



## Anti-bullying Policy

Signed

*Tim Bridger*

Chair of the Board of Directors

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| Date approved:  | 07.09.2021         |
| Approved by:    | Board of Directors |
| Version:        | 2.1                |
| Date for Review | September 2022     |

### Version History

| Version | Date Issued | Brief Summary of Change | Owners Name     |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 0.1     | 14.05.2019  | New Policy              | Wendy Ainscough |
| 1.1     | 01.09.2020  | Annual Review           | Wendy Ainscough |
| 2.1     | 07.09.2021  | Policy Review           | Wendy Ainscough |

## **Alumnis Multi Academy Trust**

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

#### **Key Contact Personnel**

Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy: Rachael Sharpe, Headteacher

Designated Safeguarding Lead (s): Rachael Sharpe, Headteacher

Named Local School Committee with lead responsibility: Sally Lowson

**This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedures.**

#### **Links to legislation**

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

## **Introduction**

Alumnis schools endeavour to create a safe and stimulating environment where everyone knows that they are valued. A person has the right to be treated with respect and has the responsibility to treat others in the same way. Children are given the confidence and strategies to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences, knowing that positive action will be taken.

## **Trust Aims and objectives**

- To promote a secure and happy environment both in school and online that is free from threat, harassment or any type of bullying behaviour;
- To create a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and all stakeholders assume responsibility for the identification and appropriate responses to bullying;
- To produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur;
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps maintain a bullying-free environment;
- To use the schools children protection online management system (CPOMS) to closely monitor and resolve any bullying incidents and notice patterns.

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility;
- Local School Committee to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this Trust policy in the local setting;
- All staff, including: committee members, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly;
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school;
- Children to abide by the policy.

## **What is bullying?**

Bullying is a conscious and wilful repetitive act of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person or people. It is also an abuse of power by those carrying out the bullying, which is designed to cause harm. If bullying is allowed, it harms the perpetrator, the target and the whole school community and the culture of safety and wellbeing in the school.

## **The Nature of Bullying**

Bullying is considered to be:

- deliberately hurtful (including aggression), both emotional and physical;
- repeated often;
- often difficult for individuals who are being bullied to defend themselves against.

Bullying can take many forms:

- physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal: name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks;
- indirect: spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours;
- children may also be targeted by bullies using technology.

People may bully others because of varying perceived differences:

- sexism, racism, religion or belief, academic ability, gender identity, homophobia, disability, perceived characteristic (e.g. hair colour or weight) or because of an associate (family member or friend).

## **Our Approach to Bullying**

We believe that if children are encouraged to be good citizens in an environment where they feel stimulated and excited by their learning, where high expectations of behaviour and conduct exist and where children are taught and modelled core Christian values, they will develop an understanding and respect of others and it will minimize the occurrence of bullying. We feel it is important to create an atmosphere where our children know that they will be listened to and where their concerns are taken seriously and responded to with sensitivity.

Bullying is always unacceptable and always serious. We are committed to creating a safe environment where children can learn and play, can talk about their worries, confident that an adult will listen and will offer help.

Staff are trained to be aware that children do not always tell us they are being bullied. They may exhibit symptoms in other ways e.g. withdraw and isolate themselves, be unwilling to attend school, complain about missing things or feeling unwell, refuse to talk about problems and become easily distressed and show signs of unwillingness to work or complete tasks and activities or join in PE etc. Staff are proactive in reporting on and following up on any concerns they have in relation to any form of bullying.

Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum such as circle time, role-play, class performances, sharing assemblies and Collective Worship, our children gain in self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Encouraging children to take responsibility, for example by becoming

a member of the School Council promotes children's self-confidence and uses pupil voice. In having this approach we believe this helps to reduce a code of secrecy where children feel too scared to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences.

Our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and SMSC curriculum will ensure that each Year Group addresses issues related to bullying. This may take the form of an explicit approach or maybe implicit, in terms of looking at friendships and valuing each other, appreciating differences, to develop individual self-confidence. In addition to this, the issue of bullying in its many forms is the focus of circle time discussions.

Online Safety (see online safety policy)

Our curriculum work promotes children staying safe online and when using technology.

Incidences of online bullying are brought to the attention of the online safety lead and the Headteacher and are investigated as soon as possible. Information is gathered from pupils and any staff concerned. Any relevant observations are recorded on the school's data system and the Headteacher is kept informed. The school's website also has a reporting button, this is a tool for children and parents / carers to report any online safety concerns to the school.

Our aims when reacting to incidents of bullying are:

1. To make the child who has been bullied feel safe and reassured that the incident is being dealt with;
2. To ensure that the child displaying bullying behaviours understands that their behaviour is unacceptable and how it has affected the other child;
3. To encourage a change in behaviour from the child who has displayed bullying behaviours;
4. That there are consequences to actions (refer to Behaviour Policy).

In order to achieve this we use a range of strategies appropriate to the nature, severity and history of the bullying.

If the bullying is a recently established behaviour by an individual or a group which involves regular name-calling, intimidation or social exclusion (but not gross physical violence) a problem solving approach is adopted. The underlying intention is to change the dynamics of the situation, to raise the awareness of the participants about bullying, and to support the peer group in taking responsibility for bullying.

If the bullying involves an individual or group, who have been involved in bullying on a previous occasion and the school has previously implemented the above problem solving approach, then the following procedure will be followed:

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern;
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate;
- The Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) or another member of the senior leadership staff will interview all parties involved;
- The DSL/DDSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns;
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate;
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies;
- Sanctions, as identified within the school Behaviour Policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned;
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or Children's Social Care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm;
- Where the bullying of, or by, pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. If appropriate, action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's Behaviour Policy;
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school, on CPOMS, in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken;
- All incidents of bullying and prejudice/hate related behaviour will be reported to the Local Authority using a [BPHI form](#);
- Parents will be kept informed during the process.

## **Cyberbullying**

(Schools should ensure they access Childnet's Cyberbullying guidance)

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-guidance-for-schools>

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified;
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again;

- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation;
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  - looking at use of the school systems;
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
  - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content;
  - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the schools procedures on searching and confiscation. (Note: Schools should ensure they access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the schools powers are used proportionately and lawfully);
  - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies;
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
  - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
  - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

## **Supporting pupils**

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support;
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.;
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to do so;
- Respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate;
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence;
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers;

- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

**Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change;
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child;
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions;
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider;
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, time out, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions;
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

**Supporting adults**

Our schools take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.

- Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:
  - Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher;
  - Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate;
  - Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern;
  - Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online;
  - Reassuring and offering appropriate support;
  - Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance;

**Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher to establish the concern;



- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures;
- If online, requesting that content be removed;
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

### **The Role of the Local School Committee**

The LSC monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. This will be done through a monitoring log. The LSC require the Headteacher to keep accurate records on CPOMS of all incidents of bullying and to report, on request, about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

The LSC responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the LSC notifies the Headteacher and asks them to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the LSC.

### **Monitoring the Policy**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to the LSC about the effectiveness of the policy on request. To discover the extent to which bullying exists in school and to monitor the extent to which our anti-bullying policy is effective the log and strategies will be reviewed.

It is the responsibility of the LSC to review the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy annually. They do this by scrutinising the school's anti-bullying records and by discussion with the Headteacher. They analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation and any other characteristic/ background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

### Quick Reference Guide

