



Anti-bullying Policy

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INTRODUCTION

'Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood'. (DfES, 2017)

The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and all staff at The Axis Academy are committed to safeguarding the welfare of our students. Policies and procedures will be robust and contain the necessary measures to enable all staff to fulfil their roles and responsibilities with full regard to this commitment.

The policies and procedures contained in this document apply to staff, visiting professionals and all people who come in to contact with our students. We each have a role to play in ensuring that the students in our care feel safe, secure and happy to come to school. We all share the responsibility to protect our students and that includes taking the right steps to ensure that their safety is maintained. It is our statutory obligation to follow procedures and these procedures are set down in this document.

Please also refer to the academies child protection and safeguarding policy, SEN policy, Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and behaviour policy. Useful documents in relation to bullying can be accessed here: [Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies \(DfE, 2017\)](#)
[Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying \(DfE, 2014\)](#)
[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018](#)

RATIONALE

In the context of our school ethos, vision, key principles and Keeping Children Safe in Education, The Axis Academy is committed to the protection, support and care of all members of the school community. We believe that the emotional, physical and mental welfare of the student is paramount. Our aim is to create an atmosphere where students and staff feel safe and secure and where they can enjoy positive and open relationships with each other. Students must also be able to interact with staff and with fellow students without prejudice or judgement.

PRINCIPLES

As a mental health specialist school, providing bespoke education, we must ensure that our policies and procedures minimise bullying and always help and support every member of the school community. Students in our care should be able to feel safe and secure, engage in their learning and progress through their school experience in accordance with their own ability and potential. Equally, members of staff should be able to fulfil their professional duties without impediment. Therefore, our policy on anti-bullying and the procedures which are in place are intended to reflect those beliefs.

We are committed to sustaining a culture in which those barriers to teaching and learning that are a consequence of bullying are removed. In line with our school behaviour policy we have a zero tolerance of bullying in all of its forms.

In carrying out our responsibilities, all staff will seek opportunities to emphasise the message of this policy and put it into practice. Those with responsibility for team meetings, subject lessons and activities will ensure that the school's anti-bullying values are highlighted and evident throughout.

THE AIMS OF THE AXIS ACADEMY

The Axis Academy aims to ensure that:

- Associates of the Board, all staff, visiting professionals, students and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is
- Associates, all staff, visiting professionals, students and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported
- All students and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As an Academy we take bullying seriously. Students and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying. These include:

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular form time, PSHE and RHSE where issues of diversity and healthy relationships are discussed and anti-bullying messages are drawn out

- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year
- School assemblies and student/parent surveys
- Poster campaigns and student displays
- Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

Measures are put in place which prevent or address incidents of bullying. These are:

- To establish and maintain a culture of zero-tolerance re: bullying (promoted by visual displays, annual Anti-bullying week and PHSE, RHSE lessons and form time)
- To provide mechanisms for students and/or staff to report incidents of bullying
- To use our annual school survey and school systems to monitor incidents of bullying and evaluate impact of the measures in place
- Peer mentoring where appropriate

HOW WE DEAL WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Stage 1: Information

- Students, parents/carers, members of staff or other stakeholders may report an issue.
- All incidents of bullying must be logged on CPOMS and referred to the safeguard lead and deputy safeguard lead and or Headteacher.
- Information shared in morning briefing/daily debriefs

Stage 2: Investigation and Action

- All students involved should be interviewed by an appropriate member of staff.
- If appropriate parents/carers may be contacted and information shared.
- Mediation process to resolve the issue(s) if required and beneficial to all parties concerned.

Stage 3: Enhanced response:

- If the issue continues parents/carers of all parties could be invited in for a meeting with relevant member of staff e.g. Headteacher, behaviour lead, SLT member, Pastoral Lead etc.

- The school decides upon the next course of action e.g. Positive re-engagement plan, moving group, twilights etc.

Stage 4: Escalated response:

- Fixed term exclusion.
- Outside agency involvement e.g. Police.
- Alternative timetable/placement.

HOW THE AXIS ACADEMY WILL RECOGNISE INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Signs and Symptoms.

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults, at home and in school, should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Does not want to go to school on the bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes his usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering or self-harming
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Underperforms in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is bullying other students or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong with them
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous/jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility, and should be investigated.

DEFINITIONS

It is important to understand what constitutes bullying as opposed to being rude or mean.

Rude - Inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else.

Incidents of rudeness are usually spontaneous, unplanned inconsideration, based on thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism, but not meant to actually hurt someone.

Mean - Purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone once (or maybe twice).

The main distinction between “rude” and “mean” behavior has to do with intention; while rudeness is often unintentional, mean behavior very much aims to hurt or depreciate someone. It is impulsive cruelty that is often regretted very quickly. Very often, mean behavior in children is motivated by angry feelings and/or the misguided goal of propping themselves up in comparison to the person they are putting down.

Bullying - Intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, that involves an imbalance of power.

