ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Introduction

Co-op Academy Manchester is committed to preventing all forms of bullying. Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour that has no place in our community. Bullying is behaviour that is intended to cause emotional, mental or physical harm undertaken by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time. It can affect attitudes and performance in school, as well as the victim's wider life. For some it can lead to serious and prolonged distress and long-term damage to social and emotional development.

Co-op Academy Manchester sees the issue of bullying as a serious matter. We will encourage students to report any incidents of bullying to any adult in the academy. Bullying is unacceptable behaviour. The academy is committed to creating a safe environment where young people can learn and thrive, can talk about their worries, and feel confident that an adult will listen and will offer help.

The academy intends to implement an anti-bullying policy that reflects the aims and policies of the Equalities 2010 legislation and any subsequent updates. This policy should be read in conjunction with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and the academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions policy and the PSHE, RSE and Citizenship policy.

The academy will make it clear to students, staff, parents and governors that when bullying happens we will work as a community in accordance with this policy to help both the victim who are harmed and the perpetrators to manage the situation. We will ensure the safety of the victim and do our best to support improved behaviour from the bully / bullies.

Parents / guardians of both victim(s) and perpetrator(s) will be kept informed of our actions and follow-up procedures.

The academy will record all incidents of bullying.

Types of bullying

Homophobic and biphobic bullying

Homophobic and biphobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by someone's actual or perceived sexual orientation and can be experienced by:

- Young people who are or who are thought to be LGBTQ+.
- Young people who are different in some way and who may not act like others.
- Young people who have LGBTQ+ friends or family.
- Teachers who are or who are thought to be LGBTQ+.

Transphobic bullying

Transphobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by someone's actual or perceived gender identity and can be experienced by:

- Young people who are or who are thought to be trans.

- Young people who are different in some way and who may not act like others.

- Young people who have trans friends or family.

- Teachers who are or who are thought to be trans.

Gender or sex-based bullying

Gender or sex-based bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by someone's gender identity or sex. This bullying is based on sexist attitudes that, when expressed, demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender and can affect all students.

Sexual bullying

Sexual bullying occurs when bullying has a sexual element. This bullying is linked to sexually inappropriate behaviours and can affect all students. It is also often, but not always, underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes. Sexual bullying can be seen as sexual harassment in schools.

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying occurs when technology is used as a platform for bullying behaviours of any kind. This can include the use of computers, mobile phones, video games, social networking sites and any other forms of technology, and can affect all students.

Racist, religiously-motivated or cultural bullying

Racist, religiously-motivated or cultural bullying occurs when bullying has a racial, religious or cultural element and can be experienced by:

- Young people who have or who are thought to have a faith.

- Young people who come from a different racial, religious or cultural background.

- Young people who have friends or family of a different race, religion or culture.

- Teachers who are or who are thought to be of a different race, religion or culture.

Special Educational Needs and disability (SEND) bullying

SEND bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by someone's actual or perceived special educational needs or disabilities and can be experienced by all pupils.

Other types of bullying

The academy acknowledges that the above list and definitions of bullying is not exhaustive and students may experience bullying for a variety of other reasons. These are recorded in the academy as '*other types of bullying*'.

Signs and indicators of bullying

The following list outlines the main signs and indicators of bullying. It is not an exhaustive list, but merely outlines the usual indicators for bullying behaviour. Bullying can take many forms and not all outcomes will be the same (for example, signs of sexual bullying may be different to signs of racist bullying) but all bullying behaviour shares the common feature of attempting to negatively impact victim(s).

The common signs and indicators of bullying taking place are:

- Reports of verbal abuse.
- Reports of physical abuse or evidence of bruising, cuts etc.
- Reports of, or evidence of, cyber abuse.
- Persistence absence from school.
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Failure to produce work or producing unusually poor quality work.
- Reports of, or evidence of, graffiti, damage to property or theft.
- Work of a concerning subject matter.
- Handing in work that appears to be defaced or damaged.
- Frequent concerns about poor health.
- Reports from home of a change in behaviour or difficulty sleeping.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and / or adults including wanting to spend an abnormal amount of time with staff.
- Talk about self-harm or suicide.
- Changes to usual behaviour, habits and attitudes.
- Changes in body language.
- Changes in appearance.

It should be noted that some bullying behaviour may present as joking behaviour or 'banter', and may not be perceived by students as bullying. This does not lessen the seriousness of this behaviour, however students may need to be educated on the appropriateness of their behaviour.

Strategies to prevent bullying

- Prior to joining the academy all students and parents or carers sign a contract committing them to abiding by the rules and policies of the academy.

- Clear and consistent messages given to students on a regular basis by the Vice-Principal (Students) regarding expectations in the academy.
- A comprehensive PSHE, RSE and Citizenship curriculum designed to meet the needs of the academy community.
- Ensuring that a clear, uniform approach to dealing with all forms of bullying is adopted by staff and regularly monitored and explained to staff and students on a regular basis.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the signs and indicators of bullying and act to prevent any instances occurring.
- Ensuring that the message of anti-bullying is highlighted and reinforced during the national Anti-Bullying Week and throughout the academic year.
- Ensuring that a high-profile staff presence exists across the academy, especially at break and lunch times.
- Enlisting the involvement of external agencies to provide training for staff and students as appropriate.
- Ensuring that the academy directly links with external agencies in addressing issues in the community.
- Ensuring students have access to appropriate pastoral support and interventions, such as the student intranet '*Speak Out*' button, which alerts the academy's Safeguarding Team.
- Students are regularly signposted to relevant staff and external agencies, such as Childline, the Samaritans, Stonewall etc. for support if needed.

Methods of dealing with bullying

Whilst the preventative measures in place seek to ensure that bullying is a rare event in the academy, occasionally bullying may take place. When this happens, the following action(s) could be undertaken. This list is not exhaustive and the response of staff may vary depending on the circumstances, nature and seriousness of the alleged incident.

Procedures

- It will not be ignored.
- Staff will not make any assumptions about the bullying without full investigation.
- Accounts of any incidences will be sought and written accounts recorded where necessary.
- CCTV footage may be reviewed if alleged incidences have taken place within the academy.
- Any bullying concerns and sanctions would be logged in accordance with the academy's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.
- Parents or carers of both victim(s) and perpetrator(s) will be informed of the outcome of any investigation.
- Ensure that all relevant personnel within school (e.g. form tutor, LPSO, Head of Family, Vice Principal, SENCO, DDSL) have been informed.

- Contact will be made with external agencies including social services and the police where appropriate, in conjunction with mandatory reporting procedures and LSCB guidelines.

- A plan of pastoral support may be put in place to support either the victim, the perpetrator or both, where necessary. This may include: at least one session of restorative justice; an education programme; or the signing of a behaviour contract.

- In the case of any form of cyber bullying access to school internet or email may be revoked and mobile phones may be confiscated until they can be returned to a parent or carer, or handed to the police if requested.

Staff will also challenge casual discriminatory language and will ensure anyone who makes persistent remarks is dealt with according to the academy's Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards policy.

Reporting and recording incidents of bullying

Alleged incidences of bullying are taken extremely seriously in the academy and should be logged on the academy's Classcharts behaviour system as soon as they come to the attention of a member of staff. This log will alert all relevant members of the Pastoral Team and trigger the procedures outlined above.

Occasionally, a Cause for Concern log may be the first record made, where the signs and indicators of bullying relating to a victim are evident. This will be picked up by the Safeguarding Team and may be passed to the relevant LPSO, Senior Leader or Vice-Principal (Students) for investigation.