



The
Ongar
Academy

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Title | Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy |
| Author/Title | David Grant Headteacher |
| Committee Responsible | Education |
| Governor Link | Blane Judd |
| Date approved by Committee | 14 April 2015 |
| Date approved by Full Governing Body | 14 April 2015 |
| Review Date | October 2016 |

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy

Enquiries & comments

Any enquiries and comments about this publication may be made to:

e-mail: admin@theongaracademy.org

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1 | Mission Statement |
| 2 | Definitions of Bullying / Harassment |
| 3 | Roles and Responsibilities |
| 4 | Preventing and Responding to Bullying Incidents |
| 5 | Bullying that Occurs Outside of School |
| 6 | Monitoring the Impact of Anti – Bullying Policy and Practice |
| Appendix 1 | Advice to Parents / Carers What to do if your child is being bullied |

1. MISSION STATEMENT

The school is committed to promoting an anti-bullying/harassment ethos and is a place where bullying and harassment are not tolerated. The school takes issues of bullying/harassment seriously and enables all members of the school community to challenge bullying behaviour in order that a supportive, cooperative ethos is maintained.

The school's anti-bullying policy has been developed with due regard for our duties and obligations under existing legislation and public sector duties for the safeguarding and wellbeing of all our pupils and we will take all steps to ensure their safety.

2. DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING / HARASSMENT

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE 2011)

It is important to understand that bullying/harassment is defined by the impact on the person being bullied, not just the intention of the perpetrator. Bullying/harassment is the intentional, repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. However, single incidents of hurtful behaviour may still leave the targeted student fearful of repetition and should always be addressed. This is particularly relevant to cyberbullying, when a single incident may have an ongoing impact.

Bullying can take place in school and outside of school and can include:

- Name-calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive comments
- Offensive graffiti
- Excluding people from groups
- Gossiping and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours
- Kicking
- Hitting
- Pushing
- Taking and damaging belongings
- Hurtful behaviour that leads to fear of recurrence.
- Cyberbullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages via the internet, setting up websites designed to embarrass or upset individuals or excluding them from social networking sites.

Passive participation and collusion by bystanders also need to be considered as bullying/harassment.

Children and young people can both bully and be bullied at the same time. Students are bullied for a variety of reasons including:

- Ethnic background, religion or culture
- Disability, special educational needs or being particularly able, gifted & talented
- Sexual orientation
- Gender (including sexualised bullying)
- Size, appearance or health conditions
- Social or economic status (poverty, class)
- Age/maturity
- Home circumstances – certain groups such as students in public care, or young carers, or those with same sex parents/carers or whose parents/carers have mental health difficulties may be particularly vulnerable

Bullying behaviour is often linked to difference, perceived difference or discriminatory attitudes towards certain groups. This can occur regardless of whether the targeted student is actually a member of any of those groups. However, anyone can be bullied for any reason or difference.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community are encouraged to take responsibility for personal behaviour and actions and treat one another with respect and kindness. Everyone should contribute to creating a positive working atmosphere within school where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, difference is celebrated and discrimination is actively challenged. Teachers, staff and Governors should model positive attitudes and relationships.

It is important that all members of the school community take responsibility for creating a climate where students who are being bullied, or those who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.

Students

Students are encouraged to speak directly with their Form Tutor if they are being bullied, or if they believe that another student is experiencing bullying/harassment.

Senior school students who are buddies or peer mentors are encouraged to explore any concerns about bullying/harassment and to report these to the Form Tutor, SENCO, Learning Mentor or other member of staff immediately.

Form Tutors

Form Tutors should be aware of any unusual patterns of behaviour or attendance with respect to the students in their form and should investigate these as a priority. Where bullying/harassment is identified or suspected, they should discuss this with the students and then meet with the Pastoral Leader to

decide how best to proceed. A record should be kept of these discussions, including accounts written by the students.

Form Tutors should continue to monitor situations closely. It should never be assumed that the bullying/harassment has stopped.

Subject teachers

Subject staff should always be aware of the possibilities of bullying/harassment and note any concerns that might arise. These should be discussed with the students, if this seems appropriate, and with the form tutor as a priority. A change of seating plan in the short term should be considered. A record should be kept of any discussions with the student and this should be passed on to the form tutor.

Where information is received about bullying/harassment, the subject teacher should monitor the students carefully and report any further concerns immediately.

Pastoral Leaders

Pastoral Leaders may identify patterns of absence, a change in conduct or a decline in tracking results. These should be investigated as a priority and explored with the Form Tutor. Where bullying/harassment is identified as a cause, this should be dealt with immediately.

The action taken by Pastoral Leaders will vary according to the nature of the incident – normally the student will receive support and the bully some form of sanction, but also appropriate support. It may be appropriate for the student to face the bully with the Pastoral Leader present as an intermediary; this should only be arranged with the agreement of the student and after discussion as to how the meeting should be managed.

Parents/carers of the bully and the bullied student must be informed of the incident and the action taken. It may be appropriate for the SLT link to be present at any meetings with parents/carers.

Pastoral Leaders, in conjunction with appropriate SLT staff will involve external agencies (including police and independent mediation or advocacy services) as appropriate to respond to incidents.

Pastoral Leaders, in conjunction with the Assistant Headteacher i/c PSHEE should ensure that the PSHEE programme includes opportunities for students to explore the themes of bullying/harassment and ways in which they can develop strategies to combat bullying/harassment. The assembly programme will offer additional opportunities to deliver the anti-bullying message throughout the year.

