

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

JUNE 2014

Introduction

This policy has been agreed by the STEP Academy Trust Board of Directors and applies to all member Academies. As such, the term “governor” refers to member of a STEP Academy Trust Local Governing Body (LGB). For the purposes of this document, The STEP Academy Trust will hereinafter be known as “The Trust”.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policies:

- *Child Protection;*
- *Safeguarding;*
- *Intimate Care;*
- *Positive Handling;*
- *Anti-Bullying;*
- *Behaviour;*
- *Behaviour and Exclusion;*
- *Health and Safety;*
- *Anti-Harassment & Discrimination;*
- *Code of Conduct setting out standards and acceptable behaviour for staff;*
- *E-Safety and ICT acceptable use;*
- *Managing allegations of abuse against staff;*
- *Equalities*
- *Disability;*
- *Admission;*
- *Whistleblowing.*

Rational

As a UNICEF Rights Respecting Trust, pupils are taught that they have rights and with those rights come responsibilities. We recognise that rights and responsibilities are equally balanced and encourage our children to take responsibility for their actions in order to develop an awareness of how they affect the rights of others. These rights are taken from the UNCRC. Children have the right to be protected from conflict and cruelty and they have the responsibility not to bully or harm each other.

Every child has the right to feel safe in our Academies and enjoy their education without the threat of bullying behaviour. Our approach is to build the children’s self-esteem and confidence and for our approach to be consistent across the Trust. We intend that the policy is clearly understood and shared by all, children, staff and parents.

Bullying of any individual, pupil or member of staff, is unacceptable. In STEP Academies we seek to address any incident of bullying whenever it occurs. The behaviour and attitude of our children and staff is very important. High standards of behaviour and a positive attitude lead to excellence

in both relationships and standards of work. The ethos of each Academy is based on mutual respect and care and consideration for others. The Trust is totally opposed to bullying.

Bullying concerns everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It affects other pupils who watch, and pupils can be drawn in by peer-group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of Academy life and it rarely sorts itself out. We recognise that insults, name-calling, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and physical violence are found in society today, but in STEP Academies, no one should have to accept this type of behaviour. As a Trust we understand the need to differentiate between a single isolated act of bullying and severe long term persistent bullying.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy takes its place within the general aims of each Academy. It has close links to the RRS, SEAL, Safeguarding, Child Protection, Behaviour, Equalities and PSHCE policies.

Aims and objectives of the policy

- To create an Academy culture where bullying is seen as unacceptable by Trust staff, pupils, parents and carers;
- To ensure that members of the Academy community have the confidence to be able to disclose and discuss bullying if it does occur;
- To develop procedures for noting, reporting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone deliberately hurts, threatens, frightens or humiliates someone else. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

- **Physical** – a child can be punched, kicked, hit, spat at etc;
- **Verbal** – this includes name-calling, racist and sexist remarks, sarcasm, teasing, spreading rumours, etc.;
- **Intimidation** – a child may be made to feel frightened or uncomfortable by behaviour ranging from overt threats to subtle "looks";
- **Exclusion** – a child can be bullied simply by being excluded from games, groups, discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends. Group rejection is a common form of bullying;
- **Damage to property or theft** – children may have their property damaged or stolen. The bully may use physical threats so that the pupil hands over property to them.
- **Through communication technology** (cyber bullying) - e.g. text messaging, e-mail or postings on websites;
- **Victimisation by adults** – any adult in the Academy could use their size and status to victimise a child. A parent, for example, who makes a direct approach to a child to chastise him/her over an alleged incident, could be engaged in a form of bullying.

What are the characteristics of bullies and their victims?

Bullies may be:

Aggressive
Lacking in attention
Lonely, unhappy or insecure
Jealous of others
Manipulative
Bullied at home e.g. punished excessively at home
Spoilt at home
Crying out for help
Underachieving in class

Victims may be:

Quiet, shy, "different"
Frightened to come to our Academy
Anxious not to tell

What are the signs that might indicate a child is being bullied?

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Adults are aware that these are possible signs and will investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from our Academy;
- Is unwilling to go to our Academy;
- Begins to underachieve at our Academy;
- Becomes withdrawn, starts stammering;
- Regularly has books or clothes damaged or destroyed;
- Becomes distressed, stops eating;
- Cries easily, has nightmares;
- Becomes disruptive or aggressive;
- Has possessions 'go missing';
- Starts stealing money to pay the bully;
- Is frightened to say what's wrong;
- Runs away.

