Anti-Bullying

Approved by:	AIB	Date:	13/12/23
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Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a safe and friendly environment where all our young people are able to learn and achieve and fulfil their potential free from experiencing bullying behaviour. Our expectation is that all young people and staff will behave in an appropriate and socially acceptable way. Bullying behaviour of any kind is unacceptable at the CE Academy both inside and outside of school. If bullying behaviour does occur all young people should be able to inform a member of staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All members of staff have a duty of care and a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of the young people. There is a consistent approach to how bullying behaviour is dealt with. Parents are involved at the earliest opportunity and young people are encouraged and taught to develop effective personal strategies to solve any issues.

The aims and objectives of this policy

- To make it possible for young people to experience the Academy as a caring, supportive learning environment, free from bullying behaviour.

- To create an atmosphere of tolerance, mutual respect, cooperation and consideration of others to enable young people to feel safe from fear and threats.

- To ensure that all young people feel valued, ensuring progress in their attainment, attitudes and their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

- To accept that it is everyone's responsibility to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour.

- To involve all staff, young people and parents/carers in promoting and following the policy and in the referral of bullying incidents.

Other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Management

- Behaviour Principles

- Equality Opportunities

- Safeguarding and Child Protection

- Digital and Online Safety

Definition of Bullying Behaviour

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Usually there is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the target to defend themselves".

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously CE Academy's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; CE Academy staff have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying behaviour having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they target to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **Social/emotional** – being unfriendly, excluding or attempting to exclude from friendship groups, tormenting, intimidation, making threatening gestures;
- **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, spitting, punching, slapping or any use of violence.
- **Racist** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Homophobic** – focusing on the issue of sexuality or gender (transphobic).
- **Verbal** – humiliation, teasing, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, making insulting remarks.
- **Cyber** – bullying by electronic media to include all areas of internet misuse such as emails, internet chatrooms, instant messaging, the posting of threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material to social media sites or personal websites, hijacking of email accounts for malicious use, the misuse of mobile telephones to make threats, send abusive texts or calls, the misuse of mobile phone cameras and associated technology to cause distress, fear or humiliation including using social media to insult, intimidate and spread rumours, all of which detract from our focus on learning.

Cyber bullying

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites. Section 127 of the Communications Act of 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communication network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying behaviour and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.[1] If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

We encourage parents/carers to be aware of what their child is posting and uploading online and to monitor the use of social media. We advise all parents to contact the police if incidents of cyber-bullying occur outside of school hours.

Criminal law

Although bullying behaviour in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If CE Academy staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should initially seek advice from SLT who may then suggest reporting it to the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

The CE Academy recognises that specific groups of young people are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), young carers, Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and those who are or are thought to be LGBTQ+. As such, prevention of bullying considers the specific patterns of discrimination these groups face.

Bullying behaviour which occurs outside school premises

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying behaviour occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying behaviour outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying behaviour that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

Signs of bullying behaviour

A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is a target for bullying behaviour. Staff and parents/carers should be aware of these possible signs and where they see repeated or multiple symptoms they should investigate further. Behaviour patterns that might indicate a cause for concern include when a young person:

- is frightened of walking to and from school;
- doesn't want to go to school;
- begs to be driven to school;
- changes their usual route to school;
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- begins to truant;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens suicide;
- runs away from home;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the mornings;
- starts to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with torn clothes or damaged property;
- has possessions that are damaged or "go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a bully);
- has lunch money that goes missing (see above);
- comes home hungry;
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;

- is frightened to say what is wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received;
- will not let parents/carers see their cyber messages.

Roles and responsibilities

- All young people must know that they will be listened to and believed and that the response of the school will be swift, effective and sensitive to their concerns. It is the responsibility of the young people to report the incident in the first instance to either a member of staff or a peer mentor.

- The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for the well-being of all the young people at the Academy and responsibility for their safeguarding.

- All staff, young people, parents/carers and governors must be aware of the Anti-Bullying policy and share responsibility for upholding its aims and objectives. All staff complete Safeguarding training.

- Key Tutor/member of staff should address minor incidents and friendship disagreements, ensuring that the situation is dealt with swiftly and efficiently.

- All incidents of bullying behaviour or suspicions of bullying behaviour should be reported to the Headteacher/SLT who will decide if the incident is bullying behaviour according to our definition and will ensure that the situation is thoroughly investigated to clarify the facts and to ensure that a conclusion can be reached.

