The 3-18 Education Trust

Anti-bullying Strategy

Every individual is in a great school.

Approved: Summer Term 2024

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Introduction

Each school within the 3-18 Education Trust (Trust) is a community in which everyone has an interest in developing an atmosphere and environment conducive to learning and personal development. As such all the Trust's schools are working towards reducing the number of bullying incidents by taking preventative measures.

Adults in all the schools should establish open, positive and supportive relationships where children and young people feel safe, secure, listened to and secure in their ability to discuss sensitive issues.

Aims

The aims of the Trust's Anti-bullying Strategy are as follows:

- To ensure a positive learning environment is created in which everyone feels safe and secure.
- To encourage an ethos of respect irrespective of race, gender, age, religious belief, sexuality, ability or disability.
- To raise awareness of what is considered bullying behaviour and ensure that pupils are equipped with the skills to deal confidently and positively with incidents of bullying if they occur.
- To engage with all members of the community to ensure that learning environments are created within the schools in which bullying will not be tolerated.

Defining Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one 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
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: Racial Faith-based Gendered (sexist) Homophobic/biphobic Transphobic Disability-based	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)

Type Of Bullying	Definition
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites, devices or via images, audio, video, or written content generated by artificial intelligence (AI)

How will Bullying Behaviour be prevented?

The Trust's aim is to build a community where bullying behaviour is unacceptable. This can be achieved by developing positive relationships which are underpinned by preventative strategies.

Effective preventative strategies must involve all members of a community building a culture where everyone feels safe, secure and nurtured. Adults should be aware of their responsibility to be role models for children and young people and should support others in the wider community to do the same.

It is essential that all schools within the Trust recognise that everyone matters and should be valued for who they are; it is acceptable to be different. Schools will be proactive in developing approaches to celebrate diversity, change attitudes and behaviour by promoting an ethos and culture of inclusion.

Understanding the impact of bullying behaviours on health and wellbeing and on learning and development will help the Trust take action to prevent and manage incidents. All Trust schools and communities will therefore take steps to ensure that:

- Regular staff training takes place to raise awareness and ensure that staff develop the skills to recognize, respond and take action appropriately to tackle bullying behaviour. This includes cyberbullying which is often the same type of behaviour as other bullying but takes place online.
- Teachers will plan opportunities through the curriculum to support young people to develop effective relationships, build resilience and skills for life. This will include developing self-awareness and awareness of others, responsibility taking and problem solving.
- Schools and learning communities will take action to ensure all children and young people are fully aware of the anti-bullying strategy and of the school Policy and guidelines.
- Proactive approaches, for example Restorative Approaches may be used to support and develop a culture which aims to prevent incidents of bullying behaviour.
- There will be clear and effective communication about acceptable standards of behaviour for all which reinforce our values and aims in relation to anti-bullying.
- Children and young people should know who to speak to, be confident they will be listened to and taken seriously and know that appropriate action will be taken.

How are schools and learning communities expected to respond to bullying behaviour?

When bullying behaviour does take place in any of the Trust's schools, staff need to respond appropriately by addressing the needs of children and young people who experience bullying behaviour as well as those who exhibit these behaviours. This should be carried out within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support.

- Recognition should be given to the needs of all involved.
- Young people should be encouraged/enabled to speak up and speak out, either verbally or through the use of a 'worry box', peer supporter, circle time, circle of friends, mediation or other appropriate methods.
- In each school, pupils should know who to report any concerns to.
- Incidents of bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying, should be investigated promptly and thoroughly by an appropriate member of staff. All involved should be given the opportunity to talk and be listened to.
- Where appropriate, parents/carers will be involved.
- Feedback should be given to appropriate people.
- Both the emotional and physical effects of bullying behaviour should be considered.

Where bullying behaviour has taken place, this should be recorded appropriately in line with individual school systems. The recording of incidents of bullying behaviour is essential to allow schools and learning communities to monitor responses and the effectiveness of their practice. It can provide information on recurring patterns such as:

- Involvement of particular young people, staff, or other adults.
- Where and when bullying behaviour takes place.
- Identification of any aspects of discrimination or prejudice.
- The effectiveness of any action taken.

All aspects of bullying incidents should be dealt with in a way that fosters mutual respect, individual responsibility, resolution and support. Staff must be confident that a resolution has been reached and bullying behaviour has stopped.

