

Anti-Bullying Policy

Member of staff responsible: Marcus Shepherd, Headteacher

1. a) The National and Legal Context

This policy takes full account of the academy's legal obligations under the Education Inspections Act of 2006 to:

- promote the well-being of pupils in the academy
- develop a policy which encourages good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular preventing all forms of bullying amongst pupils
- establish procedures for dealing with complaints about bullying.

This policy has been produced with reference to the DfE 'Keeping Children safe in Education' 2016, Derby Children's Safeguarding Board procedures and guidance, the National Healthy Schools Programme theme of Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Preventing & Tackling Bullying 2014 and the DfE Safe to Learn document 2007.

b) How this Policy was developed

This policy was written in consultation with academy staff, the school council, parents and the Governing Body.

The academy has a 'duty of care' towards its pupils with regard to bullying in that the Headteacher and staff stand in 'loco parentis' (in place of the parents). This duty of care includes protecting pupils from harm from bullying.

2. a) Definition of Bullying

We follow the DCSF Safe to Learn, 2007, guidance which defines bullying as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally". Bullying can be direct or indirect and includes:

Verbal bullying – name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments and teasing.

Physical bullying – kicking, hitting, punching, pushing and pinching.

Emotional bullying -producing offensive graffiti, excluding people from groups, spreading hurtful and untrue rumours, being forced to do things against own will and taking belongings or money.

Racist bullying – an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. This can be in the form of:

- verbal abuse, name calling, racist jokes, offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks

- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- inciting others to behave in a racist way
- racist graffiti or other written insults, even against food, music, dress or customs
- refusing to co-operate in work or play

(Macpherson report 1999)

Sexual bullying – this is generally characterised by:

- abusive name calling
- looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- inappropriate and uninvited touching
- sexual innuendos and propositions
- pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- in it's most extreme form, sexual assault or rape

Sexual orientation – this can happen even if the pupils are not lesbian, gay or bisexual. Just being different can be enough. This can be in the form of:

- use of homophobic language
- looks and comments about sexual orientation or appearance

SEN or disability – These pupils are often at greater risk of bullying. This can be characterised by:

- name calling
- comments on appearance
- comments with regard to perceived ability and achievement levels

Text/Cyber bullying – this is on the increase and can involve pupils receiving threatening or disturbing messages from possibly anonymous callers. It can also include comments posted on social media.

The academy allows students to bring mobile phones to school but they must remain switched off in their bags or handed in to the school office for safekeeping. The academy will deal with incidents of text/cyber bullying if the incident is likely to affect the well-being of students in academy. However, we strongly encourage parents to take action themselves by contacting the police, mobile phone and website providers.

People who are victims of bullying frequently, but not exclusively, are bullied as a result of:

- race, religion or culture
- special educational needs or disability
- appearance or health conditions
- sexual orientation
- gender
- home circumstance including looked-after-children and young carers

b) Inclusion

Every member of the academy community is entitled to expect equality of protection from bullying as well as protection and support from academy policies and procedures designed to ensure that the academy remains a safe environment in which to teach and learn. Our academy policy has given careful consideration to the six equality strands, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability and sexuality - REGARDS. This is to ensure that anti-bullying provision is provided in a sensitive and non-judgemental way that will enable all young people, staff and the wider academy community to feel valued and included in effective policy and practices. In order to achieve this, we have included as wide a cross section of the academy community as possible in the consultation leading to the agreement of this academy policy and we have tried to incorporate the specific needs of particular groups.

3. Academy Statement of Intent

The academy has a strong no-bullying policy. **We will not tolerate bullying behaviour of any kind.** Name-calling, racially sensitive incidents, verbal or sexual abuse, threatening behaviour, harassment and bad language are all regarded as bullying behaviour.

Serious incidents of bullying behaviour in which students are physically assaulted, intimidated or verbally abused in some way, may result in an exclusion from the academy; this may be a fixed term exclusion or, if the offence is serious enough, a permanent exclusion, even for a first offence.

If a student knows that a fight may occur between other students either in school, on the way to or from school or outside academy hours, he or she is expected to report this to a senior member of staff so that preventative action may be taken. Merrill Academy is a 'telling school' and we expect our students to report any behaviour that they know is inappropriate to a member of staff.