Experts agree that bullying entails three key elements:

- An intent to harm
- A power imbalance
- Repeated acts or threats of aggressive behaviour

Children who bully say or do something intentionally hurtful to others and they keep doing it, with no sense of regret or remorse — even when targets of bullying show or express their hurt or tell the aggressors to stop.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional. Being unfriendly, excluding, and tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures, damaging property, theft)
- Physical. Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist. Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual. Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic. Because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal. Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber. All areas of internet, such as email, social network sites such as Facebook, internet, and chat room misuse
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
- Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities
- Social/familial. Because of socio-economic background

- Educational. Because of educational ability

Bullying is damaging for both victim and perpetrators and is usually linked with secrecy and threat. It can lead to feelings of fear, misery, isolation, loneliness, powerlessness and hopelessness, as well as physical signs in the victim and a sense of power and control in the perpetrator. Therefore, bullying will not be tolerated at The Axis Academy and will be taken seriously.

SIGNPOSTING AND FURTHER HELP AND SUPPORT

- Anti bullying Alliance: [anti-bullying tool for parents and carers](#)
- If you would like support and advice, you can talk to a family support worker at Bullying UK on their confidential helpline on 0808 800 2222. You can also share experiences and advice with other parents on the [Family Lives Forum](#)
- [Kidscape](#) is small charity that provides information, training, and support for parents and children facing problems to do with bullying. They provide a parents helpline on 020 7823 5430 (Mon-Tues, 10am-5pm)
- [Think you Know](#) - for advice on all things digital safety
- [Domestic Abuse Hub](#)
- [Gingerbread](#) - a national charity that supports single parents
- [Internet Matters](#) – for more information about cyberbullying and online safety
- [Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children's Board](#) – for information on all aspects of keeping children safe
- [Am I a bully?](#) If you think your child is bullying others, this BBC guide may help them reflect on their behaviour
- [Bullying UK](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)
- [Young Minds](#) – Young Minds is a Mental Health Charity and offers support and advice in relation to bullying.
- [Childline](#) – Advice on coping with bullying and making it stop.

APPENDIX ONE

Parental Involvement

When necessary the parents/carers of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained.

Parents will be informed regularly through newsletters about the anti-bullying policy in the school. As a school we regularly review the policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour Policy.

Advice for Parents/Carers:

The most important thing a parent/carer can do to help a child who is being bullied is to provide love and reassurance and to support them in their quest to solve the problem. A report of bullying by a child should always be taken seriously.

Parents/carers can take comfort that The Axis Academy is committed to tackling bullying in all its guises. Therefore, parents/carers are invited to contact the Academy should they become aware that their child is being bullied. The school welcomes ideas and encourages that you contact the Pastoral Lead.

The school website has a specific area for advice and guidance and parents/carers are always welcome to discuss any query or concern they may have about bullying with any member of staff.

APPENDIX TWO

DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Staff Guidelines

It is the individual responsibility of all adults, teaching and non-teaching staff to:

- Challenge anything you see or hear during lessons and around school e.g. racist remarks, jeering, swearing at, laughing at, name calling, isolating, physical violence etc.
- Address any issues as they occur in lessons – if possible, sensitively, with the whole class; if not, then at least with the people involved.
- Encourage students not to tolerate things done to them and to speak out.
- If a student makes a complaint, listen and take it seriously – your attitude will say so much about the support the student may expect.
- Use your own judgement as to whether to investigate thoroughly or just to accept the distress of the ‘victim’ as being the important factor.
- Record all incidents or complaints on CPOMS. Contact our Pastoral Lead, behaviour lead or a member of the WISPAS Team. Ensure this is done at the earliest opportunity so that any issues can be supported and resolved
- Decide what is appropriate to do, using your own judgement as to whether to deal with the incident yourself or to seek further support from either of the above.
- If there is more than one incident involving the same people contact Pastoral Lead, the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher, (dependant on seriousness and frequency of incidents) who should inform parents of both or all involved and suggest strategies to prevent further incidents.

APPENDIX THREE

Advice for students.

If you are being bullied, it is important that you talk to an adult who is in a position to help you.

There can be a reluctance to report bullying because of a fear of being labelled a 'grass' and going against an unwritten code of student behaviour. This concern is understandable but must not prevent you from reporting bullying behaviour. The vast majority of students dislike bullying and would support your attempts to stop it. Some students may not want to report bullying because they feel it might only make matters worse. Again, this fear is understandable, but staff are trained in ways to help victims of bullying in a manner that protects the victim.

It can take courage to challenge the bully, to expose them for who they are and to play a part in improving our school by ridding it of bullying behaviour. The Axis Academy encourages its students to stand up to bullies – **do not tolerate bullying as a victim or as a bystander.**

Everyone at The Axis Academy should be committed to making it a safe space, a friendly and happy community.

AND REMEMBER;

Before you post to social media:

THINK is it;

True
Helpful
Inspiring
Necessary
Kind

If it is not DELETE IT!!