

1 GREAT ACADEMIES STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Academy Trust aims to ensure that all of our pupils can learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Great Academies Trust seeks to establish a learning environment in which everyone feels able to enjoy and achieve and where success is recognised and rewarded *in the knowledge that bullying is not excusable nor is it inevitable.*

The law states that schools and academies have a legal duty to counter bullying amongst their pupils. Furthermore, our principals have a legal duty to draw up procedures to prevent bullying and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils.

Additionally, the Board of Directors believes that the academy trust has a moral responsibility to promote good citizenship through the example it sets in all its academies.

2 OUR AIMS

The Academy Trust:

- Has adopted a definition of bullying that is agreed across the Trust and accepted by each academy community;
- Has a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur;
- Seeks to involve all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of this policy;
- Raises awareness of bullying and promotes positive relationships based on mutual respect;
- Promotes positive action to prevent bullying through PSHE programmes, assemblies, school council, anti- bullying weeks, restorative practices; and related activities.
- Ensures fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality and encourages understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds.

This policy demonstrates how each academy will respond to allegations of bullying and equally applies to incidents which occur off the academy premises where pupils are involved in school activities or when pupils are travelling to or from school.

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Everyone involved with the Trust has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all pupils and all members of staff have a duty of care to ensure our pupils are protected from harm.

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Anti-Bullying Policy are to:

- Provide a clear definition of bullying, shared by all;
- Provide a clear and effective process for dealing with allegations of bullying;
- Outline the sanctions which may be used to deal with bullies;
- Outline the support available to victims of bullying and
- Provide guidance to stakeholders on how they should discharge their responsibilities.

4 IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

4.1 Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as:

“any deliberate and persistent attempt to hurt, threaten, frighten or humiliate someone, either physically or emotionally, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves”.

The term bullying does not apply to an isolated incident, or to a temporary breakdown in a hitherto healthy relationship between pupils.

The Trust recognises that there are various forms of bullying, which may include:

- Physical – e.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings, damaging property, unwanted physical or sexual contact;
- Verbal – e.g. name calling, insulting, racist remarks, sexual harassment, demanding money or other items;
- Psychological – e.g repeated and intentional use of words or actions which can cause psychological harm, intimidation, manipulation, stalking
- Indirect – e.g. spreading malicious rumours, excluding individuals from social groups; and
- Cyber – e.g. use of email, social networking sites, mobile phone messaging to spread rumours, make malicious comments.

The Trust recognises that bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers bullying which is carried out for any reason, and against any pupil, including bullying related to a pupil’s

- race, religion or culture,
- SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability),
- Sex/gender
- appearance or health,
- sexual orientation including LGBT
- home or social circumstances

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4.2 Building a culture to avoid bullying

All our academies have in place programmes to promote pupil health and well-being which build on building relationships, valuing each other and diversity, respecting and caring for one another. The curriculum in each academy provides clear opportunities for pupils to explore values and behaviours. Provision may include a cross-curricular approach, specific lessons, assemblies and other awareness-raising events.

4.3 Effects of bullying

We recognise that those who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as increased nervousness, clinginess, feigned illnesses or even misbehaviour and self-harm. This may also affect their progress. If unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable within the school. It is not unknown for victims to become bullies themselves. Bullying can and frequently does have long term effects on victims.

4.4 Involving parents and pupils

All our Academies will:

- Work with parents in to help them recognise and deal with bullying.
- Ensure that parents are aware of the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and publish on each academy website;
- Inform parents of behaviours which may indicate a child is being bullied
- Encourage parents to contact school immediately if they suspect their child is being bullied; and
- Inform parents of incidents and involve them in discussions.

We will involve all our pupils by:

- Regularly seeking their views on the extent and nature of bullying;
- Inform them of behaviours which may indicate a child is being bullied
- Ensuring they know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying;
- Ensuring they are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaged in bullying;
- Involving them in anti-bullying campaigns in school; and
- Offering support to everyone who has been bullied.

4.5 Responding to allegations

Each academy will treat seriously all incidents which are brought to the attention of staff and the following action will be taken:

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- Following a report of an incident being received, the pupil who may be being bullied will be talked with by an appropriate member of staff
- The victim will be listened to and reassured;
- A record of the incident will be documented in line with each academy's procedures, including a record made by the pupil, if appropriate;
- Academy staff will talk to all pupils involved;
- Any other evidence will be sought, for example any CCTV footage, social media posts, text messages;
- Parents/carers of all relevant pupils will be notified and kept informed.
- Consequences will be decided upon dependent on the individual circumstances; and
- The situation will be monitored and further action taken where deemed necessary.

