



**LONGSPEE**  
High Expectations Lead to High Achievers

# **LONGSPEE ACADEMY**

## **Anti-Bullying and Prejudice Policy**

**Adopted by AAC:**

**November 2016**

# **Anti-Bullying and Prejudice Policy**

## **A Definition**

Bullying can be described as 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. Bullying can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, verbal abuse, threats and extortion, through to physical intimidation, assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident that casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

In a school context prejudice can be defined as the inappropriate treatment of one child by another or by a group on the basis that the child is perceived to be different. Such perceptions are the cause of much of the bullying that takes place in schools. Specifically however, we identify racial bullying and bullying on the basis of gender or sexual orientation as prejudice.

At the Longspee Academy we recognise that bullying is an actual or potential reality for some of our pupils. The Academy works with children who experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties which means our pupils are more likely to express their own insecurities in ways that cause offence or harm to other people, or conversely to be particularly vulnerable to being bullied. Whilst we recognise that such behaviour may be symptomatic of the emotional lives our pupils live, we will always confront and challenge bullying. Our approach is to encompass the needs of both bully and victim and wherever possible seek a restorative outcome, the emphasis being on improving the emotional health of those concerned.

Because we recognise that the adults in our community have a vital responsibility to be good role models, the Academy undertakes to ensure that all professional relationships in the school are free from bullying and sexual or racial harassment and are based on the principle of mutual respect. Any member of staff who is guilty of such behaviour will be subject to a disciplinary procedure.

## **The Academy aims:**

- To foster an environment in which all members of the school community can work safely and happily together.
- To instil in pupils a sense of their own value and that of other people and the recognition that bullying is unacceptable in all its forms because it undermines the self respect of both 'bully' and 'victim'.
- To listen to concerns expressed by pupils, staff and parents when bullying arises
- To investigate bullying and ensure that all involved are informed of the outcomes.
- Where bullying is severe or persistent to enact a graduated series of responses that will involve the pupils, parents and if necessary the police to ensure that the matter is resolved.
- In cases of racial bullying or bullying related to gender or sexual orientation to keep records of the incident and the outcome.
- To monitor bullying over time and provide statistics for the Governing Body.
- To periodically survey the opinions of the school community/carers regarding their perception of bullying and how safe they feel in school.

## **Dealing with suspected bullying**

All reports of bullying are to be taken seriously although formal investigation may not be needed if the incident is clear and appropriate restorative outcomes such as an apology are achieved.

Where the situation is unclear, the severity of the incident is high or the incident is part of an ongoing pattern further investigation is required.

In the event of the above the following principles should be observed:

- The supposed victim, the bully and any witnesses should be interviewed and their statements recorded. This should be done impartially without apportioning blame or responsibility. It is important to recognise that 'witnesses' to a bullying incident are affected by the perceived power of the 'bully' and may provide corroborative statements which support the bully but are in fact untrue.
- A bullying incident form should be filled in with any statements attached and the incident discussed with a member of the SLT.
- In confronting the alleged bully it should be made clear that at this stage it is simply an investigation but it has been reported that bullying has taken place. If the individual accepts their involvement the usual practice would be to seek a restorative outcome if the 'victim' is in agreement. If the alleged bully is not able to take responsibility then further investigation will be undertaken.
- If appropriate, parents of both alleged bully and victim will be consulted.
- Where there is sufficient evidence sanctions should be applied in proportion to the severity of the incident.
- Sanctions may include but are not limited to:
  - Loss of break time(s).
  - Writing a letter of apology.
  - An after school 'catch-up'.
  - Internal isolation.
  - Fixed term exclusion.
  - Police involvement.
  - Agreed sanction in the home.

At the discretion of staff a restorative outcome may be considered.

- If the incident is part of an ongoing pattern a more rigorous response may be required which will involve the Academy emotional literacy support assistant(s) (ELSA).
  - A restorative session will be offered and either or both parties may elect to be involved. If a resolution is achieved the process may be terminated.
  - If the restorative process is rejected or does not achieve resolution, the Academy senior leadership will be asked to formally intervene to seek resolution.
  - If resolution is not achieved the Principal will convene a meeting involving parents and possibly other agencies to pursue the matter further.
- Where bullying results in a physical assault the Academy will support parents or carers who wish to pursue this through a formal complaint to the police, but the onus of responsibility will rest with parents and not the Academy.
- Additional pastoral support may be provided via the ELSA team to ensure that the situation is supported until fully resolved.
- For practical purposes bullying which takes place on the transport to and from school will be dealt with as if it took place during the school day and will be subject to the same processes.

