Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Title	Anti-Bullying Policy
Version Number	1.0
Approved By & Date	ATB 30th March 2023
Effective From	30th March 2023
Review Frequency	2 years
Policy Owner/Author	Deputy Principals

Anti-Bullying Rationale

Pupils attend the Academy to learn and in order to maximise their learning potential, a safe and caring environment must be established, one which makes them feel secure and which supports them in their development. New College Durham Academies Trust (NCDAT) believes that all young people have the right to be treated with respect from all who they come into contact with and to take part in any activity free from intimidation or threat. In order to ensure that such an environment exists, all staff, teaching and non-teaching have a responsibility to listen to young people and respond immediately to any information which suggests that such an environment is being threatened.

This policy also supports the work undertaken with respect to the tutor time curriculum. All of these contribute to ensure a respect agenda across the Academy, to ensure a positive and supportive environment is seen in all areas and to develop positive relationships across the organisation.

This policy links with the Behaviour for Learning Policy. The Trust also recognises that staff need to be protected from bullying from students, parents or indeed other staff. NCDAT has clear expectations for how our staff should expect to be treated and our Behaviour for Learning Policy details how students who abuse staff or make malicious accusations will be sanctioned.

Purpose of the Policy

To make it clear to staff, parents, pupils, governors and the community that all forms of bullying, including Cyber-Bullying, will not be tolerated. Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical;
- Verbal;
- Emotional;
- Cyber.

- Stakeholders need to be aware how bullies could pick on a student due to their background, appearance (including those due to health conditions), gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, culture, and SEND.
- To demonstrate to victims that their concerns will be taken seriously.
- To encourage adults to be positive role models for young people.
- To emphasise that the Trust is a community in which every individual is valued.
- To encourage mutual respect.
- To state the signs and symptoms of bullying.
- To state the procedure for dealing with inappropriate social behaviour.
- To outline strategies which might be used to counter bullying.
- To help to create a positive learning environment for all young people.
- To define and outline the Trust's response to prejudice of any kind as described in the Equality and Diversity Policy, including gender identity (including transgender), ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, ability and age. Also, any

incidents regarding pregnancy or maternity issues. In the case of adults, also marriage and civil partnerships.
- To work alongside the Prevent Policy to reduce the risk of radicalisation.

Stakeholders should use this policy in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy when considering cases of / perceived cases of abuse (in all its forms).

Our agreed understanding or the term "Bullying"

Our agreed understanding or the term "Bullying", drawn up in consultation with our students in February 2023, is that bullying is:

"Intended to hurt or harm another individual or group, either physically, verbally or emotionally. The behaviour is intentionally hurtful and is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. An imbalance of power will be evident from perpetrator(s) to victim(s) e.g. group number, social status, age, race etc."

Bullying behaviours
- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.

- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.

- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.

- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.

- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion

- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Signs of Bullying

When bullying occurs it is a problem for the whole Academy community, one which damages the victim, his/her family, onlookers and the ethos of the Academy. Some young people are the victims of physical bullying, others the victims of verbal, emotional bullying, cyber bullying or indirect bullying (e.g. being left out of the group). Adults in the Academy community must be alert to the possibility that bullying is occurring. There are many reasons why a young person's behaviour might change, but bullying may be one of them and should always be considered.

Changes in behaviour might include:
- Loss of concentration;
- Variation in academic performance;

- Loss of appetite and weight loss;
- Increased number of complaints about being ill; low self esteem; mental stress;
- Sudden loss of interest in Academy and falling attendance rate;
- Sudden loss of interest in a previously favoured activity;
- Desire to remain with adults;
- Mood swings; become clingy/aggressive/uncooperative or non-communicative;
- Change in behaviour patterns;
- Sudden need for more money or evidence of stealing.

Pupils may also report loss of or damage to personal possessions.

Adults should look out for physical injuries to the young person which cannot be adequately explained.

It is important to note at this point that some victims of bullying do not display any outward signs. All adults should still take claims seriously.

Pupils receive regular advice via assemblies, form tutors, etc. on how they can report instances of bullying. The usual route would be via their year team, but all staff in the Academy may be approached and are aware of how to escalate any disclosures in order to support our students.

