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**ANTI- BULLYING POLICY**

**Last revision date: December 2016**

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**1. Roles and responsibilities**

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy and provision rests with the Principal. On an operational basis, the management, responsibility and evaluation of this policy is undertaken by the **Vice-Principal Deep Support & Assistant Principal Deep Support.**

**2. Mission Statement**

South Leeds Academy is committed to working with students and parents to provide a learning environment that is secure and supportive so that all individuals can develop academically and socially free from fear of ridicule, harassment or physical threat. We aim to create an environment where all members of the Academy community feel safe, respected and valued. All children have an absolute right to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our Academy. Bullying may be verbal, physical or psychological. In fact any action which makes a child feel uncomfortable, insecure or threatened may be defined as bullying. The Academy disapproves of bullying in all its forms and considers it a most serious offence.

### 3. Introduction

Bullying, in whatever form detrimentally affects the ability of our students to meet the aspirations which this academy has for each and also meet the outcomes of the Every Child Matters initiative. Bullying will not be tolerated in any form, or to any degree.

**Key objective** - We will work hard to ensure that bullying plays no part in our community by proactively working with all students, their families and our staff to eradicate it and promptly dealing with all reported incidents.

**Purpose of this policy** - This policy will provide clear guidance for staff on dealing with bullying incidents and the processes by which the Academy will seek to eradicate this issue.

### 4. Bullying defined

Bullying manifests itself in a number of ways:

- Physical e.g. Assaulting a person or damaging their property
- Verbal e.g. name calling or teasing
- Indirect – damaging the reputation or character of the victim, or socially excluded them from games or conversation.
- Cyberbullying. e.g. texting, e-mails or other digital communication, e.g. chat rooms, blogs, etc. This is a particularly nasty form of bullying, as the bullying follows the victim into the home and outside school hours.

No matter what form bullying takes, it is all abhorrent and damages both the victim and the bully to differing extents. The South Leeds Academy will make use of the best information and practices available to eradicate this problem.

Bullying affects the ability of a student to fully participate in and enjoy school life and it is both an equal opportunities issue as well as a disciplinary offence, which the Governors and staff will do all in their power to resolve.

### 5. Roles and responsibilities

The responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of all students rests not only on the Principal and Education Advisory Body (EAB), but on every member of the academy staff. Every person has a duty of care to observe, monitor and report any behaviour, conversation or action which they suspect. Staff have a legal obligation through such

legislation as 'Every Child Matters' to ensure that every action, however apparently small or insignificant is dealt with and reported.

The academy fully supports the DCSF initiative: 'Bullying – A Charter For Action' and we will work towards the full implementation of the guidance in this.

## **6. Preventing bullying**

The academy will develop a clear strategy, which it will share with all staff through a dedicated professional development programme. This strategy will then be clearly and comprehensively communicated to every member of our student population, their families and where appropriate with the community.

This strategy will be developed using current best practice not only from the UK, but also where appropriate, taking account of successes of schools in other countries.

The academy will take every opportunity to demonstrate to students, through the curriculum (E.g. via C4 and Anti-bullying events), pastoral programmes, displays, assemblies and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying.

The academy will consider designating 'Special Safe Places' where vulnerable or sensitive students can freely access at breaks and lunchtimes, such as the library and dedicated pastoral spaces.

Expert opinion says that bullying is a response to powerlessness. We will seek to engage all our students through our pastoral programme and our School Council working groups.

Staff will not ignore bullying or suspected bullying. All academy staff will intervene to prevent bullying incidents from taking place. After initial intervention a referral will be made to the Learning Manager in the first instance who will then liaise with SLT.

The academy will encourage students to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher or other adult at the academy. Students will be told that they may bring a friend with them if they wish.

The academy will ensure that all staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the academy's Anti-bullying policy.

Staff will praise and encourage students when they show kindness and consideration to others.

## **7. Recognising the signs of bullying**

The academy recognises that any student can be bullied but certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- A lack of close friends in the academy
- Shyness
- Race, religion, sexual orientation or social class
- A disability or some other obvious difference, e.g. stammering or acne

Staff will suspect bullying is occurring if a student:

- Becomes withdrawn and anxious
- Shows a deterioration in his/her work
- Starts to attend the academy erratically
- Has spurious illnesses
- Persistently arrives late at the academy
- Prefers to stay with adults

If you suspect a student is being bullied share your concerns with the student's House Tutor or House Director. Monitor the health and behaviour of the student carefully and be prepared to promptly deal with any deterioration. If deterioration is noted agree with other colleagues the most appropriate support, which may involve parents/carers.

## **8. Dealing with bullying**

All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable.

In dealing with bullying, staff will:

- Not ignore it
- Not make premature assumptions
- Listen to all accounts of the incidents
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages students to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves
- Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed
- Ensure that all relevant personnel within school (Learning Manager/ SENCo / Safeguarding Officer / SLT) have been informed
- Record the incident promptly

Procedure to support a student who has been bullied:

(a) Talk to the student away from other students, but with other staff close by. (b)

Listen to the student's account of the incident.

(c) Reassure the student that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do.

- (d) Make it clear to the student that she/he is not to blame for what has happened.
- (e) Ideally, allow the student to write a statement or make a note of what the student said.
- (f) Explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately.

The DCSF have a website 'Don't suffer in silence' which gives excellent advice for students who have been bullied and for staff supporting them.

[www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/)

Ask the student:

- (a) What happened?
- (b) Whether or not this was the first incident, if not how many other incidents have there been.
- (c) Who was involved
- (d) Where it happened
- (e) Who saw what happened (staff as well as students).
- (f) What the student had already done about it.
- (g) Depending on the severity of the incident, whether parents/carers ought to be contacted

Ideally, the student should be given the time and appropriate accommodation to make a written statement which is jointly checked by the student and member of staff and where necessary amended to ensure clarity. This information must be passed on as soon as possible to the House Tutor or House Director. It is usual to remove the accused bully and any witnesses from class as soon as possible to get them to write statements on their own about the incident.

Members of staff who witnessed the incident should be asked to write the relevant details down as soon as possible and give these to the staff investigating.

The victim should be consulted regarding their return to lessons and where possible their views heeded

## 9. Supporting students

**Victims** - It is likely that pastoral staff will work with these students, but it is essential that the students are fully supported during this traumatic time through contacts with staff and with students. Ultimately, the student must make the decision who they would like to speak to. Usual choices are: VMG Tutor, LM, Safeguarding Officer, SENCO or Senior Leader. The student's own peers could have an important role in acting as councillors or mediators. – This will be developed over time.

**Bullies** - It is also important for the bully to receive counselling, to prevent further incidents. Often, bullies themselves have been victims. Usually a member of the pastoral team will carry out this role:

- (a) Talk to the student about how things are going at the Academy, her progress and friends.
- (b) Ask why they acted as they did.
- (c) Explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy.
- (d) Discuss with the student how to join in with others without bullying.
- (e) Give the student lots of praise and encouragement for the times when she is being kind and considerate to others.
- (f) Inform and involve parents when appropriate.
- (g) If appropriate, there could be a meeting between the victim and the bully to enable the bully to apologise / explain why, etc

## **10. Reporting and recording incidents**

Bearing in mind the seriousness of these incidents it is imperative that all incidents be:

- Promptly dealt with
- Recorded and reported promptly (LMs) well before the end of the day

## **11. Working with Parents/Carers**

We recognise that parents and carers have a key role to play supporting victims and counselling instigators and we will work closely with these to deal with bullying.

Bullying in the academy is everyone's problem. All staff, students and parent/carers should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the academy a happier place for everyone.

Parents, carers and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.

The academy will encourage parents/carers who suspect that a child is bullying or being bullied to immediately contact the academy and make an appointment to see the child's LM or SLT Link as soon as possible.

Parents and carers will be informed of incidents and will be involved in discussions. The Academy will discuss with parents how they can work together to stop the bullying.

## **12. Reinforcement of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

This policy will be reinforced effectively across the academy via the following:

- (a) Use of display
- (b) C4 lessons will cover bullying in Year 7 and in response to incidents where appropriate.
- (c) Assemblies will focus on issues associated with bullying and in response to incidents where appropriate.
- (d) Self esteem and assertiveness training will be carried out in C4.

## **13. Dealing with Persistent Bullying**

If counselling and other preventative measures, such as peer support strategies do not succeed, persistent bullying will be dealt with under the academy's discipline policy. The bully may for example:

- (a) Be removed from the group.
- (b) Be put in detention.
- (c) Be banned from an academy trip or other events where these are not an essential part of the curriculum.
- (d) Be isolated or placed in another school for a fixed period.

In the most serious cases, permanent exclusion may be considered.

## **14. Review**

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually or when there are changes in the law. Policy review now January 2016 following Bullying Charter Mark programme.

### **Useful references**

- a. [www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying)
- b. [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- c. [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- d. [www.peersupport.co.uk](http://www.peersupport.co.uk)

[www.bbc.co.uk/education/bully/index.htm](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/bully/index.htm)

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