Pastoral Leaders are responsible for ensuring accurate records are kept of incidents, along with how the school responded. This can be achieved through completion of the Cause for Concern Form and logging data onto SIMS.

Parents/Carers

Parents are encouraged to contact the Form Tutor or Pastoral Leader if they have any concerns about their child or about another student in the school. The Form Tutor or Pastoral Leader should record these concerns and investigate them as a priority.

Advice to parents/carers is available (see Appendix 1)

5. PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

Preventing bullying

The school has a strong ethos which encourages all members of the school community to take responsibility for personal behaviour and actions and treat one another with respect and kindness. This is reinforced through the school's core values. These values are promoted in school through, for example, assemblies and tutorials. An anti-bullying ethos is also reinforced through curriculum opportunities, particularly in the PSHEE programme.

Responding to bullying

- Sit down with the student and listen to her/his account of the incident, allowing the student to fully express her/his feelings relating to the incident. Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by reporting the incident(s)
- Agree with the student what steps will be taken and when they will be given feedback about what has happened as a result of this
- Make a decision as to whether the student is able to return to class or needs to remain with a member of staff while the incident is being investigated.
- Gather evidence and keep written accounts from everyone who has been involved or who has witnessed the incident and involve /carers at the earliest opportunity.
- Draw up a list of actions to be taken to deal with the perpetrators.
- Inform the student and parents/carers how the incident is being dealt with and check that they are satisfied that it has been dealt with effectively.
- Talk to the student about how they feel and ask whether they require further support.

A record of action taken should be passed to the Pastoral Leader and SLT Link, along with any other documentation relating to the incident.

The Pastoral Leader and /or SLT Link will then consider and implement the agreed action points. The incident and action taken will be logged on SIMS and reported to the Head Teacher.

The order in which the above procedure is followed should be flexible and will be guided by the principle that support to the student is paramount.

The support given to students who have been bullied will be decided by Pastoral Leaders and the SLT link. Possible support includes access to the school counsellor and working with a mentor or peer mentor.

The sanctions applied to each case of bullying/harassment will depend on the extent and severity of the incident. The Pastoral Leader will discuss this with the SLT Link and possible sanctions will include after school detentions, internal exclusion, fixed-term exclusion and the possibility of a permanent exclusion in cases of serious and persistent bullying/harassment.

It should also be recognised that students who bully often need support as well. There may well be personal, social, intellectual, physical and other individual reasons why students bully and reactions to bullying should be guided by individual needs.

In managing such situations, the school will have regard to current legislation with regard to equal opportunities.

6. BULLYING THAT OCCURS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises (Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.)

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on, using the procedures in Section 5 (above). This may include sharing information with other schools if the perpetrators are not from this school.

Members of SLT should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police of the actions taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

7. MONITORING THE IMPACT OF ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PRACTICE

The school uses a range of information to determine levels of bullying, the extent to which students feel safe at school and the extent to which staff feel confident in identifying and addressing bullying. For example:

- There is regular review and monitoring of bullying/harassment incidents, records and data by Pastoral Leaders and the SLT Link.
- This review and monitoring allows regular reports to be made to Governors.
- The views of students are sought, for example, through student questionnaires, focus groups and the School Council
- The views of parents/carers are sought, for example, through questionnaires
- The views of staff are sought, for example, through questionnaires and the meeting schedule of the school, including Whole School Meetings, Faculty Meetings and Year Team Meetings.

APPENDIX 1 - ADVICE TO PARENTS / CARERS

What to do if your child is being bullied

If your child is being bullied at school, you should approach the school to tell them about the situation and find out what they are doing, or planning to do, to deal with the problem.

Step 1: talk to your child

You should

- Talk calmly with your child about his or her experiences and help him or her to understand that there are some things that can be done to try to stop the bullying/harassment
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was involved, how often the bullying/harassment has occurred, where it happened and what has happened
- Reassure your child that he or she has done the right thing in telling you about the bullying/harassment
- Explain to your child that, should any further incident occur, he or she should report it to a teacher straight away and tell you about it

Step 2: talk to the Form Tutor

You should

- Make an appointment to see your child's Form Tutor
- Explain to the Form Tutor the problems your child is experiencing
- Be realistic when talking to the Form Tutor – the school will not be able or willing to exclude the bully from the class or whole school immediately. However, the teacher should investigate the allegations and take reasonable steps to protect your child
- Obtain a copy of the school's anti-bullying policy, so that you are aware of the action the school should take on being notified of a bullying/harassment incident. You should also request a copy of the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy as this will set out sanctions for certain types of behaviour.

Remember when talking to the Form Tutor, you should

- Try to be as specific as possible – the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied and will need dates, places, times and the names of the children involved in order to take effective action to stop the bullying/harassment
- Make a note of what the teacher has said and the action that she or he intends to take
- Stay in touch with the school after this meeting (let them know if things improve as well as if the problem continues)

Keeping channels of communication open is essential if the problem is to be resolved.

Once your child has told you that they are experiencing bullying/harassment, you should keep a diary of incidents, including dates, times, perpetrators and action that you have taken.

If you feel you cannot talk to the Form Tutor, or that the Form Tutor does not take your complaint seriously, you should contact your child's Pastoral Leader or a member of the School Leadership Team.

The Ongar Academy and its Governing Body are committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness, and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.