Consett Academy also has a sixth form peer mentoring group. These are Year 12 and 13 students who have received training on how to advise our vulnerable students. Sixth form peer mentors are available every lunchtime, and they offer a range of extra-curricular activities (under supervision from a member of staff). During these activities' students are encouraged to share any concerns they may have and the sixth form peer mentors either offer advice or pass information to an appropriate adult (e.g. year team) if the issue require further action.

Information is available to parents/carers detailing our approach to bullying and this explains how they can report any issues, including bullying to the Academy. Once again, the usual route is via the year team or the SOS (speak out safely button) on the website but all staff, including Form Tutors, Year Manager, Heads of Year and the Principal may be contacted.

Guidelines for staff

The staff understands that we have a responsibility to ensure that all areas of Academy are safe for all students. We have duty staff in all necessary areas of Academy at all key times, including before Academy, break time, lunch time and after school. Senior leadership and staff supervise corridors on lesson turnover and ensure that a calm and safe atmosphere exists. Staff watch out for early signs of distress in young people to attempt to ensure that it does not escalate to bullying. Whilst this might be behaviour symptomatic of other problems, we recognise that such behaviour might be related to bullying and all cases will be reported so appropriate action is taken. All staff receive training to:

- Listen carefully and record all reported incidents;

- Offer immediate protection to the young person if necessary, e.g. withdrawal from classes or provide a safe haven at social time if necessary until the problem is resolved;
- Inform the year team via the email who will then begin investigations.

The Policy is supported in numerous areas of the curriculum and has specific links with PSCHME in the following using:
- Y7 – Relationships with everyone, Positive relationships and Cultural differences;
- Y8 – Prejudice and discrimination – Disability awareness;
- Y9 – LGBT+ Community and Peer pressure;
- Y10 – Identity and rights, Harassment and Community awareness;
- Y11 – Risky behaviour and Global partnerships.

Whilst the investigation is taking place the year team will:
- Protect and support all parties involved;
- Listen to both parties and take the necessary steps to stop the bullying;
- Ensure that the victim and the bully record their versions of events – Who? What? Where? When? Why?;
- Inform parents and discuss the situation with them;
- Involve all parties in the discussion about what action is to be taken;
- Record all incidents and actions and bring them to the attention of the appropriate Head of Year, Head of Student Support or Deputy Principal (Behaviour).

LISTEN, RESPOND, RECORD, MONITOR

After the investigation the year team, in negotiation with the HOSS/DP Inc., will:

- Implement strategies to ensure that the bullying does not occur again by responding to the needs of the victim and the bully;
- Record the incident in the student file with copies of all reports. Incidents of a racist nature should also be recorded and reported to the appropriate authorities;
- Meet with parents of victim and bully in a timely manner to discuss the Academy's response and how parents may support their child;
- Alert staff – especially the HOY - to the incident – at pastoral and staff briefings;
- Monitor the situation – regular meetings to be held with both parties.
- Data of instances of bullying are regularly monitored by the HOSS and DP and any identified issues or patterns in behaviour are acted upon as necessary. This may involve discussion in assemblies, tutor time or referral to the Anti-Bullying Group for further consideration. The Academy has set times in its calendar to promote our anti-bullying work, including CEOPs updates and an Anti-Bullying Week.

All bullies will receive a sanction, as per the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Strategies available to overcome bullying for the victim and the bully include:

- Counselling – Form Tutor / YM / HOY / HOSS/Academy Counsellor /Local Police;
- Referral to the Bridge;
- Revisiting the issue via Tutor time and assemblies;
- Removal of the bully from the environment of the victim;
- Referral to "Sixth form peer mentors";
- Allocation of an adult mentor – Academy staff/external agency;
- Loss of social time for the bully;
- Possible central isolation, internal exclusion, suspension (FTE) or even permanent exclusion for the most extreme cases.

Young people have the right to be safe. They also have the right to expect adults to support them when their safety is perceived to be threatened .

Prejudicial Bullying

Current Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 is designed to prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender (including transgender), ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, ability and age. Also, any incidents regarding pregnancy or maternity issues. In the case of adults, also marriage and civil partnerships.   The Sexual Orientation Regulations (April 2007) also protect staff from issues arising from sexual orientation, or perceived sexual orientation, by employers or in an employment situation. This includes:

- Recruitment;
- Access to training;
- Promotion;
- Dismissal;
- Harassment.

