Students First
OUTWOOD
FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Statement of Intent

Ofcom research (2022) indicated that 39% of children aged 8-17 have experienced bullying either on or offline and that two out of every three parents/carers are concerned that their child will experience online bullying. Additionally, recent research from the Department for Education looking at pupils in year 10, found that 40% of young people were bullied in the last 12 months. At Outwood Grange Academy Trust we take the view that bullying may happen even if we do not witness any incidents or are not made aware of this. We therefore take a proactive approach to challenging unkind or bullying behaviours.

Our academies foster a welcoming culture of safety, responsibility and respect ensuring a positive climate where all members of our school communities feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. We are committed to ensuring a caring, inclusive and safe environment for all of our students to learn in so they enjoy their education.

Our inclusive provision assists our students to enjoy their education, feel valued and develop both academically and personally. All students are supported in their learning and encouraged to engage in every aspect of school life. Our inclusive curriculum celebrates diversity and promotes tolerance and mutual respect of others.

Bullying of any kind is not accepted at our academies. If bullying does occur, all students are able to report bullying and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly, proportionately and effectively. We are an anti-bullying Trust. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected and encouraged to inform members of staff so action can be taken.

Principles

The following principles underpin our approach to bullying:

- All pupils have the right to a safe, caring, positive and protective environment in school
- Establish an atmosphere where bullying is regarded as unacceptable and not tolerated
- Raise general awareness so the whole school actively plays its part in recognising bullying and to act when it occurs by preventing or responding appropriately to it
- Raise awareness through the curriculum, assemblies and pastoral structure that pupils will always be supported if bullying is reported
- Responses to bullying incidents will be robust and consistent and aim to prevent rather than control. Disapproval of bullying should be aimed at the behaviour of the pupil not the pupil as a person
- The school may seek the support of parents/carers in dealing with incidents of bullying
- There is no such thing as acceptable bullying

This policy is written with due regard to the:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Education and Inspection Act , 2011
- Children Act, 1989
- Behaviour in Schools:Advice for headteachers and school staff , July 2022
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025

Directly associated policies:

- OGAT Safeguarding Policy
- OGAT Positive Discipline for Learning and Life Policy
- OGAT SEND Policy

What Is Bullying?

'Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others. It can occur in person and online, or both. It is usually persistent and can be overt and covert. It is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying results in pain and emotional distress to the victim.'
Bullying can be, but not limited to:

- **Emotional:** Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/or personal nature. Demanding money, material goods or favours by means of threat or force
- **Physical:** Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence because of some perceived physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference
- **Racist:** racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour:** Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Gender (sexist bullying):**
    - Sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic bullying)
    - Gender identity (transphobic bullying)
- **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, coercion teasing, abuse and threats. Ridiculing an individual
- **Cyber:** Online abuse such as through email & internet chat rooms. Threats by text messaging & calls and social-media platforms. Misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera & video facilities

This policy references the Equality Act 2010 and shows our commitment to preventing and responding effectively to the bullying of protected and vulnerable groups of children including disabled children/children with SEN, those or are or perceived to be LGBT, race and religion targeted, young carers, looked after

children, appearance targeted, sexist and sexual bullying. Our Academies are part of the 'anti-bullying alliance' who provide advice and support on 'at risk groups'

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts and can have long lasting damaging effects on an individual. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who bully need to learn different ways of behaving and may need intensive work on what it means to be a positive and empathetic person.

Each academy has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to any issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the Trust's policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents/carers should know what the Trust's policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a trust we take bullying seriously. Students and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated in any of our academies.

Staff Responsibilities

- To implement procedures to confront bullying of any form
- To listen to all parties involved in incidents
- To investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible

- To take appropriate action and to refer to Personal Development Mentor/Learning Manager/SLT as appropriate
- To record and log any incidents of HSB/ racist/ homophobia/ biphobia/ transphobia/ peer on peer abuse (OCloud/CPOMs)
- To share with parents/carers of the victim and bully, incidents of serious and /or persistent bullying
- To promote the use of a range of learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behaviour
- To promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation within the relevant academy and relevant agencies when appropriate
- To promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive and most effective
- To respond proactively to the modern world of social media and online interactions. Promptly addressing merging harmful trends or 'crazes'. Online bullying and incidents beyond the school gates can and will have an impact on a student's life in school. The Academy will work proactively with parents, carers and other agencies to address this impact.
- To promote all students being safe, respectful and responsible

Signs and Symptoms

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. All adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- is frightened of walking to or from their academy (bullying can take place within an Academy or to and from the school)
- doesn't want to go on their academy / public bus
- begs to be driven to their academy
- changes their usual routine

- is unwilling to go to their academy (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts to stammer
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- school work begins to suffer
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or ‘go missing’
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has lunch or other monies continually ‘lost’
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (money/lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- eating habits change
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and therefore should be investigated.

