



Unlocking potential

ANTI – BULLYING POLICY

September 2023

Responsibility	Headteacher
Date of last review	05/09/2023
Date of next review by	05/09/2024

Signed:

DSL

Signed:

Headteacher

Date: 19.09.2023

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THE LAW

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the Police these include:

- Violence or assault
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages.
- Hate crimes
- Sexual harassment and assault

By law all schools must have a policy in place which includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. Schools must also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school. This applies to all schools in England and Wales.

1. BULLYING: OUR SCHOOL'S VALUES AND BELIEFS

The Aspire Academy understands that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and that all members of staff have a role to play in this. (Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023, and The Aspire Academy's Safeguarding Children Policy, September 2023). Part of this duty is ensuring that children are safe from bullying, both physical and online.

All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included.

Pupils and staff have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear.

All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable.

Pupils who experience bullying will be supported.

We recognise the effects that bullying can have on pupils' feelings of self-worth and on their school work, therefore the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

2. OUR INTENTIONS IN PRODUCING THIS POLICY ARE

To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations in order to help unlock potential.

To reduce and to eradicate wherever possible, instances in which pupils are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy.

To reduce and to eradicate wherever possible, instances in which pupils are subject to any form of bullying.

To respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to us.

To establish a means of dealing with bullying, and of providing support to pupils who have been bullied.

To provide support for pupils who are accused of bullying, who may be experiencing their own problems and ensure they realise the effect of their actions on others.

To meet any legal obligations which rest with the School.

3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

At the Aspire Academy will do not accept any form of bullying or intimidation. We define bullying as '*a person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those whom they perceive as vulnerable*'. We recognise that bullying can be either physical or emotional and can be conducted in person or virtually online.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time (persistence)
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- 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.
- 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. In the first instance staff must speak to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher connected to issues of bullying within the workplace, if this is not appropriate then the Chair of Governors may be approached. Members of the school workforce

suffering from or concerned about bullying may also contact their 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. Pupils 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.

4. CREATING AN ANTI-BULLYING CLIMATE IN SCHOOL

Our school's Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils behave well; where pupils take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being; and where they include and support each other.

As a school we take bullying seriously. We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying. These include;

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular Ready to learn/ Tutor periods and PSHE classes where issues of diversity are discussed and anti-bullying messages are drawn out.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying for example Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year.
- School assemblies.
- Pupil surveys.
- Poster campaigns, displays.
- Improved supervision in potential problem areas.
- Peer mentoring and Buddy Schemes.
- Assertiveness interventions.
- Staff induction process and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

We promote a restorative approach and will use restorative questions, circles and conferences to address any issues involving allegations of bullying and bring together all parties in order to reach a mutually supportive conclusion which enables the harmer to accept responsibility for the harm caused and allows the rebuilding of relationships and a sense of community.

Our curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy;
- Increase understanding for targets of bullies and help build an anti-bullying ethos;
- To teach pupils how to constructively manage their relationships with others;
- Build self-esteem, empathy and resilience.

Current affairs, literature and historical events are chosen to reinforce our anti-bullying approach and are used to enhance Tutor Time sessions, RtL, PSHE lessons and assemblies.

Tutorial work, Circle Time, role plays, stories, assemblies and examples from sport and the news are used to show what pupils can do to prevent bullying, and to create an anti-bullying climate in school.

Bullying will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the information we give to pupils, parents/carers, the home school and other agencies/stakeholders when a pupil is referred to The Aspire Academy. We will use school assemblies, lessons and tutor time to reinforce this message.

Posters around the school site will be used to remind pupils that bullying is not acceptable, and to tell them what to do if they feel they are being bullied.

We will advertise our anti-bullying policy on the school website.

We have a Safeguarding mobile phone which allows pupils to report anonymously any specific or general concerns about bullying in school. This facility has a text message service which pupils can use 24 hours a day to contact Mr R-Hitchins connected to issues they are worried about, 07944 232096.

Our Aspire Voice offers a forum in which concerns about bullying can be discussed on a regular basis.

We explain the guidance to all our pupils to explain what they should do if they are being bullied, or if they see another pupil being bullied.

We will provide written guidance for parents on the signs of bullying and what to do if they suspect their child is being bullied at school.

We will ask pupils where and when bullying occurs in school and we will supervise and try to eliminate any unsafe areas which they report to us.

We will provide regular training for teachers and non-teaching staff on spotting the signs of bullying and how to respond to it. The NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 is available on The Aspire Academy website for both families and staff to use if needed.

5. STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING (See Appendix 1)

- A no blame forum (or mediation) in which attitudes, feelings are explored and/or shared agreement as to what happens next;
- Restorative Approaches via the restorative continuum – affective statements, restorative questions, restorative meeting, restorative circle or conference;
- Counselling on appropriate behaviour;
- Development of coping strategies, confidence building and assertiveness techniques, building resilience;
- Working with parents/guardians to develop in the pupil a greater sensitivity to the feeling of others.

If strategies are not proving successful further sanctions will be explored in line with The Aspire Academy Behaviour policy.

6. REPORTING AND RECORDING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Pupils who have been bullied should report this to anyone of the following: their group tutor, the project team, their head of year, Mr Rainbird-Hitchins or any adult working for The Aspire Academy.

Pupils who see others being bullied should report this to anyone of the following: their group tutor, the project team, their head of year, Mr Rainbird-Hitchins or any adult working for The Aspire Academy.

Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied should report this to the pupil's group tutor and/or head of year. All logs should be reported through the Arbor management system

Parents who are concerned their child may be the target of bullies should report this to their child's group tutor and/or head of year.

Reports of bullying will be logged and monitored by the group tutor in the first instance.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be followed up by the group tutor with the support of the head of year of the pupil who is the alleged target of the bullying.

Reporting may be verbal, or by text to 07944 232096

7. OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone within school is expected to:

- Act in a respectful and supportive way towards one another, and
- Adhere to and to promote the objectives of this policy.

Pupils are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying,
- Report suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report.
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parents/Carers can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community.
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing bullying or involved in some other way.
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

Outside Agencies can help by:

- Outside agencies can support by informing school of any concerns which they have been made aware of and work in partnership with The Aspire Academy to resolve any such issues.

8. BULLYING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL PREMISES

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises, however the Headteacher has the right to discipline pupils for behaviour off the school premises. We know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school.

Where a pupil or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose pupils may be involved with the bullying incident.
- Talk to members of staff who are involved in transport to gain an understanding into what is happening on the journey.
- Talk to outside transport companies if the incident is happening on public transport.
- Talk to the police for guidance and reporting purposes.

9. CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure, details can be found on our website.

We would also be pleased to receive Compliments and any feedback from parents when things have gone well is much appreciated.

One of our Governors will take a special interest in bullying within school.

10. LINKED POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023
- The Aspire Academy's Behaviour Policy Dated 2023
- The Aspire Academy's Safeguarding Children Policy (Including Child Protection) Dated September 2023

Appendix 1 – Dealing effectively with bullying