Adult bullying

From time to time, adults behave inappropriately towards each other. If any parent feels that they are being treated inappropriately within our Academy community they must report this to the Head teacher immediately.

On occasions, when a parent suspects another child of inappropriate behaviour towards their own child, they try to take matters into their own hands. This can result in:

- Parents approaching other parents in groups;
- Inappropriate verbal exchanges in front of pupils;
- A breakdown in communication;

If children are experiencing problems with other children, parents must not try to take matters into their own hands. Parent confronting other parents in the playground is not acceptable and could be viewed as adult bullying. The Academy should be informed immediately of any concerns so that we may intervene to resolve the problem to ensure our Academy community remains a happy, safe and enjoyable place where everyone wants to be.

Procedures and consequences

The following procedures for reporting bullying and dealing with the consequences of bullying should be understood and followed by every member of our Trust. All incidents of bullying should be reported to a member of staff. Children should not be told to “hit back.” Teachers will investigate and take appropriate action. The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying must stop immediately. Attempts will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour. This will involve talking about what has happened and why they became involved. It may also take the form of counselling and or a behaviour modification programme.

Reporting incidents: all reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be investigated and dealt with by class teachers and recorded on a ‘Bullying Incident Form’ (*see Appendix 1*). In this way pupils will gain confidence in telling an adult. This confidence factor is of vital importance. Serious cases of bullying will be referred immediately to the Headteacher or designated senior leader. Incidents of bullying will be recorded on a termly basis (*see Appendix 2*) by the Headteacher and will be reported each term to the LGB in the Headteacher’s Report.

Involving parents: if it is established that systematic bullying has taken place, parents/carers of victims and bullies will be contacted by the Head Teacher or member of the senior leadership team, so that they have an opportunity to discuss what has happened. This will put them in a position to help and support their child and will give an opportunity to explain the actions being taken and to discuss ways in which they can help or support the Academy’s actions. Separate follow-up meetings with both parties will also be arranged.

Supporting children: both the victim and bully will be supported. The victim will receive support in order to deal with their feelings and the bully in order to change this type of behaviour and prevent further incidents occurring.

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying: When analysing incidents of bullying, teachers will seek answers to questions of: *what, where, when, who and why*. If a group is involved, each member will be spoken to separately. Other pupils may also be spoken to in order to get a clearer picture. Written records will be kept of these discussions and given to the Head teacher or designated senior leader who will file them in the Anti-Bullying Folder. It may also be appropriate for pupils to write down their own accounts.

Consequences: The bully will offer an apology and other appropriate consequences may take place such as lunchtime reflection. For a minor offence an official warning may be given and the consequences of any future bullying made clear. In very serious cases exclusion will be considered. Whenever possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

Procedures for Dealing with Cyber Bullying

If a bullying incident directed at a child occurs using email or mobile phone technology either inside or outside of Academy time, the following procedures will be followed:

- Advise the child not to respond to the message;
- Secure and preserve any evidence;
- Inform the sender’s e-mail service provider;
- Notify parents of the children involved;

- Consider delivering a parent workshop for the Academy community;
- Consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of offence;
- Inform the Headteacher and the ICT leader.

If malicious or threatening comments are posted on the MLE or an internet site about a pupil or member of staff, the following procedures will apply:

- Remove the comments or inform and request the comments be removed if the site is administered externally;
- Secure and preserve any evidence;
- Notify parents/carers of the children involved;
- Endeavour to trace the origin and inform police as appropriate;
- Inform the Headteacher and the ICT leader.

The Academy raises awareness of issues relating to cyber bullying by annually publicising procedures in the Parents' Newsletter and by holding Parent Workshops as required.

What can be done to prevent bullying?

- Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is encouraged to tell staff.
- If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Children have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities
- Bullying Week and campaigns will be a regular feature of Academy life.
- Consistent whole Academy approaches to bullying will be used in assemblies and in citizenship/ RRS/ PSHE lessons.
- Making use of curriculum opportunities to raise pupil awareness e.g. through RE, cross curricula themes, drama, story writing and literature.
- Role-play and circle time sessions can also be used.
- Appropriate training will be provided for staff to help them deal effectively with bullying.
- Children are made aware of the strategies to deal with low level issues and what to do in different situations including situations of cyber bullying.
- Good quality role models (eg: Pupil Advocates).
- Adult modelling of appropriate response to a wide range of scenarios.
- Adults to deal with a situation, even if minor. Talking to the children may prevent the situation escalating.
- Children and parents/carers have a good knowledge of the procedures/policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

All adult members of the Academy community (governors, staff, parents, carers and visitors) should:

- Show respect to every person within our Trust and avoid saying or doing anything which will cause hurt or offence to others;
- Report all incidents of bullying;
- Offer support to anyone they see being bullied;

Pupils should:

- Treat others as they would like to be treated and not say or do anything which could cause hurt or offence;
- Tell an adult if they see anyone being bullied;
- Help and support their peers if they see them being bullied.

All staff should:

- Show by example that they are committed to stopping bullying in their Academy;
- Create an atmosphere of trust and respect where pupils feel their concerns are taken seriously;
- Be vigilant and take action if any changes in a child are seen, to eliminate the cause as bullying;
- Listen to complaints and concerns about bullying and take appropriate action;
- Make sure that those who have been bullied are informed about what action has been taken;
- Develop and use a wide range of approaches when taking action against bullying.

All teachers should:

- Be responsible for the recording of all incidents of bullying that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the Academy (see Appendix 1).;
- Inform the child's parents and the Headteacher.

All parents should:

- Expect the Academy to take bullying seriously;
- Support the Academy in its policy against bullying by discussing it with their child;
- Contact the Academy (initially the class teacher) if they have concerns that their child is being bullied. All concerns will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow. We can only help if we know about a problem;
- Support the Academy in its actions against those who bully;
- Look for unusual behaviour in their child e.g. they may suddenly not wish to attend the Academy, regularly feel ill, or not complete work to their normal standard;
- Play an active part in their child's education. Ask them how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with and how lunchtime was spent;
- Not advise their child to "retaliate in kind." It usually makes matters worse;
- Discuss with their child the Academy policy on bullying. Explain to them that the Academy can only deal with the problem if we know about it;
- Explain to your child that all STEP Academies are "telling" Academies in which speaking out against bullying should not be seen as a weakness;
- Monitor with due regard to age restrictions the TV programmes and videos their child watches and the computer games they might play.
- Monitor carefully their child's access to the Internet. Consider when and if it is appropriate for their child to use the Internet unsupervised.

Governors should:

- Support the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our Academy;

- Not condone any bullying at all in their Academy, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- Monitor incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly.
- Require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the LGB about the effectiveness of the STEP Anti-Bullying Policy in the Academy. (*Appendix 1 and 2*).

The Headteacher should:

- Implement the Academy Anti-Bullying Policy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the Academy policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.
- Report to the LGB about the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy on request.
- Ensure that all children know that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
- Ensures that all staff, including midday supervisors, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- Lead the Academy in making our vision a reality, where all members of the learning community nurture, value, respect and care for each other.

Complaint procedures

If parent is dissatisfied with the way the Academy has dealt with a bullying incident, they should follow the Academy's complaints procedure by initially contacting the class teacher. If the concern remains, they should contact the Headteacher. If they are still concerned, they should contact the LGB via clerk (email address can be obtained via the Academy office).

Monitoring

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by senior staff in a variety of ways, including analysing the recorded incidents of bullying and talking to the children. The 'Monitoring Incidents' form (*Appendix 2*) will be reported to the LGB.

This policy will be reviewed by the Directors every two years or earlier if it is considered necessary.

Appendix 1
Bullying Incident Report Form

Please give to a member of the SMT

By (the person responsible for)	Pupil/Outside person		
	Ethnicity	Gender	Year Group
Against (the victim)	Pupil/Outside person		
	Ethnicity	Gender	Year Group

Nature of the Incident (Please tick and/or add details)

Physical assault	Name calling	Graffiti/defacing property	Offensive writing
Incitement of others	Cyber bullying	Other	

Brief description of the incident**Action taken (by whom)****Parents of victim contacted Yes/ No Parents of perpetrator contacted Yes/No**

Name:	Position:
	Date:

Appendix 1
Bullying Incident Report Form

Follow up record

Date	Action Taken By	Brief Description of Action	Outcome

Has the bullying stopped?

Further action to be taken:

Any further comments: