



Anti-Bullying Policy Prevention & Response

Approved by:	Paul Thompson & The Advisory Board	Date: September 2023
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INTRODUCTION

We aim to provide a positive, safe, and caring learning environment for all learners, staff, and visitors to our school. To achieve this, we support and encourage everybody to be respectful of each other (this includes learners, staff, and visitors) and to report incidents of bullying that they either witness or experience themselves.

- We view all forms of bullying as completely unacceptable.
- Acts of bullying will be responded to in line with our behaviour policy (as well as the specific guidance below)
- Bullying is explored throughout curriculum.
- Where applicable, managing electronic bullying (e.g., cyber-bullying) will also need to be considered alongside our e-safety policy.
- Our equality policy, with a particular focus on the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010, is also an important consideration in managing and analysing incidents of bullying.

IT IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PREVENT OCCURRENCES OF BULLYING AND TO DEAL WITH INCIDENTS QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

Bullying

- Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.
- Bullying is, therefore:
- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against
- Bullying can include:

TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial • Faith-based • Gendered (sexist) • Homophobic • Transphobic • Disability-based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taunts, gestures, graffiti, or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g., gender, race, sexuality)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching

TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct or indirect verbal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber-bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites

WHAT ARE WE DOING TO PREVENT & REDUCE BULLYING?

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies are used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- **Clear, agreed expectations** which are highly visible in the school and referred to in lessons and themes as part of our approach to promoting positive behaviour.
- Our **values curriculum** which focuses on relationships, respect, dealing with conflict, trust, British values and which permeates our curriculum.
- Active learner voice to ensure they are heard, and we agree on the scope of bullying.
- Taking part in **national anti-bullying week** each year
- Awareness through regular, relevant class information talks
- The following of the school's behaviour policy.
- Ongoing staff training to recognise and deal with bullying, including all protected characteristics.
- Encouraging the whole school to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Displaying Childline/NSPCC/posters around the school.
- Reporting all bullying episodes on our safeguarding system (Edukey) and following this up with regulate monitoring to implement any strategies and or consequences.

WHAT SHOULD THE ROLE OF PARENTS & CARERS BE?

Parents have an important part to play in preventing and responding to bullying. We ask parents to look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, regularly feeling ill, being overly quiet, isolating themselves.

We ask that caregivers always take an active role in their child's education, enquire how their day has gone and who they have spent time with. If a parent or carer feels their child may be a victim of bullying, they must inform the schools. This information will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will follow.

If as a parent or carer you feel another child has bullied your child, we ask that you do not approach that child or their family. Instead, **please inform the Headteacher immediately**

- **It is important that parents/carers do not advise their child to fight back or to repeat the bully's behaviour as this can make the situation worse.**
- **It is important to never tell a child it is their fault they are being bullied.**
- **is hugely helpful for parents & carers to support children in asking for help.**

HOW SHOULD BULLYING BE REPORTED AND WHAT PROCEDURES WILL WE FOLLOW WHEN RESPONDING TO BULLYING INCIDENTS?

Allegations and incidents of bullying at Vocational Training Centre School (VTC) will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All of those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will support all learners involved whilst the allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following robust, but flexible, procedures are always followed:

1. **Incidents of reported bullying need to be reported to a senior leader.** This will usually be via a teacher, TA, or member of support staff.
2. **Depending on the incident, an appropriate member of staff will speak to all learners involved about the incident separately or if appropriate as a group.** This will be reported to the Headteacher / Head of Centre.
3. The problem will be identified, and possible solutions suggested, which may include:
 - mediation
 - restorative justice which will move learners on from having them justify their behaviour.
 - asking the bully/bullies to genuinely apologise
 - supporting the bully/bullies, through their key worker/keytherapist, to understand and change their behaviour.
 - consequences, including exclusion, as per our behaviour policy.

4. **In the unlikely event the bullying continues, or in more serious cases of bullying, families will be invited into the school for a meeting to discuss the problem** and in very rare cases, mediation/restorative justice meetings with both families and learners present may be used to resolve the issues.

All incidents of bullying are logged as safeguarding incidents on Edukey and reviewed and followed through at the appropriate level.

Actions from this analysis (e.g., staff training, timetable changes, specific support plans, etc) are then implemented as appropriate to reduce, eradicate or prevent further cases of bullying.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

This policy, alongside complementary policies as identified on the cover page, ensures that the curriculum and systems for managing behaviour pay regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 which include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership/pregnancy/maternity.

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER RIGHTS

Lessons will be taught to learners in line with British Values which also promote equal opportunities and an understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights.

Thematic topics will be carefully chosen to ensure learners understand the facts about sexuality and gender identity, as well as understand the damage and prejudice that stereotypes can cause within RSE lessons.

At VTC School we believe that eradicating homophobic language has a clear link to school improvement. If gay young people don't hear the use of homophobic language, they not only feel happier but perform better too.

Homophobic language, even when used unconsciously and without hurtful intent, should always be addressed by staff.

ALLEGATIONS FROM LEARNERS AGAINST OTHER LEARNERS

In most instances, negative conduct of learners towards each other will be covered by this policy and our behaviour policy, which is further defined within the child-on-child abuse policy. However, some allegations may be of a more serious nature and raise safeguarding concerns. Allegations made against another learner may include **physical abuse** (for example violence, particularly pre-planned, forcing the use of drugs or alcohol), **emotional abuse** (for example blackmail, extortion, threats, intimidation), **sexual abuse** (for example indecent exposure, touching, sexual assault, sexting, forcing the watching of pornography) and/or **sexual exploitation** (for example photographing or videoing indecent acts).

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy is linked to the following policies:

- Equal opportunities policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behavioural policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- Child on child abuse