4.6 Sanctions

Once an instance of bullying has been substantiated, the aim will always be to resolve the problem quickly and effectively. Some cases may be resolved speedily through discussion, advice and counselling and will require no further intervention beyond monitoring. Where bullying persists or its severity requires a sanction the academy may take any of the following disciplinary actions:

- Warning
- Detention/loss of free time;
- Withdrawal of privileges or treats;
- Exclusion from certain areas of the academy or internal fixed term exclusion;
- Fixed term exclusion; and
- Permanent exclusion.

In extreme cases the academy may need to seek support from external agencies, including the police.

4.7 Support

The Trust will offer a variety of methods to support pupils who have been the victims of bullying including:

- A peer mentoring system;
- Mediation; and
- Offering activities which help to develop their self-esteem, positive self-image and confidence

The Trust believes that it is also important to have a multi-dimensional approach which builds a positive and inclusive climate and will utilise the services available which may include:

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- A peer mentoring system;
- Behavioural counselling;
- Family counselling; and
- External agencies such as child and family services as appropriate.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

GAET responsibilities

The GAET Board must ensure that an anti-bullying policy is in place and that this is updated as necessary. This policy only works if it ensures that each whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and those involved take the steps necessary to both prevent and respond to bullying.

Academy responsibilities

- To actively promote this policy ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of the responsibilities that they have for creating a climate in which learners can thrive and flourish and which is free of bullying and intimidation.
- To ensure an appropriate range of preventative measures are in place
- To ensure appropriate staff training is provided

Pupil responsibilities are

- To report bullying to an adult, whether it is to self or others, whenever it occurs.
- To never stand by and watch without referring any incident to an adult.
- To complete a record or give an account of an incident fully, honestly and quickly, when asked to do so, and in a way appropriate to their age and circumstances.
- To avoid situations on social media where bullying is taking place and report them when they occur.
- To avoid text messaging when it is being used in hurtful ways and to report any incidents immediately.
- To be involved in anti-bullying initiatives and procedures as appropriate in each academy.

Parent/Carer responsibilities and advice

Parents and carers may be best placed to spot behavioural changes that may indicate that bullying is taking place. These can include:

- Complaining of medical issues during term time that are not present at weekends and during holidays.
- A decline in the standard of academic work and loss of interest in enrichment activities.

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- Stammering and general loss of self-confidence.
- Sleep disturbance
- Unexplained cuts and bruises or damage to possessions or clothes.
- A change in routine with regard to travel to school, or a reluctance to travel alone.
- Theft (for example when a bully makes a child give them money or other items)

Parents who suspect that their child is being bullied should:

- Listen, calmly and reassure their child that the situation will be better when action is taken.
- Assure them that the bullying is not their fault.
- Never encourage physical retaliation to bullying; the outcome is unpredictable and your own child may be seen as an aggressor
- Not confront the parents of the alleged aggressor.
- Report the situation to your child's teacher, year leader or principal and follow up if you do not receive an initial response to your concern within two working days.
- Attend any follow-up monitoring meetings at an agreed time

Parents whose child may be involved in bullying others:

If it is suggested that your child may be bullying others you may be shocked and upset however it is important to work with the academy and to listen to the evidence. Where it is clear that your son or daughter has been involved in some form of bullying you will need to work with the academy as your child comes to admit their behaviour and works with the professionals involved to work through a programme of support designed to ensure that the behaviour is not repeated.

Responsibilities of Academy Staff:

Complaints of bullying must be investigated without delay. If the apparent victim or perpetrator is absent from the academy interviews must be held without delay once the pupil has returned. In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to arrange for an interview to occur at a pupil's home.

- The staff member must speak privately and separately to the pupils involved in an attempt to obtain all perspectives
- Staff members must seek answers to the what, where, when, who and why questions. This should be done calmly, to set an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually, and asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.

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- It will be necessary to ensure that the behaviours complained of do correspond to the definition of bullying given in this policy and that there has not simply been a, possibly temporary, breakdown in a hitherto healthy relationship.
- If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying, it should be made clear how they are in breach of the academy’s behaviour code and the pupil encouraged to understand the situation from the victim’s point of view.
- The incident should be recorded, included in the academy’s records and reported to the appropriate school staff as described in the appendices.
- Where there is bullying by a group, each member should be helped to handle the possible peer-pressures that may face them after interview.
- Staff members who are investigating cases of bullying should keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask each interviewee to write down their account of the incident. All documentation should be retained.
- Where bullying has occurred, the staff member and/or Head of Year or Key Stage will meet with the parents/carers of the parties involved as appropriate. They will explain the actions being taken by the academy and the reasons for them, referring them to this policy. They will seek parental support for the actions being taken and agree a time for a follow up monitoring meeting unless this is deemed unnecessary by all involved.
- Where necessary they will organize ongoing support for the victim and a package of actions to help modify the behaviour of the aggressor(s).
- They will arrange separate follow-up meetings with the parties involved with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the victim is ready and agreeable. This may include the use of Restorative Justice approaches.
- Should these actions prove ineffective then further incidents will be escalated to more senior staff for further intervention and possible sanction.
- Staff who oversee bullying logs/records monitor repeat/persistent offenders and take appropriate action.