Racism

A common misconception is that bullying must always involve repeated behavior over time. However, a single, one-off incident, involving racist language, hate speech, or targeted discrimination based on a protected characteristic can sometimes, depending on the circumstances, constitute bullying or a serious breach of Positive Discipline for Learning and Life policy. Such actions severely compromise

the safety and well-being of the victim and the wider school culture. A single instance of discriminatory abuse will never be dismissed as "banter" or a "lapse in judgment"; it will be treated with the highest severity.

Furthermore, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and Working Together to Safeguard Children, prejudice-based bullying and racist incidents are recognised as forms of child-on-child abuse. Where incidents cause or are likely to cause significant harm, they will be handled through safeguarding channels alongside our behavior procedures.

All reported racist or prejudice-based incidents will follow a strict, transparent timeline for investigation and resolution.

Step 1: Immediate Action and Recording

- **Immediate Intervention:** Staff will immediately intervene to stop the behaviour, ensure the victim is safe and supported, and isolate the perpetrator if necessary.
- **Mandatory Recording:** Every incident involving a protected characteristic must be formally recorded on the school's internal logging system (i.e.., CPOMs/OCloud). The report must explicitly detail the protected characteristic targeted (e.g., racially motivated).
- **Leadership Notification:** The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and senior leadership team (SLT) will be notified immediately.

Step 2: Investigation and Parental Communication

- **Investigation:** A member of the SLT or a designated pastoral staff will conduct a swift and objective investigation, gathering statements from the victim, perpetrator, and any witnesses.
- **Parental Notification:** Following an incident the parents/carers of both the victim and the perpetrator will be contacted as soon as possible, to inform them of the situation and the next steps.

Step 3: Proportional Sanctions

Sanctions will be issued in line with the school's Positive Discipline for Learning and Life Policy. Due to the severe nature of prejudice-based incidents, standard entry-level sanctions are rarely appropriate. Depending on the severity and intent, actions may include:

- Immediate action and issuing of appropriate sanction.
- **Suspension (Fixed-Period Exclusion):** In line with DfE guidance, serious or repeat racist abuse may warrant formal suspension.
- **Permanent Exclusion:** Reserved for persistent, severe, or harassment where the safety of the school community is compromised.

Step 4: Targeted Support and Follow-Up Actions

Every Academy is committed to long-term resolution, ensuring that incidents are not merely penalised but learned from.

- **Victim Support:** The victim will be offered targeted support, which may include regular check-ins with a mentor, access to a safe adult, and a safe space to express the emotional impact of the incident.
- **Perpetrator Education:** Alongside sanctions, the perpetrator must undergo mandatory, structured educational intervention regarding the impact of racism and discrimination. This is designed to address the root cause of the behavior and prevent recidivism.
- **External Escalation:** Where an incident involves criminal behavior, hate speech that incites violence, or severe harassment outside of school grounds (including online/cyberbullying), the school will consult with the Safer Schools Police Officer or local authority safeguarding teams.
- **Monitoring:** The SLT will review prejudice-based incident data, via CPOMs/OCloud, frequently,to identify trends, inform the PDG curriculum, and ensure the school's robust stance remains highly visible.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to a trusted member of staff e.g. Personal Development Mentor, Learning Manager, SLT etc NB some Academies have electronic methods of referral available. These are communicated to students and parents/carers by individual academies.
2. Where bullying is reported, the incidents will be recorded by staff on OCloud. Incidents are tracked to identify any patterns.
3. In particular cases parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. Attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- Consequences such as those in our behaviour policy may take place, up to and including the use of exclusions.
- Assertive training
- Counselling (Personal Development Mentor, Learning Manager, SLT, other)
- Use of report
- Involvement of external agencies
- Monitoring by Personal Development Mentor/Learning Manager
- Peer support/peer mentoring
- Formal recording (racism/homophobia)
- Use of behaviour contract
- Liaison with parent/carer/social worker
- In serious cases, suspension or even permanent exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the students will be reconciled/ a restorative conversation had
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURE

The fundamental aim, when bullying occurs, is to address the issue, with seriousness and immediacy, and ensure the victim is fully supported. The perpetrator(s) is dealt with in an objective and timely manner. Including appropriate and effective sanctions/ interventions to change behaviours.

