing. Parents/carers will be informed to help change the attitude and behaviour of the student.

In agreement with both parties involved there will also be the opportunity to rebuild

relationships if required or wanted, involving a discussion mediated by a member of staff as a way of resolving disputes.

Prevention of bullying:

The aims and objectives of the academy in relation to bullying are to:

- Provide effective staff training
- Create an inclusive environment
- Ensure all students, teachers and parents know that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Ensure clarity and agreement about what is and is not bullying.
- Ensure whole academy awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all students with regard to bullying.
- Teach that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, children with different family situations
- Involve all members of the academy, staff and students in helping to prevent bullying and to confront it when it occurs.
- Encourage students to report instances of bullying and make it easy for them to do, so they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted upon.
- Ensure that all students, parents and staff know what preventative steps the academy takes and how these are implemented.
- Ensure all students, staff and parents know the procedure to follow when bullying occurs.
- Work with the wider community, such as police and children's services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent

In conjunction with this policy, the academy will also adhere to the following:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Children's Act 1989
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986
- Education Act 2011

In dealing with bullying we aim to:

- Eliminate the bullying itself.
- Support the victim by resolving the problem and by building up his/her self esteem and, where appropriate, developing strategies to avoid bullying.
- Bring the perpetrator to realise the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and the consequences should it continue.
- Investigate the cause of the bullying behaviour and where appropriate work with him/her to modify his/her behaviour.
- Reconcile the perpetrator and the victim.

The academy's response to bullying is achieved in various ways:

- Year 7 new students will be given a student handbook on arrival which includes what to do if a student feels he/she is being bullied. The academy provides students with a 'Text Academy' service which provides a phone number to text and an email address to report incidents.
- Assemblies will be delivered by the students to highlight the issues. These assemblies focus on:
 - o Clarifying and defining what is and is not bullying, raising awareness of the difference between disputes, endings of friendships and bullying behaviour.
 - o Cyber bullying as part of safety.
 - o Encouraging zero tolerance of bullying behaviour, encouraging a sense of social responsibility and the courage to speak out when necessary, and ensuring students know what they can do if they or someone else is being bullied.
- Tutorial time will be used to discuss further what is and is not bullying, and what students feel could or should be done. Work and ideas emanating from these lessons will be fed into the system to inform and add to the strategies already being used.
- The academy use a software package that monitors activity on the whole academy network and alerts us to any violations, including cyber bullying.
- The Academy Council will be consulted on anti-bullying policy and strategies.
- Key pastoral staff will always mediate between the bully and the victim, where appropriate. The victim will be encouraged to tell the bully how the bully's actions made them feel.
- The bully will be given an opportunity to apologise.
- The school keeps a Bullying Log to record all incidents and these are reported regularly to Governors.

Bullying outside school premises

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted upon as deemed appropriate to the situation. The academy will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Record keeping

All incidents of bullying are recorded and are regularly reported to governors. Serious concerns about bullying will result in the parents of the student being invited into academy to meet with an appropriate member of staff.

Students who feel they are being bullied will be asked to keep a detailed record of incidents and be supported by the LSU.

Sanctions

The varying nature and varying degrees of bullying require a range of responses and a range of sanctions.

Anyone who bullies someone will be seen and spoken to about this by LSU pastoral staff / tutor. Incidents of a more serious nature may be dealt with by SLT.

In appropriate cases (and particularly, though not exclusively, where the perpetrators do not attend the academy and the bullying occurs elsewhere), the police liaison officer is involved to advise the victim on what steps can be taken. Where the perpetrator is part of the academy, he/she would stress the seriousness of the matter and the possible consequences if it were to continue.

In the cases of a first and minor incident, an informal warning from a Tutor or pastoral staff may be sufficient. This would be recorded as a bullying concern on SIMS.

Where a student is found to persist in acts of bullying, despite warning, it may be necessary for other sanctions to be put in place and this is recorded in the Bullying Log.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to recommend a fixed term exclusion to the Headteacher.

A fixed period exclusion might also be given even if there have not been previously recorded warnings, if the seriousness of the bullying warrants it.

As a last resort, or in extremely serious cases, permanent exclusion would be considered.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, to tackle incidences of cyber bullying it may be necessary for a teacher to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices (including mobile phones)

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Signed: _____ Headteacher

Date: _____

Reviewed: October 2022

(Ratified by the Full Governing Body on 6th December 2022)