In order to achieve a satisfactory resolution, schools and learning communities may use a range of strategies such as:

- Small group work/team building activities.
- Peer mediation building on shared concern.
- Reflection diary.
- Supervision.
- Restorative approaches and/or other group intervention with learning mentors.
- Solution focussed approaches.
- Seek outside help/advice/involve other partners or agencies as required.
- Police involvement or engagement.
- Appropriate consequences should be considered as part of the resolution process.

All schools in the Trust will share information as appropriate and work jointly with other agencies to ensure a coordinated and cohesive approach for the benefit of all pupils.

Prejudice-Based and Discriminatory Bullying

Bullying behaviour related to race, religion, culture or nationality.
Physical differences and different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds can be seen in the eyes of some to be evidence of one section of society being inferior/superior to another. A child or young person may be made to feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status. This can adversely affect the lives of those from minority ethnic, gypsy traveller, refugee as well as those from different cultural and religious communities.

Bullying behaviour related to sexual identity.
Bullying behaviour related to sexual orientation is also classified as homophobic bullying. Children or young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or transgender (LGBT), or are perceived to be, face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying behaviour least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The child or young person may not want to report bullying if it means 'coming out' to teachers and parents before they are ready to.

Bullying behaviour related to gender.
Children or young people of both sexes can be affected by this type of bullying behaviour. It is based on the acceptability (or otherwise) of certain male and female behaviours and applies to those that do not conform. Personality traits, social activities and academic choices can influence this type of bullying behaviour. The child or young person can often be pressurised to 'fit in' with the crowd.

Bullying behaviour related to disabilities or Additional Support Needs.
Whether in mainstream or specialised schools, children or young people with disabilities do not always have the levels of social confidence and robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying behaviour. The behaviour can take any of the forms previously described, but can also include more manipulative behaviour, i.e. taking advantage of their emotional, behavioural or physical difficulties.

Bullying behaviour related to young carers or care circumstances.
Children or young people can be more vulnerable to experiencing bullying behaviour by the fact that they provide care and assistance to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem. Young carers often take on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Children or young people in care are equally as vulnerable to bullying behaviour due to their unique circumstances such as adoption, living away from birth parents or having social work involvement.

Bullying behaviour related to appearance or health/medical conditions.
Children or young people with visible health or medical conditions, such as eczema or facial disfigurement, may be more likely than their peers to become subject to bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can also result in bullying. Obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it), can also be exploited and used as a reason to exhibit bullying behaviour.

Strategies for Prevention

Education and awareness of rights through:

- Raising awareness of bullying behaviour with staff through training.
- Teaching pupils about positive relationships via the school's PSHE curriculum.
- Teaching pupils how to resolve conflicts amicably.
- Teach through an anti-bullying programme/solution focussed resolution.

Developing an inclusive and positive ethos in school through:

- Encouraging tolerance and respect.
- An expectation of positive behaviour and personal responsibility.
- Creating a culture where bullying and discrimination is unacceptable.
- Encouraging peer support/mentoring programmes.
- Considering how pupils are grouped.

Proactive information strategies and campaigns through:

- Information technology.
- Visual media.
- Paper leaflets.
- Use of assemblies.
- Theme week.

Enabling pupils to have a voice through:

- Encouraging and supporting pupils to talk to an adult if they are being bullied or if they know bullying is happening.
- Ensuring pupils know who to talk to within the school.
- Talking about behaviours and their impact on others through restorative approaches, nurturing environments and health and wellbeing programmes.
- Building resilience in pupils through programmes such as 'Bounce Back'.
- Class discussions/topic at assembly.
- 'Worry boxes' or similar.
- Team building activities.
- Pupil Council.

Police involvement or engagement:

- Class discussion with community police officers or school's liaison officers.
- Information and/or advice.
- Discussion of consequences of bullying behaviour.

Strategy Monitoring and Review

Monitoring

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer will monitor the outcomes and impact of this strategy on an annual basis.

Review

Member of Staff Responsible	Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Relevant Guidance/Advice/Legal Reference	The Education and Inspection Act 2005 The Equality Act 2010 The Education Regulations 2014
Strategy Adopted By	Trust Board
Consultation	
Date of Strategy	Summer Term 2024
Review Period	Bi-annually
Date of Next Review	Summer Term 2026