Every case is personal and different and should be treated as so. There is never a 'magic wand' in these circumstances but careful and serious handling, by adults and sometimes 'peer mentors', often leads to the victim being empowered again and back to feeling safe and secure.

The table below outlines both essential actions to dealing with bullying cases and also potential actions/ procedures that may be academy specific.

Obligatory action	**Practice/ procedures/ Actions that may be Academy specific**
Bullying incident is reported	
Head of Deep Support/ Learning Manager informed	Some Academies may have other staff that they wish to directly involve (Inclusion team / Personal Development Mentor etc) that are part of their process.
Statements taken from alleged victim, perpetrator and witnesses. Ensuring immediate safe space for alleged victim(s).	Statements should be standardised, signed and dated and reflect objectively what has occurred.
Parents/ carers of all parties informed at the most appropriate opportunity. Full recording on OCloud	Some Academies may wish to use a coloured letter system, signifying a tiered approach to actions taken.

Follow up meetings arranged with parents/ carers where appropriate	There may be instances where meetings raise the need for broader interventions such as 'Early Help' etc
Potential PCSO/ external agency involvement in serious cases or indeed as an ongoing intervention for individuals/ groups.	There may be cases where the seriousness merits police involvement or indeed where parents/ carers have actually made that contact themselves
Specific and compulsory, intervention work with the perpetrator(s)	E.g. ACE programme; anger management; empathy programme; Transformation Programme; Talk the Talk; ABC contract; 'stay away agreement'; behaviour contract; use of 'Peer Mentors'; restorative justice*

*The use of restorative justice is a skilled intervention and requires staff training. It is not something that should be 'imposed' on the victim but a clear and agreed strategy.

Prevention

We will use methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may / do include:

- following the consequences system
- we ban the use of mobile phones by students on our academy sites at all times
- utilising Peer Mentor support/ anti-bullying ambassadors/ Diana Award Champions
- revisiting the ACE programme at regular intervals and ensuring there is targeted intervention where needed. Either with individuals and/ or groups
- signing a behaviour contract

- having discussions about bullying and why it matters with a Teacher, Personal Development Mentor or Learning Manager
- meeting with parents/carers or other outside agencies
- involving social workers or the education psychologist
- developing a positive whole school culture of respect, safety and responsibility
- Taught sessions through the whole academy personal development and growth programme

We recognise that young people can also be subject to unpleasant experiences and bullying, outside of the school environment. The increasing prevalence of social media and online engagement has made this more likely.

Young people should always speak to trusted adults outside of school and feel confident about seeking help and support. The ‘helpful organisations’ below are accessible at any time whether during term time or school holidays. In addition, on our website, there is our mental wellbeing ‘green button’. This also signposts a number of useful organisations.

Helpful Organisations

This directory provides a clear, accessible overview of external advisory organisations, support services, and statutory guidance for schools, staff, pupils, and families. The resources are organised into five distinct focus areas to support school safeguarding, inclusion, and wellbeing policies.

1. General Support & Mental Wellbeing

- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Childline
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”
- DfE: “No health without mental health”
- Family Lives
- Kidscape
- Kooth
- MindEd
- NSPCC
- PSHE Association
- Restorative Justice Council
- The Diana Award
- Victim Support
- Young Minds
- Young Carers

2. Cyberbullying & Online Safety

- Childnet International
- Cyberbullying: What it is and how to stop it
- Internet Watch Foundation
- Think U Know
- UK Safer Internet Centre

3. LGBTQ+ Support

- EACH
- Schools Out
- Stonewall

4. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- Changing Faces
- Mencap
- DfE: SEND code of practice

5. Racism and Hate Incidents

- Anne Frank Trust
- Kick it Out
- Report it
- Stop Hate
- Show Racism the Red Card