



Avonbourne Boys' & Girls' Academies

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Anti-Bullying Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Avonbourne Academies should remain a caring, effective, safe and supportive community offering equal opportunity and provision for everyone.

Philosophy

We believe that for everyone to benefit from our learning community, Avonbourne Academies should be a place where all stakeholders are made to feel welcome and comfortable and where everyone is treated with respect in an atmosphere free from intimidation.

We believe that all children and young people have the right to protection from harm, neglect and abuse and that their wellbeing is of paramount importance. Avonbourne Academies aim to ensure good relationships between, and good behaviour towards, all members of its community and that learning and personal development takes place in a climate of trust, safety and confidence. At Avonbourne Academies we actively teach students what behaviours are #NeverOk and ensure that both students and staff are aware of the numerous ways to report such behaviours.

We have a system of rewards which aims to motivate and encourage students as well as helping to build individual self-confidence and self-esteem. Please see the Academies separate rewards policy. Avonbourne Academies value everyone's unique contribution to our community.

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all students and all staff have a duty of care, to ensure our students are protected from harm.

It is understood that bullying is never acceptable, and our behaviour curriculum is set out to ensure that students, staff, parents and carers should treat each other with respect.

Principles

The Academies will:

Adopt a definition of bullying that is agreed across the Academies and accepted across the local community.

- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur
- Raise awareness of bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect. A named person responsible for championing the Academies' anti-bullying stance will ensure that this is always a prominent aspect of Academy culture
- Seek to involve all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of this policy
- Promote positive action to prevent bullying through the SMSC programme and related activities

- Provide support for all members of the Academies community that may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying
- Provide appropriate training for both staff and students to support the implementation of the policy across the school
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality, and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds

Definition of bullying

‘A persistent, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone’ There may sometimes be misunderstanding about the meaning of the term ‘bullying’. One-off incidents, whilst they may be very serious and must always be dealt with, do not fall within the definition of ‘bullying’.

Types of bullying

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- It is repeated over time
- There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves

There are various forms of bullying which include:

- Physical – e.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – e.g. name calling, insulting, racist remarks
- Indirect – e.g. spreading malicious rumours, excluding individuals from social groups, family feuds brought into school
- Cyber – e.g. use of email, social networking sites, mobile phone messaging to spread rumours, make malicious comments

The lives of students who are bullied are made miserable; they may suffer injury, they may attend erratically, they may lose self-confidence, they are likely to underachieve educationally and socially. Many of the outward signs of bullying can be the same as other indicators of abuse such as:

- Non accidental injuries (including self-abuse)
- Low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety

If unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable within the school. It is not unknown for victims to become bullies of younger or more vulnerable students than themselves. Bullying can and frequently does, have long term effects on victims which may affect their adult lives.

This policy will also strive to prevent and respond to bullying of protected and vulnerable groups including disabled children, children with SEN, those who are or are perceived to be LGBT+, children in care, young carers, alongside challenging incidents surrounding religion, race, appearance, sex and gender, which are protected characteristics under the Equality Act of 2010.

Role of Parents/Carers

Avonbourne Academies will ensure that the robust stance regarding bullying is made clear to parents and carers through the prospectus and Home/Academy agreement. Parents should be encouraged to inform the Academy staff of any concerns or suspicions they may have regarding bullying incidents and inform their child's tutor or Head of Year at the earliest opportunity should they note an unexplained change of behaviour in their child or if information about bullying becomes known. This can be done either by direct email or by telephoning the Academy reception.

Role of Staff

Staff need to recognise that bullying is an Academy-wide responsibility and can involve staff being bullied just as much as students. Anyone, staff or student, can be a victim of bullying or a perpetrator. There needs to be awareness that there will be incidents of bullying, and as soon as any member of staff becomes aware it is their duty to respond appropriately. **Not to respond is to condone.** In all dealings with students, staff will want to emphasise the importance of respecting feelings and emotions of others. It is important that staff do not disregard any form of bullying including sexual harassment as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Role of Students

Students at Avonbourne Academies need to understand what bullying is; its causes, affects and methods of prevention. Students will be taught to accept that they have a duty to themselves and others in preventing bullying and that staff as well as students can be victims of bullying. Students have a vital role in the prevention of bullying. Action must be taken by drawing the attention of an adult in the Academies to anything, which from the student's point of view may give the opportunity for bullying to occur. Students are taught that those who tolerate bullying are supporting them. Students are taught that positive action from peers can discourage bullying.

