

# AYLSHAM LEARNING FEDERATION

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Signed: .....

Chair

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### 1. Introduction

Aylsham Learning Federation believes that all students/pupils/children have a right to be safe and happy. While Aylsham Learning Federation does not have a significant bullying problem it is inevitable that a small minority of our students/pupils/children at some point during their time with us may be affected by bullying. We therefore are keen to ensure a zero tolerance approach is taken towards any incidents of bullying that may occur between students/pupils/children and take active steps to prevent it happening in the first place.

The primary aim of this policy is to prevent bullying (including racism and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying), where possible, and to lay down clear guidelines for dealing with it when it does occur.

### 2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- physical bullying,
- verbal bullying (including cyber-bullying), or
- indirect bullying (excluding others from activities to intentionally be unkind).

Bullying can be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation or because a child is adopted 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 a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than

physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

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 and can happen at all times of the day via personal devices or social media, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

<https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition>

### 3. Aims and Objectives

1. To ensure all incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively and within a whole school approach.
2. To raise awareness of bullying and prevent its occurrence in the first place.
3. To ensure students/pupils/children know who to report bullying to and feel safe in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and helped with the problem facing them.
4. To ensure that all staff are aware of signs of bullying and are vigilant of this in all aspects of school life.
5. To raise awareness of equality of all regardless of race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio economic background or disability. For further information, please refer to the equality information and objectives policy.

### 4. Strategies for Dealing with Reported Bullying

#### ***Strategies used specifically at John of Gaunt:***

Our priority is to ensure the children feel safe and know that it is always important to talk about how they feel so that we can support each other as a community. It is a subject that we take extremely seriously. Our children are very young with a range of maturities - incidents that could be perceived as bullying can be the result of behaviour that arises from their spontaneous, egocentric nature. The essential message for our children is that if anything concerns them during their time in school they talk to someone about it.

- All incidents of bullying that are reported are dealt with swiftly and effectively and within a timely manner.
- Serious incidents are dealt with by the Head of School or in the case of very serious incidents the Executive Headteacher:
  - both parties will have the opportunity to give their viewpoint,
  - both parties will have the opportunity for a restorative approach,
  - a resolution and a way forward are agreed,
  - incidents are reported using SIMS,
  - parents/carers may be contacted if they are not already aware or bullying behaviour continues after initial intervention, and
  - friendship between parties will be closely monitored following a reported incident.

### ***Strategies used specifically at Bure Valley School:***

- The incident of bullying is recorded and reported to the Pastoral Leader and/or Head of School/Assistant Heads.
- The Pastoral Leader and the Executive Headteacher/Head of School/Assistant Heads will then investigate the incident and will involve the parents/carers of both children as appropriate. The Executive Headteacher/Head of School/Assistant Heads or Pastoral Leader will agree with the parent/carer about what to do and will keep the parents fully informed.
- We keep a SIMs record of all incidents of bullying that occur both within school time and those reported before and after school.
- Teachers, Pastoral Leader and the Executive Headteacher/Head of School/Assistant Heads will counsel and support both parties and ensure appropriate consequences are given to the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking with the children involved: we explain why the action of the bully was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.
- We make use of a hierarchy of consequences including:
  - change of seating position within the classroom,
  - loss of morning playtime,
  - loss of some or all of lunchtime playtime,
  - individually supervised worktime whilst isolated from the class (dependent on the severity of the incident),
  - if a child is involved in repeated bullying, further steps will be taken and parents will again be involved,
  - the Pastoral Leader liaises regularly with all staff to ensure consistency of approach in dealing with incidents of bullying and behaviour management. The member of staff responsible for anti-bullying ambassadors receives annual training which is then disseminated to staff.