If a member of staff has reason to be concerned about the well-being or safety of any pupil as a result of bullying this will be referred to the designated senior member of staff for child protection, regardless of the stage reached in the investigation.

Bullying outside of the academy

GAET and each academy will review any incidents of bullying which take place outside of academy premises and/or hours and will consider using their powers

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when it is reasonable to do so, and particularly if incidents out of school directly affect behaviour, attitudes and pupils’ well-being in school, then they will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant policy.

Where possible the academy will take steps available to ensure that parents and/or external agencies, including the police if appropriate, are made aware.

Summary of responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- Each Governing Body to take a role in monitoring and reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of this policy;
- Governors, the Principal, the Leadership Team, teaching and non-teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly;
- The principal to determine designated members of staff to monitor and record all reports of incidents of bullying;
- All members of the academy community to report incidents of bullying;
- All members of the academy community to take an active role in fostering a positive anti-bullying ethos within the school; and
- All our pupils to speak out report bullying incidents and help and support victims of bullying.

6 EQUALITY

The Great Academies Education Trust ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided. We do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their sex, race, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origins. This is line with the 1976 Race Relations Act and covers both direct and indirect discrimination.

7 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

To be reviewed and amended by GAET officers in collaboration with the principal, or nominated representative, from each Academy. The recommendations will be submitted to the Board of Governors for consideration and, where applicable, approval.

Each academy’s Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academies.

Each academy’s governing body will receive appropriate information and data regarding bullying at least annually.

This policy should be read in conjunction with;

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- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and safeguarding policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data protection policy

Complaints.

Should it be necessary to raise officially any concern about this policy or its implementation, registered parents or carers may use the official complaints procedure which is available on request from the academy.

Date: March 2016

Date for next review: March 2018

8 SOURCES CONSULTED

- Independent School Standard Regulations 2010
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Duty 2011
- The Children Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998

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Appendix 1

Great Academy Ashton

Curriculum delivery method

Students at the Academy access ECM (Every Child Matters) lessons which focus on all types of bullying and the effects. All year groups have assemblies during national anti-bullying week. Form tutors deliver anti-bullying messages and resources, including where to access support, to students during registration time throughout the academic year; this also gives students the opportunity to discuss and express their opinions and support. Student planners have a number of pages dedicated to bullying.

In each year group there is a foundation learning strand for the most academically vulnerable students. These students follow a SEAL programme once a fortnight at KS3 which includes circle time and enables students to develop their social and emotional awareness and understanding.

Specific resources

The Academy is part of the Stonewall Champion Schools programme and there are noticeboards around the Academy which are dedicated to anti-bullying (incl LGBT). The Academy is also participating in the Rainbow Flag Award, led by The Proud Trust. The Academy uses restorative justice and there are trained peer mediators in Years 10 & 11 who work with younger students to resolve differences and help students to develop empathetic understanding for others' feelings.

All year managers are trained in restorative practices and carry this out with students when the situation has escalated beyond the skill set of the peer mediators.

Recording and reporting guidance, including monitoring

1. Staff report incidents of bullying using CPOMs, with an incident logged for the victim(s) and this goes automatically to the Head of Year, Year Manager and DSL for action. All proven bullying incidents are logged against the perpetrator on SIMs and on SMART by the Year Manager.
2. Students can report incidents of bullying to any member of staff, or they can complete a request for peer mediation form (via student services desk or Year Manager)
3. All incidents are investigated by a pastoral member of staff and written statements from students are taken (and staff where appropriate). Parents are informed when allegations have been made and are kept up to date as the investigation proceeds to an outcome.
4. HOYs/Year Managers/DSL decide upon a course of action. If a sanction is required, this is done in line with the Academy's behaviour policy. Where restorative justice is decided upon, this is carried out by a trained member of staff and/or the peer mediation team.

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The number of racist and bullying incidents are shared with governors termly at the full governing body meeting via the Principal's report.

Lead responsibility

Rachel Gill, Designated Safeguarding Lead, is the nominated person within the Academy.

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