We believe that:

- Bullying is undesirable and unacceptable
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness
- All members of the academy community will be listened to and taken seriously
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others
- Young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously
- Harm can often be repaired using a Restorative Justice Approach. This carefully managed process will involve the victim and offender taking an active role in seeking resolution together to restore relationships and prevent further incidents
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse

4. Aims of the Policy

- To assist in creating an ethos in which attending school is a positive experience for all members of the academy community
- To make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at the academy
- To enable everyone to feel safe while at the academy and encourage pupils to report incidences of bullying
- To deal effectively with bullying
- To support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to
- To help and support bullies to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and understand why it needs to change
- To liaise with pupils, parents and other appropriate members of the academy community
- To ensure all members of the academy community feel responsible for combating bullying
- To ensure consistency in practice within the academy community

5. Intended Outcomes

- That all parents and pupils have received and had opportunity to comment upon the academy anti-bullying policy
- That there are effective listening systems for pupils and staff within the academy
- That parents have a point of contact for the anti-bullying lead in academy if they are concerned about their child
- That all staff have the necessary skills and confidence to deal with incidents of bullying effectively and promptly
- That no child or young persons' educational opportunities and achievement is disadvantaged due to the experience of bullying
- That all staff are equipped with the skills necessary to deal with bullying
- That the wider academy community, for example midday supervisors, is involved in dealing effectively with, reporting, recording, monitoring and if necessary referring bullying incidents
- That there is effective communication with parents and the wider academy community on the subject of bullying through newsletters, parents meetings and Healthy Schools Roadshows
- That all incidents of bullying are recorded and appropriate use is made of the information and where appropriate shared with relevant organisations

6. Specific Academy Targets

- To ensure all staff are familiar with reporting incidents procedures
- To ensure all incidents of bullying are recorded appropriately on the academy Student Statement form.
- To implement systems to collate data on bullying and produce half termly analysis to inform planning
- To continue to implement rigorous and effective anti-bullying procedures to continue to reduce incidents of bullying

7. Core Values

Merrill Academy's values set out clearly for our students how they should behave.

Excellence – Always modelling the positive behaviours which make us proud to be the Merrill community. Setting a positive example when others do not reach our standards and never accepting low expectations.

Determination – Always striving to make the academy the best it can possibly be and always encouraging others and ourselves to be the best possible member of our community.

Empathy – Always striving to make the academy the best it can possibly be and always encouraging others and ourselves to be the best possible member of our community. Being thankful and taking full advantage of the opportunities made available to us, whilst being mindful of those less fortunate than ourselves.

Community – Involving everybody in all we do and encouraging them to be happy and succeed regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, interests, religions or beliefs.

Playing Their Part

Schools like Merrill Academy value care about their community. They are the result of people in the school working together and doing their best in every area of school life. This includes the students, because, without them, there would be no school. The part each student plays is vital. If Merrill Academy is a good school, it is one because of the students. They make Merrill Academy a good place by showing every day the values of:

- Excellence
- Determination
- Empathy
- Community

We recognise that all adults in the academy are in effect role models for the students. The way in which we behave towards each other and to students is particularly important in terms of providing positive role models. Therefore, as adults we must:

- show respect for every student and other colleagues within the school community as individuals
- be aware of vulnerable students
- separate the behaviour from the student
- avoid favouritism
- be seen to be fair
- avoid labelling
- have high expectations of students
- actively seek to develop a praise culture within the academy

Young people also have a responsibility to role model appropriate behaviour for their peers. We therefore believe that all students must

- show respect for their fellow students and adults working within the academy

community

- support and be sensitive to others when they may be feeling vulnerable
- actively seek to develop a praise culture within the academy
- actively support the academy anti-bullying policy
- take responsibility for their own behaviour

8. Recording of Incidents

It is a legal requirement for schools to record all incidents of bullying. To meet this requirement, we:

- keep a record of individual incidents of bullying. ***A Student Statement form can be found in the appendix to this policy***
- ensure that an annual analysis of the bullying record is undertaken by the academy including members of the senior leadership team and the governing body

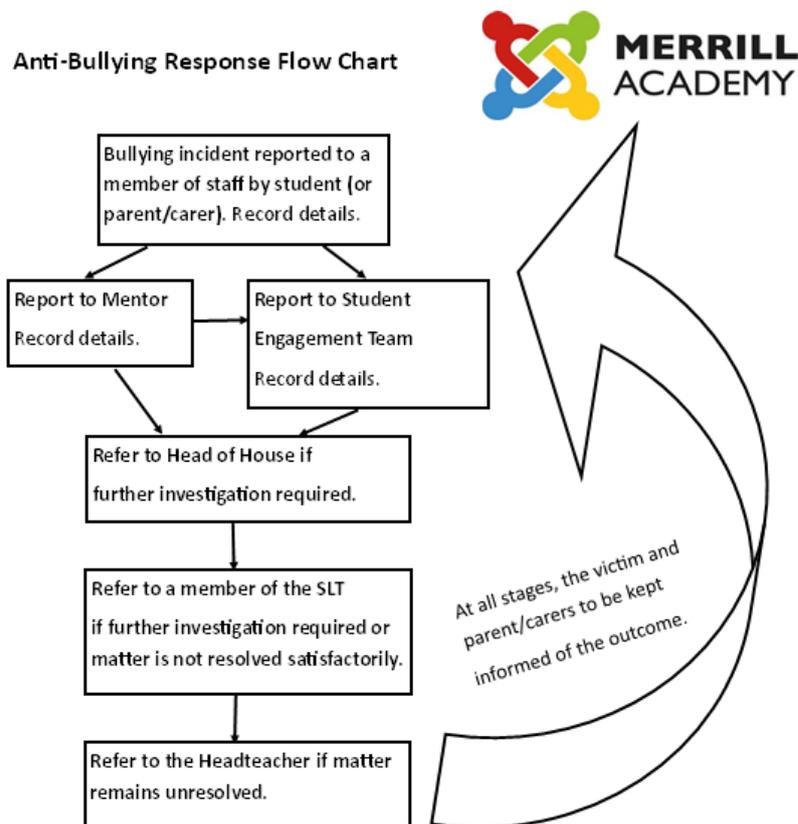
The academy also records individually incidents of a racially sensitive nature.