### ***Strategies used specifically at Aylsham High School:***

- All incidents of bullying that are reported within school should be taken seriously and investigated within a timely manner.
- All prejudice related incidents should be reported and recorded by the Assistant Headteacher. These will be shared with the local authority (LA).
- Serious incidents should be dealt with by Heads of House(s) or in the case of very serious incidents the senior leadership team:
  - statements from both parties should be taken
  - incident reported on SIMS along with resolution/sanction given
  - where appropriate follow up action could involve contacting the parents/carers of both parties.
- It will be appropriate for some incidents of bullying to be dealt with by Heads of House or other appropriate adults within school. In some cases it may be appropriate for the incidents to be dealt with by the Friendly Faces, a peer support group run by year 10/11 students coordinated by Mrs K Connor, who are trained to deal with bullying in an informal manner through peer support or in a more formal way using restorative justice techniques (overseen by Mrs S Thomas (ST)).
  - **Friendly Faces and restorative justice approaches**
    - The Friendly Faces will keep a record of each reported incident. Reports are held by KC or passed onto a Head of House, the senior leadership team or a member of the pastoral team.
    - Statements will be taken from both parties.
    - Attempts will be made to reconcile differences and come to an acceptable resolution.

- If Friendly Faces deem they are not able to find a suitable resolution or the incident is more serious they will report to KC/Head of House/senior leadership team for review.
- When appropriate senior Friendly Faces can be used to resolve persistent or more serious issues using restorative justice techniques in a peacemaker meeting. These issues will be identified by staff and passed on to ST to set a meeting up.
- During the meeting students will bring all parties together to discuss the issue being faced and put together an agreed way forward via a contract which all parties agree to keep to. ST holds all copies of contracts unless their review at which point they are added to the student's file.
- Those not keeping to their agreement will be referred back to Head of House/senior leadership team.

Across all schools in the Federation in the most serious of incidents, the Executive Headteacher/Head of school/senior leadership team may contact external support agencies such as the short stay school, SEND support teachers/teams or children's services. The Executive Headteacher/Head of school/senior leadership team may also temporarily exclude a student/pupil/child for a fixed term or permanently exclude a student/pupil/child. In these cases, governors are informed.

## 5. Strategies to Raise Awareness and Prevent Bullying

### ***Strategies used specifically at John of Gaunt:***

- All classrooms have a safe quiet space where children can go if they are feeling overwhelmed and an adult will understand that they have something they need to talk about.
- Children have access to a nurture TA to share their worries and concerns.
- Staff are vigilant when on duty to spot potential issues before they arise but also to tackle issues immediately via a face to face restorative approach.
- Friendship board encourages children to talk about positive relationships and when someone has shown a random act of kindness.
- Half termly kindness awards recognise positive kind behaviour.
- Whole school assemblies address what good friends look like and how to be a good friend.
- Playground buddies help all children to make good choices at break times and lunchtimes and alert staff to any potential issues.
- ***Friendship Week*** - this takes place each November; activities during the week enable the children to feel confident and talk about issues such as behaviour, helping others when they need it, discussing feelings, being a good friend, co-operation and teamwork. The important message of talking and sharing any concerns with others, and listening carefully to offer support is reinforced in a variety of ways. This week also includes e-safety to ensure that children know how to be safe online and report any cyber bullying.
- ***PSHE*** - this aims to develop the underpinning qualities and skills that help promote positive behaviour and effective learning. We focus on five social and emotional aspects of learning: self-awareness, managing feelings, motivation, empathy and social skills.
- ***Circle Time*** - forms part of our PSHE and enables all children to have a voice and for children in their class groups to address any problems that they may have a find solutions to the problem.

- **School Council** - the children in the school council are often asked to talk about any concerns that they have or that the children from their class have. School councillors take an active role in promoting positive and kind behaviour at all times.
- **British Values** - whole school assemblies on British values help children to understand about equality.

### ***Strategies used specifically at Bure Valley School:***

- Participation in anti-bullying week.
- School safety sessions in September; includes reference to bullying.
- Appointment of pastoral leader to support vulnerable children, and to intervene if acts of bullying are reported/witnessed.
- Posters around school for Childline, 'what to do if . . . . '
- Implementation of social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) across the school – promotes relationships.
- Staff vigilance and training.
- Focus for assemblies – raise awareness through story.
- A group of children attend training at Aylsham High School to become anti bullying ambassadors within school. Their role in school is to inform and provide support with any aspects of negative behaviour. This is organised by a teaching assistant who leads regular meetings with them and provided ongoing support and training.