## **Cyber-bullying and e-safety**

The Academy recognises that modern social media and gaming sites allow communication between children which can be used as a platform for bullying. The e-safety policy sets out the Academy's stance with regard to computer use in school and offers guidelines for safe use at home, however where cyber-bullying occurs outside school we will support parents as far as possible but can only directly deal with incidents that take place on the site. We rely on parents to inform us of their concerns and we will support parents or carers who wish to pursue a matter through police involvement. Where cyber-bullying takes place at school it will be dealt with through the standard bullying procedures.

It is Academy policy that staff must be mindful of their use of social media and it is not appropriate for staff to give pupils 'friend' status to avoid any possibility that an online relationship provides a vehicle for bullying or causes concern over child protection.

The Academy raises awareness of e-safety through a broad programme of education including involvement in e-safety week.

## **Racial Bullying**

The school is part of a community in which racial and ethnic diversity is low and as a consequence racial bullying is relatively rare. When it occurs it is taken very seriously.

We are aware that in some instances our younger pupils use words they have heard elsewhere with very little understanding of their meaning. In such cases it is necessary to deal with the incident in ways that do not unduly raise the profile of the event to avoid increasing the likelihood of recurrence. Parents or carers will be informed. As in all instances of bullying a restorative approach will be used when possible.

Racial bullying which is carried out with full knowledge of its implications is confronted vigorously. In such an event the Academy undertakes to:

- Investigate the case fully and record the incident in the racial bullying log and reported to the Governing Body.
- Communicate with parents and carers and ensure that they are fully involved in the process.
- Seek the support of the police Safer Neighbourhood Team to underline the seriousness of the case, as appropriate.
- Involve the Academy ELSA team to support both the 'bully' and the 'victim', as appropriate.

## **Sexual Bullying**

Sexual bullying can be experienced by both genders and is characterised by name-calling, comments about appearance, attractiveness or emerging puberty, inappropriate and uninvited touching, sexual innuendo and propositions (i.e. sexual harassment). It may also involve sexual stereotyping and excluding a person simply on their gender. Any direct sexual assault will result in an exclusion from the Academy and may involve police action and will require Social Care involvement.

Adults in the Academy must guard against reinforcing sexual stereotypes or be themselves involved in sexual bullying as defined above.

As with racist comments our younger children may use language which is inappropriate and which they have heard elsewhere. Such cases should be treated with caution to avoid imbuing the words with a mystique that invites further use. A simple 'That's not a nice thing to say', may be sufficient. Parents or carers will be informed.

More serious cases of sexual bullying will be confronted robustly and treated in a manner parallel to that applied to racial bullying.

Through its educational programme the Academy seeks to confront sexual bullying and to foster respect for gender and human sexuality. This will be addressed through the school's pastoral curriculum.

## **Bullying arising from sexual orientation**

It is not uncommon for children to go through periods during their physical and emotional development in which they are unsure about their sexuality. Bullying arising from sexual orientation issues is rare. The Academy takes a zero tolerance and will tackle homophobic and transphobic bullying and anti-gay derogatory language. In general children use words they believe have power and will repeatedly say things that are seen to have a detrimental affect on someone else. As with racist and sexist bullying we will deal with instances involving younger pupils in a manner which does not overly dramatise the situation. Parents/Carers will be informed.

Serious homophobic or related bullying will be treated robustly and treated in a manner parallel to that applied to racial bullying.

Matters related to sexual orientation are addressed through the Academy's pastoral curriculum.

## **Bullying related to SEN**

The Longspee Academy is an SEN school and consequently we have many children who have educational needs which cause them to struggle to access the curriculum. Although the occurrence of bullying which targets a child's SEN is quite rare, staff are conscious to monitor and address any issues that arise as a consequence of it.

### **Caveat to the Policy - Adult conduct in the Academy**

The Academy expects the highest standards of conduct from its employees and will not tolerate bullying or harassment. The Academy undertakes to ensure that all staff are dealt with fairly and with dignity. Senior leaders will carry out their roles in a manner that is non-threatening and intended to support colleagues to achieve their best. All staff must ensure that whilst engaged on Academy business their conduct, use of language and demeanour are consistent with their status as employees of the Academy and must always be mindful of the powerful influence they exert over the young people in our care.

Anti-Bullying and Prejudice Policy ratified by the AAC on:		30.11.2016
Policy to be reviewed: Autumn 2018		
Signed:  Chair of the AAC.	Signed:  Principal.	