- Careful consideration of all circumstances will be made before sanctions or follow-up actions are decided. This will, in the vast majority of cases, involve the parents/carers of both the alleged bully and target being informed at the earliest opportunity where this is deemed appropriate by the Headteacher/SLT.

- Parents/carers can contact or talk to any member of staff to report any concerns.

Investigating and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour

- The member of staff responsible for investigating the incident should collect all relevant evidence to support the investigation. This evidence will include separate statements from the target and alleged perpetrator and any witness statements. The evidence may also include staff or parent/carer statements, CCTV footage, electronic evidence and evidence from previous related incidents.

- The investigating member of staff will ensure distinction between incidents of bullying behaviour and other types of incident such as a falling out with friends.

- All information will be used in the swift resolution of an incident and will be passed to the appropriate staff to deal with.

- Where victims and perpetrators have been identified parents/carers will be informed.

- Where there exists "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm" the information will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher in accordance with the Safeguarding Children's Board.

- Where bullying behaviour outside the Academy is reported to staff, it should be investigated and acted on in conjunction with the parents/carers. The parents should consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police in their local authority of the incident and this may lead to involvement of the Academy in relaying prior actions taken against a young person. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public or a pupil, the police should always be informed.

- Students are reminded that they can speak to any member of staff in school they trust.

Sanctions for bullying behaviour:

- Discussion with SLT.

- Parental/carer engagement through telephone calls or meetings.

- Timetable changes.

- Removal from a lesson/group for a period of time.

- The use of restorative justice with staff or local police officers.

- Police involvement.

- 1-1 behaviour intervention sessions.

- If the bullying behaviour has been extreme and particularly damaging, it may lead to a suspension.

Work with victims of bullying behaviour may include:

- Assurance that the young person was right to report the incident and reassurance that the bullying behaviour was not their fault.

- Encouragement to talk about the effects of the incident and how the young person feels with a member of trained staff.

- Discussion on the strategies the young person can employ to keep themselves safe.

- Advising the young person on strategies for dealing with any further incidents.

- Affirmation that bullying behaviour can be stopped and that the Academy will persist with intervention.

- Restorative justice meetings where appropriate.

- Referral to counselling with outside agencies.

Education of those bullying others may include:

- Actively challenging the behaviour and discussing the motivation behind the incident to identify whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.

- The member of staff will openly discuss differences between people that motivate bullying behaviour, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality.

- Where deemed necessary the Academy will use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems.

- Restorative justice meetings between the victim and perpetrator.

- Involvement in anti-bullying activities and workshops within the curriculum.

Proactive measures to prevent bullying behaviour

At the CE Academy we are in agreement that prevention is better than cure and therefore we strive to create an inclusive, safe environment where young people can openly discuss bullying behaviour and create a whole school ethos to reduce/eliminate incidents of bullying behaviour. The CE Academy does this by:

- proactively seeking to celebrate success to create a positive school culture;

- providing a comprehensive PACC (CPSHE, RSE, Citizenship and Careers) programme that includes opportunities to explore bullying behaviour as a topic, that encouraging open discussion on issues related to prejudice and discrimination and examines the topic of social media and its misuse;

- the promotion of e-safety across the school through PACC, staff/young people discussions;

- developing positive staff/pupil relationships;

- whole school teaching methods that encourage all young people to work cooperatively in lessons and extra-curricular activities;

- encouraging positive behaviour at all times, through the implementation of rewarding pupils' positive attitudes and behaviours;

- providing a high level of staff supervision during lesson times and social times;

- providing high staff:pupil ratio;

- looking at individual pupil timetables and make changes if necessary.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports of bullying in school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns, either in school or outside, they should speak to SLT.

Monitoring and review of the policy and practice

The Academy will regularly monitor current practice through a range of systems to ensure that the policy and the Academy procedures are clear and effective in preventing and dealing with bullying behaviour. The Academy will regularly evaluate and update the policy and practice to take account of developments in technology.

Further information can be found on:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Policy Control Sheet

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Document History

Version	Date of review	Author	Note of revisions
02	November 2023	LB	Removal of peer-on-peer – appears in safeguarding policy Addition of vulnerable young people and minor amendments.