### **The role of midday meal supervisor (MMS) & lunchtime supervision staff BVS**

The MMS/lunch time supervision staff have a special responsibility to be alert to signs of bullying during the longer lunchtime playtime. We have employed MMSs to support the classroom assistants (CAs) and senior leaders (SLT) and provide excellent supervision for all pupils.

- All incidents involving intimidation, violence and social exclusion that are reported by a child to an MMS/lunchtime supervision staff must be referred on to the Pastoral Leader.
- The MMS/lunchtime supervision staff should adopt an active role whilst supervising and endeavour to observe all children and be a presence in all of the areas where children are playing.
- If the MMS/lunchtime supervision staff have evidence that bullying is going on, then the pastoral leader, teacher and Head of School/Assistant Heads must be informed and will record the incident on SIMs.
- At this point, the child should be excluded from the playground and taken to the Executive Headteacher/Head of School/Assistant Heads.

### ***Strategies used specifically at Aylsham High School***

- Students should have access to a safe place if they feel they need it during break and lunchtimes this could be in a classroom with a trusted teacher, in the link room or in the LRC.
- Staff must be vigilant when on duty to identify and act upon bullying incidents. Friendly Faces will help with this by maintaining lunchtime patrols.
- Staff inset and discussions are a key part of the whole school approach.
- Parents/Carers, governors, students and staff should all be familiar with the anti-bullying policy.
- The issue of bullying should be discussed within form time and appropriate lessons to raise awareness.
- Bullying and cyber bullying is a key topic for assemblies led by staff or students (particularly but not exclusively during anti-bullying week).
- There is particular emphasis in the induction programme for year 6 students as it can be a concern for students coming into a new school. Many elements of bullying are

addressed within the Friendly Face Roadshow as well as ensuring students know who to talk to if they feel they are being bullied.

- Aylsham High School has links with the Diana Award Anti-Bullying Ambassadors Programme and will continue to develop these links to help with training students and raising awareness of anti-bullying. This has included hosting a regional anti-bullying conference for other primary and secondary schools in the area which is to become an annual event.
- Awareness of anti-bullying and equality issues will be raised with students during PSHE days for year 7 (anti-bullying) and year 9 (equality) run by Mr J Sexton, Mrs K Connor and the Friendly Face team.

## **6. Role of all staff**

- All staff take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. We are a talking Federation and our actions and ethos encourages a climate of trust and respect for all. Our positive behaviour models aim to encourage friendship and prevent incidents of bullying.
- We recognise that the behaviour of staff is seen by children as model behaviour and therefore staff behaviour demonstrates tolerance, understanding and care towards all students/pupils/children and high quality professional relationships with all adults. We show equal regard for all and our interactions are free from intimidation.
- All staff encourage a restorative approach to any bullying behaviour with a clear way of moving forwards.

## **7. Role of parents**

- Parents who are concerned that their child may be being bullied or experiencing hurtful behaviour, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying or hurtful behaviour, should contact their school immediately.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the Federation's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of their school and community by being kind, respectful and considerate to others.

## **8. Role of governors**

- The governing board supports the Federation in all attempts to eliminate bullying from their schools.
- The Governing Board will not condone any bullying or hurtful behaviour in school, and any incidents that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- The Governing Board monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the schools to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the way a school has dealt with an incident can ask the Chair of Governors to look into the matter. The Governing Board responds within ten days to any request from a parent/carer to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Governing Board notifies the Executive Headteacher/Head of School, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report to a representative of the Governing Board.

## **9. Monitoring and review**

- This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Executive Headteacher / Head of School and their senior leadership teams who report to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request.
- Teachers record any low level unacceptable behaviours either in class diaries (JOG) or through the SIMS recording system.
- Any serious cases of bullying are reported to the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School or Chair of Governors.
- This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this via a report from the Executive Headteacher /Head of School / member of the senior leadership team based upon SIMS data and via regular discussions at the curriculum, assessment and attainment committee level. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

This policy links to each school's behaviour policy, staff code of conduct and safeguarding policy.

## **10. Conclusion**

Bullying which is unchecked, or which staff seem to condone by ignoring, affects not only those immediately involved but the Federation in general. A whole school approach towards bullying will enhance the educational and social experience of all who attend Aylsham Learning Federation. The Federation is serious in its commitment to resolving this problem