In the Academy, the regulations apply primarily to staff; however, pupils need to be fully involved in tackling all prejudicial behaviour, since their behaviour impacts upon staff. Pupils' health and well-being is, of course, a central concern of our Academy and we are bound by a more general duty of care, which safeguards pupils from all forms of bullying and harassment.

Recent legislation has enabled same sex couples to commit formally to marriage & civil partnerships and so, in order to avoid distress or discrimination, staff need to understand that this family arrangement is fully socially acceptable and be prepared for it to be the home context for some of their pupils.

Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998, in conjunction with Article 14, states that governing bodies of schools have a statutory duty to prevent discrimination of individuals. We acknowledge that we have this duty of care for all our staff and pupils.

Example: Homophobia (all prejudicial behaviour will be treated in this way)

Homophobia is an unacceptable dislike or fear of someone who is, or is believed to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered.

A homophobic incident is any incident perceived to be homophobic by the victim or another person.

The most common forms of homophobic bullying, or indeed any other form of bullying in Academy are:

- Name calling;
- Public ridicule;
- Graffiti;
- Hitting/kicking;
- Rumour mongering;
- Teasing;
- Frightening look/stare;
- Belongings being taken;
- Social isolation;
- Sexual assault.

Currently, the common use of the word "gay" as a derogatory term is also a homophobic expression. Its meaning is offensive, and staff will endeavour to explain the meaning and offensive use of the word to pupils, thereby discouraging its use.

Our response to homophobic bullying is as thorough as our response to all forms of bullying (see pages 2 – 3) and a range of actions are employed to promote more tolerant attitudes and to reduce the occurrence of homophobic incidents.

In the case of any member of staff being the victim of repeated lower level incidents, prejudice related, sexual assault, violence, extreme forms of threatening or offensive language, the incident must be recorded via class charts/cpoms systems. Whilst school will refer to the behaviour policy for sanctions to follow, all staff members have the right to report incidents to the police.

Link to Prevent Policy

Schools have a vital role to play in protecting children and young people from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. This role is underpinned by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The Academy has a clear Prevent Policy relating to this (please refer to this for more details). Students identified as possibly being a risk of radicalisation will be referred as per agreed procedures and NCDAT will work with other agencies to provide appropriate support. NCDAT also seeks to reduce such risk through ensuring that a wide range of opportunities exist for the teaching (and learning) of Citizenship, Community Cohesion and British Values (e.g., through PSHCME program). Students engaging in any activities related to the Prevent Agenda will be sanctioned in accordance with the Behaviour for Learning Policy, as well as probable involvement with the Police.

Link to e-Safety

NCDAT has a vital role to play in protecting children not only on the "real" world but also in the "virtual" world. This role is underpinned by the Trust's approach to e-safety as outlined in the E-Safety Policy. Students are educated to keep safe on line via a range of strategies including CEOPS assemblies, our annual Internet Safety Week, ICT lessons, newsletters etc. The Academy's strategy for e-safety is scrutinised and monitored by our E-Safety Group, made up of teachers, students and governors. Students found to be using the internet/ICT for undesirable reasons including cyber bullying will be escalated through the Trust's consequence and sanction systems as detailed in the Behaviour for Learning Policy with possible involvement of the Police if this is deemed necessary (in serious cases). E-safety is covered by a range of Trust policies including the Behaviour for Learning Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, E-Safety Policy, Prevent Policy, SMSC Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

NCDAT undertakes regular surveys with the students to capture their views on how safe they feel and how they view behaviour and bullying in the Academy. Parents are also regularly asked if they feel we keep they child safe, and are invited to share any concerns they may have. The analysis of these surveys is used to inform future work in this area via the SLT and/or Anti-Bullying Group. The staff are also consulted on key polices including this policy and the Behaviour for Learning Policy. This ensures that best practice exists at all levels of our organisation.

This policy will be reviewed by the Academy Trust Board or delegated committee every two years, or earlier if considered necessary. The policy review will take into account the views of students, staff and parents via the Anti-Bullying Group who will play a key part on writing any anti-bullying policy updates.

Glossary

CEOPs	Child Exploitation and Online Protection
DP	Deputy Principal
FTE	Fixed term exclusion
HOSS	Head of Student Support
HOY	Head of Year
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SMSC Policy	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural
SOS	Speak out Safely
YM	Year Manager