



Diocese of Salisbury
Academy Trust
'Beyond expectations for all of God's children'

PREVENTING AND TACKLING BULLYING POLICY

Policy Date: September 2024

Review Date: September 2028

This policy is to be adopted by each Academy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy has been produced to help our academies prevent and respond to bullying as part of our overall behaviour policy. It outlines the Government's approach to bullying, relevant legal obligations, the powers academies have to tackle bullying, and the principles which underpin the most effective anti-bullying strategies.
- 1.2 Our academies have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and create and maintain a safe learning environment. Therefore, the importance of having a strong and consistent bullying policy in place, allows us to educate staff to identify any situation which is likely to result in conflict or bullying behaviour before it happens and before it becomes a significantly more serious issue.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with DSAT Academies' Behaviour Policy and Child Protection Policy. This Policy is also compliant with statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

2. Safeguarding Children and Young People

- 2.1 Under the Children's Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Serious cases of bullying and child on child abuse can also be considered as emotional and physical abuse.
- 2.2 Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, we may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

3. What is Bullying?

- 3.1 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 (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), child on child abuse, and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.
- 3.2 Violence and physical bullying are more easily identified, but emotional bullying is equally harmful and all staff must be alert for early indications of all forms of bullying and take prompt and effective action.

3.3 Cyberbullying

- 3.3.1 The rapid development of, and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside the Academy. Cyber-bullying is a serious form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.
- 3.3.2 The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

- 3.3.3 If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. Material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

4. Dealing with Bullying

- 4.1 We have clear and consistent policies in place to deal with bullying and poor behaviour, which are available to parents, pupils and staff so that, when incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly. Information about how Academies manage bullying incidents can be found in their individual behaviour policies.
- 4.2 We seek to create an environment that prevents bullying from being a serious problem in the first place, by educating our staff to gather intelligence about and log issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.
- 4.3 Academy staff and Headteachers are best placed to decide how best to respond to the particular issues that affect our pupils. There is no single solution to bullying. Academies will ensure they maintain detailed records of any incidents of bullying, how it is addressed and ongoing monitoring. They will reflect on any incidents of bullying to develop their skills in prevention and tackling bullying if required.

5. Prevention

- 5.1 We believe that responding to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. We develop more sophisticated approaches in which Academy staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.
- 5.2 All Academies follow a comprehensive PSHE and Relationships curriculum which involves developing an understanding of difference, promotes developing healthy relationships, mental health, British Values and children's skills in being able to voice concerns. Academies may further support and highlight issues through dedicated days, events or projects, or through assemblies.
- 5.3 Staff themselves, in consultation with SLT, will be able to determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.
- 5.4 We create an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the Academy staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others, permeate the whole Academy environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

6. Intervention

- 6.1 We use disciplinary measures for pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

- 6.2 It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the wellbeing and safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

In terms of intervention, we also:

- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the Academy does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the Academy will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home;
- Involve pupils. All pupils understand the Academy's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- Regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers;
- Implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable;
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality as well as other characteristics protected by law. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities;
- When necessary, take steps to provide targeted intervention to challenge and educate the child on a specific prejudice they hold.
- Provide effective staff training. Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all Academy staff understand the principles and purpose of the Academy's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support;
- Work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed;
- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside the Academy including cyber-bullying;
- Create an inclusive environment. We seek to create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination;
- We celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive Academy ethos around the issue.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 7.1 Academy governors and the Trust Board will monitor against this policy and available data to ensure its successful implementation.

Useful links:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/schools/anti-bullying-resources>
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/bullying/>
<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/resources/>

Linked Policies:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version)
- DSAT Child Protection Policy
- DSAT Exclusion Policy
- DSAT Behaviour Policy
- Individual Academy Behaviour Policy