Practical Steps to Prevent Bullying

- Be alert to the possibility of bullying taking place
- Ensure that any action taken contributes to the development of the Academies ethos that encourages non-bullying behaviour and views bullying as unacceptable
- Publicise the policy to students and parents to enlist their support
- Seek to bring about the situation in which children themselves actively discourage bullying and view reporting incidents of bullying as being responsible rather than as “telling lies”
- Ensure that students are not left unattended in classrooms
- Ensure that the relationships between teachers and students is characterised by mutual respect and trust so that students feel able to tell teachers if they are bullied
- Ensure that staff model non-bullying behaviour – ensure that methods of teaching and of control do not endorse bullying tactics
- Ensure that there is an emphasis on praising appropriate behaviour rather than on the use of sanctions
- Ensure arrival times for class are adhered to by staff
- Encourage students to participate in the management of classes and the Academies through Student Voice
- Take positive steps to improve the self-confidence, self-esteem and social skills of both the victim and perpetrator of the bullying
- If in doubt, seek support from any teacher or adult at the Academies, Head of Year, the anti-bullying staff champion or a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Parents and carers could monitor use of social media and group chats and have appropriate safety measures on devices used at home and on the way to and from the academy.
- All incidents of bullying should be reported to the academy so that they can be investigated. There are several methods the academy has for the reporting of bullying, including the class of email, report and support email, report and support boxes around the academy, and face to face to the pastoral team. The report and support email is reportandsupport@avonbourneacademy.org.uk

Procedure

- Bullying may be dealt with individually or within a class group. This will be decided by the member of staff involved. In cases that present difficulties or complications, the Assistant Principal for Behaviour should be informed immediately in the first instance and where appropriate, the Principal
- All students must be listened to, and all allegations of bullying investigated and recorded on MyConcern and on the electronic Arbor event log for the relevant students. If there is a reason to believe that this also constitutes a safeguarding concern, then staff should also record as an incident on MyConcern. Students should be aware that this recording will take place

- All instances of suspected bullying will be recorded whether during lesson time, lesson change over, in the playground or beyond school hours
- The incident, those involved, and the action taken will be recorded by the person who initially dealt with the incident
- All parties should give written accounts of the incident on a Student Statement form
- Parents/Carers of all parties will be informed by telephone
- If a student is injured, they must be seen by a qualified First Aid person for assessment of injury and treatment. Details of the injury must be recorded, and the parents informed by the Academy
- If there are repeated incidents, the parents may be invited to meet with the student's Form Tutor, Head of Year, Educational Welfare Officer and in serious cases, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Principal to discuss support strategies for both victim and bully
- These strategies may include an Individual Education Plan, Report Card, referral for alternative provision and/or a behaviour contract
- If bullying persists, the Education Welfare Officer and/or Education Psychologist should be informed prior to enforcing a fixed-term exclusion
- Bournemouth Borough Council will be notified of all racial incidents
- In severe cases, a student who is persistently threatening the safety and education of others and has not responded to the strategies put in place may be excluded from the Academies. This will be at the discretion of the Principal
- The Senior Leadership Team supports all staff in dealing with bullying should it occur and facilitate staff training and development. This will be acted upon and developed through the Academy audit and form part of the Avonbourne Academies Development Plan if deemed necessary

Confidentiality

The Avonbourne Academies staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made. It is very rare for a student to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the student may be experiencing
- The student's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions

Where it is clear that a student would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the student. Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

An underlying principle in supporting students in our Academies, is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively and all incidences of bullying will be taken seriously. The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed annually, and its implementation and effectiveness will be assessed. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Avonbourne Academies.

Date of this review	January 2025	Review period	1 Year
Date of next review	January 2026	Author	J Goldsmith/M Wood
Type of policy	Statutory		
Approval M Dyer 27.1.2025			