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Date:

6th October 2021

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6th October 2021

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1. Introduction

Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. We believe that all children should attend an Academy/school in a safe and secure environment, and this policy sets out how as a Trust and as schools we will address and issues of bullying and support parents and children in ensuring that any incidences of bullying are dealt with rigorously and effectively.

This policy outlines what schools within the Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust will do to prevent and tackle bullying. The policy highlights how we are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture whereby no bullying, including between adults or adults and children and young people, will be tolerated.

2. The School's commitment

2.1. Each school is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all students so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at a school, whether it is on site or on off-site activities.

2.2. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell someone, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

2.3. All members of the governing body, staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is and what the school's procedures are for responding to bullying.

2.4. The schools and Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that bullying will not be tolerated and that students will be supported when bullying is reported. Students who bully will be dealt with through the measures set out in the Behaviour policy.

3. Our Trust Schools

Our schools will:

3.1. Discuss, monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.

3.2. Support all staff to promote positive relationships to prevent bullying and will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.

3.3. Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy.

3.4. Report back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.

3.5. Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

4. What is bullying?

- 4.1. Bullying is "Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017).
- 4.2. Bullying can include: name calling; taunting; mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups; and spreading hurtful or untruthful rumours. This includes the same inappropriate and harmful behaviours expressed via digital devices (cyberbullying) such as the sending of inappropriate messages by phone, text, Instant Messenger, through websites and social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading images by mobile phone or via the internet.

5. Forms of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture;
- bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability);
- bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions;
- bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying);
- bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying;
- bullying via technology – (cyberbullying).

6. Signs and symptoms

- 6.1. A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the student this may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. All staff, and as far as possible parents, should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:
 - is frightened of walking to or from school;
 - always asks to be driven to school;
 - changes their usual routine;
 - is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
 - begins to truant;
 - becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
 - starts stammering;
 - attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
 - cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
 - feels ill in the morning;
 - begins to do poorly in school work;
 - comes home with clothes torn;
 - has possessions which are damaged or "go missing";
 - asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
 - has dinner or other monies continually "lost";
 - has unexplained cuts or bruises;
 - becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;

- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous or jumpy when a cyber message is received.

7. Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying

7.1. The school community will:

- create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others which will be upheld by all;
- work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience;
- provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns;
- challenge practice which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others;
- consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, peer support and the school/student council;
- regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour;
- train all staff including teaching staff, support staff (including administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff to identify all forms of bullying, and follow the school policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents);
- proactively gather and record concerns and intelligence about bullying incidents and issues so as to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from occurring;
- actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people;
- use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied;
- work with other agencies and the wider school community to prevent and tackle concerns;
- celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

8. Involvement of students

8.1. Each school will:

- regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying;
- encourage students to report instances of bullying as soon as possible;
- ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying;
- ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying;
- publicise the details of help lines and websites;

- offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have and reduce further incidences of bullying.

9. Liaison with parents and carers

9.1. Each school will:

- make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats;
- ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying;
- ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively;
- work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying;

10. Links to legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying as well as criminal law. These may include:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- The Children Act 1989;
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997;
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988;
- Public Order Act 1986;
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990.

11. Responsibilities

11.1. It is the responsibility of:

- Trustees and the LGB's to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy;
- Governors, Headteachers, senior managers, teaching and non-teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly;
- the Headteachers to communicate the policy to the school community and to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably;
- staff to support and uphold the policy;
- parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school;
- students to abide by the policy.

11.2. Each school will have a safeguarding Governor.

11.3. Each school will have a behaviour and safeguarding lead.

12. Complaints

12.1. If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the nature or swiftness of a response made by the school following a reported incident of bullying, he/she may wish to make a complaint. The complaints procedure for a case of bullying follows the guidance in the Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust Complaints procedure which is available on the Trust website and for the school office.

13. Equal opportunities

13.1. In implementing this policy all staff must pay careful attention to the need to ensure that their actions do not discriminate adversely against any groups of students or individual students, or appear to discriminate.

13.2. All actions must be taken in accordance with the schools' equal opportunities policies.

14. Monitoring and review

14.1. A designated member of the Senior Leadership Team, which may be the Headteacher, will keep and consider reports on serious incidents, and make a termly report, with statistics, to the LGB and to Trustees via the termly dashboard. The Headteacher and CEO will consider the reports to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled with a view to improving school anti-bullying strategies.

14.2. The Trust Board will review the policy every three years or more frequently if it considers it is necessary.

15. Appendix 1

Supporting organisations and guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” July 2017: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools – updated March 2016 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBTQIA

- Mermaids: www.mermaidsuk.org.uk
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sendcode-of-practice-0-to-25>

Racism and hate

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org/
- True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.theredcard.org

16. Appendix 2

School anti-bullying procedures

16.1. Parents

If parents suspect that their child is being bullied, they must contact the school. Parents should be prepared to explain the signs and symptoms they have noted, and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying. Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school. It is the school's view that any attempt by parents to resolve the issue themselves will inevitably make the matter worse. Parents should encourage their child to talk to a member of staff.

16.2. Students

Students who feel that they are being bullied must tell an adult, parent, teacher or other member of staff.

Students who witness bullying must tell an adult, parent, teacher or other member of staff.

16.3. Staff

Staff must record any incidence of bullying reported to them, and pass the information to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Headteacher. The Senior Leadership Team/Headteacher will consider and investigate any allegations of bullying as a matter of urgency at all times.

16.4. Serious bullying

In cases of serious or persistent bullying the school procedure is as follows:

Staff will:

- record the incidents;
- report the matter to the Senior Leadership Team/Headteacher.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Headteacher will:

- investigate the case;
- inform parents;
- invite parents to come into the school for a meeting to discuss the problem;
- if necessary and appropriate, consult other colleagues;
- if necessary and appropriate consult the police;
- determine the appropriate action to be taken;
- record all details of the case and the action taken; and
- keep the Headteacher informed if a member of the Senior Leadership Team.