9. Procedures and Dealing with Incidents – A Whole School Approach

a) Role of pupils and staff in reporting and recording a bullying incident involving pupils

We take the view that everyone has a responsibility to report incidents of bullying or to share their concerns with a member of the academy community. At this academy we follow the school guide to reporting and dealing with bullying incidents.

Anti-Bullying Response Flow Chart



b) Guidance for pupils

If you are being bullied:

- remember it is not your fault
- try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
- be firm and clear – look them in the eye and, if possible, tell them to stop and tell them how you feel

After you have been bullied:

- all bullying is wrong and you do not have to stay silent about it
- tell an adult or somebody you trust about what has happened straight away. Adults in academy have a responsibility to give you help and support around bullying
- if you are scared to tell a teacher or adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

- what has happened to you
- how often it has happened
- who was involved
- who saw what was happening
- where it happened
- what you have done about it already

If you experience bullying by mobile phone, text messages or the internet:

- don't retaliate or reply
- save the evidence do not delete anything
- make sure you tell an adult who you trust
- contact your service provider or look at their website to see where to report incidents
- be careful who you give your mobile phone number or e-mail address to
- make a note of exactly when a threatening message was sent

For contacts and details of where to seek help outside academy please see appendix.

c) Guidance for parents/carers

If your child has been bullied:

- calmly talk with your child about his/her experiences
- make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened
- reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to an adult in the academy immediately
- Contact the academy. They will arrange a meeting with you where appropriate to discuss your concerns
- Try to explain calmly the problems your child is experiencing. You may feel angry or

upset about an incident involving your child so it is better not to ring the academy immediately. Take some time to find out the facts about the incident before ringing and remember that the academy will have to investigate all sides to the story before deciding on the course of action to take

- They will contact you again when they have investigated the incident further

When talking with members of staff about bullying:

- try to stay calm and bear in mind that the staff member may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved
- make a note of what action the academy intends to take
- ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
- stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

If you are not satisfied:

- check with the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed
- make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher and keep a record of the meeting
- If this does not help write to the Chair of Governors explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happening

If your child is displaying bullying behaviour towards others:

- talk with your child and explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's Head of House. Explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop him/ her bullying others
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/ she is co-operative or kind to other people.

If your child is experiencing any form of cyber bullying:

- ensure your child is careful whom they give their mobile phone number and e-mail address to
- check exactly when a threatening message was sent and keep evidence of offending e-mails, text messages or online conversations. Do not delete messages
- if the bullying involves a pupil from the academy contact the academy to report this
- contact the service provider to report the incidents
- if the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the police

d) Sanctions

It is important for all schools to be open and transparent in the sanctions used for bullying incidents. This school has set procedures to follow in implementing sanctions where a bullying incident has occurred. These sanctions are applied in appropriate proportion to the event. In the event of all other avenues being exhausted or in particularly serious cases this may lead to exclusion.

The revised DCSF Revised Guidance of September 2007, Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units, Section 17, states:

‘In cases where a headteacher has permanently excluded a pupil for persistent and defiant misbehaviour, which would include racist or homophobic bullying...., the Secretary of State would not normally expect the governors’ Discipline Committee or an Independent Appeal Panel to reinstate the pupil’.

However, governors would need to examine the evidence that a wide range of strategies had been tried and failed to affect a positive change in the bullying behaviour. Our sanctions include:

- Loss of social time at break and lunch time
- After school detentions
- Change of start/finish time
- Move of teaching/Mentor group
- Restorative Justice task such as writing a letter of apology
- Withdrawal from lessons to work in the isolation
- Pre- exclusion warnings and contracts
- Merrill Hall provision
- A managed move to another school
- Fixed term exclusion
- Appearance before the Governing Body Discipline Committee
- Permanent exclusion from school

10. Strategies to Reduce Bullying

The academy has adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour including:

- A pastoral system allowing students to report all incidents to a member of staff
- Student Engagement Team
- Regular school to home contact
- PSHE programmes
- Restorative justice
- Key workers and mentoring programmes
- Support and guidance from Safeguarding

