



**ANSFORD ACADEMY**

LEARNING TOGETHER TO LEAD OUR LIVES

## **Behaviour and Inclusion Policy Suite**

# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

<b>Status:</b>	<b>Statutory</b>
<b>Adopted:</b>	<b>October 2024</b>
<b>Renewal Period:</b>	<b>Yearly</b>
<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>October 2025</b>

## **Section A: Rationale**

All who work at Ansford Academy believe that everyone in the school community should feel valued, accepted for who they are and safe.

We are committed to creating a learning community where bullying is not tolerated and where restorative practices are used, wherever possible, to effectively address bullying.

This policy has been impact assessed to ensure that it is in line with our Equality Policy and the Equality Act (2020) and has been written in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and DfE Behaviour in Schools guidance (2024)

## **Section B: Policy Aims**

1. To provide a clear definition of bullying
2. To develop a community in which all students and staff feel safe and happy because there is a cooperative culture where it is clear that bullying behaviour is unacceptable to everyone
3. To educate students to realise the harmful effects of bullying and encourage a 'telling' culture
4. To promote preventative strategies, in particular through curriculum opportunities, to raise awareness of bullying and develop empathy and the management of feelings
5. To reassure students that reports of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively
6. To establish and maintain a consistent approach to identifying, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying
7. To safeguard students who have experienced bullying and identify support for them
8. To identify support for students who have participated in bullying behaviour so that they do not continue to behave in this way

## **Section C: Definition of Bullying**

At Ansford Academy the adopted definition of bullying is 'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally' (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education. June 2017).

Bullying can take many forms:

- Emotional e.g. exclusion from a group, ridiculing, humiliating
- Physical e.g. hitting, punching, pinching, taking someone's belongings
- Verbal e.g. name calling, insulting, spreading stories
- Racist e.g. taunts, gestures, inappropriate comments about race or religion
- Sexual e.g. unwanted physical contact, sexist comments or abuse
- Homophobic e.g. spreading rumours, name calling, homophobic comments
- Cyber e.g. use of ICT (such as social media sites like Facebook or Instagram) to spread rumours, call people names, send inappropriate messages

## **Section D: Preventative Strategies**

1. Being Alert to the Signs of Bullying

Staff, students and parents/carers should be alert to possible signs of bullying so that they can offer support in a proactive manner, rather than waiting for a student to make a disclosure. The possible signs could include a student who:

- is frightened of walking to or from school, doesn't want to go on the school/public bus or begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) or 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 or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money, starts stealing money or continually loses dinner or other monies
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings

## 2. The Academy Curriculum

The Academy curriculum is designed to promote personal development, teach positive behaviour and equip students to make wise and safe choices.

- Within the PSHCE curriculum, delivered through lessons and the Tutor Programme, students consider issues relating to difference and are encouraged to develop the skills of empathy and managing emotions. Further opportunities to explore diversity are embedded within the Academy RE and Citizenship curriculum. E Safety lessons are delivered within the PSHCE and Computing curriculum which address issues with cyber/online bullying.
- Assemblies are used to promote the Academy values and ethos as a 'telling school' and a community in which students and staff work together in a mutually supportive environment. Some assemblies deal specifically with anti-bullying or elements of bullying behaviour as well as signposting where students can go to for support.

## 3. Creating a Culture where Bullying is Unacceptable

At Ansford we believe everyone has a part to play in creating a culture of tolerance where bullying is unacceptable.

- All staff are expected to model and promote positive behaviour and relationships. They are expected to treat others with respect and to apply the Academy Behaviour Policy consistently and fairly.
- All tutors are responsible for contributing to the delivery of PSHCE and for promoting the personal development, positive behaviour and welfare of the students they work with.

- All staff have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children
- All students are encouraged to seek ways to repair relationships that break down using restorative approaches.
- Students are encouraged to speak out when they witness or suspect bullying, by speaking to a staff member or by using the [tellme@ansford.net](mailto:tellme@ansford.net) email address
- Peer Mentors are trained and work with Tutors, Pastoral Team and the Leadership Team to support victims and work with bullies. Their work is publicised through tutors, notice boards and assemblies.

## **Section E: Safeguarding**

All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers, including online abuse. It is important that incidents of abuse and harm are treated in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and in conjunction with this policy. Examples of child-on-child abuse can be found in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. Child-on-child abuse can happen in any environment and is not restricted to school settings.

At Ansford:

- We have a zero tolerance approach to all types of abuse. Incidents are taken seriously. These will never be tolerated, normalised, or passed off as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’ or ‘part of growing up’.
- Banter and teasing should be acknowledged and recognised as bullying behaviour and may require proportionate intervention.
- We aim to mitigate the risk of contributing to a culture of unacceptable behaviours or a culture that normalises abuse through education and reflective learning.
- Child-on-child abuse may reflect equality issues in terms of those who may be targeted are more likely to have protected characteristics.
- Early identification of vulnerability to child-on-child abuse is made by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.
- There are clear systems in place for students to report any abuse knowing their concerns will be treated seriously and respectfully.

Ansford will handle initial reports of abuse by:

- Securing the immediate safety of students involved in an incident and sourcing support for other young people affected.
- Listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc.
- Ensuring that victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. They will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Ensuring the child’s wishes are taken into consideration in any intervention and any action is taken to ensure safety of the target and other members of the wider peer cohort.
- Not promising confidentiality as it is highly likely that information will need to be shared with others.
- Responding assertively to incidents of Sexual Violence and Harassment
- All protective actions will be in accordance with Keeping Children Safe In Education (2024, Part 5) and guidance Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021)

Ansford will take the following actions when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Incidents will be reported immediately to the DSL/Deputy DSL who will undertake further assessment of what action should be taken proportionate to the factors that have been identified.
- The Brook Tool should be utilised to inform assessment of risk and what actions to subsequently take. This may include seeking specialist advice and guidance from the education psychology team.
- Proportionate action will be taken and consideration given to whether a case can be managed internally or whether support from other support agencies is required.
- When an incident involves an act of sexual violence (rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault):
  - Cases will be reported to the police regardless of the age of criminal responsibility (10 years old)
  - A concurrent referral to Children Social Care must also be made
  - Children Social Care will determine whether an assessment is required under
  - Sections 17 or 47 of the Children Act 1989
- Where the report includes an online element, the setting will follow the following government guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School and Sharing
- Nudes and Semi-Nudes <sup>1</sup>and the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- Risk assessments and or safety plans will be developed for individual children who have been involved in an incident. This should be reviewed regularly or every time there is an occurrence of an incident. These should involve the child and parents/carers and address contextual risks.
- Contextual Safeguarding Approach to Child-on-Child Abuse - Ansford will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse taking place by adopting a contextual approach to safeguarding. This enables us and other support services to better identify high-risk groups, areas and environments within our community that increase the risk of abuse occurring and take appropriate action.
- The DSL/Deputies will review and consider whether any practice or environmental changes can be made in relation to any areas for development. This might include making changes to staffing and supervision, making changes to the physical environment and considering the utilisation and delivery of safeguarding topics on the curriculum.

## **Section F: Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying Incidents**

Allegations and incidents of bullying are taken seriously by all staff and will be dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will support all children involved whilst the allegations and incidents are investigated.

1. Any suspected bullying should be reported at the first opportunity. This could be to another student, a parent (or trusted adult) or a member of staff. It is the responsibility of the person who receives the disclosure to make sure that they pass on the information to the students Tutor or Head of Year.
2. The Tutor or Head of Year (or another appropriate member of staff from the Pastoral Team) will speak to all of the students involved individually, starting initially with the victim of bullying, and take statements. They will seek to find out:
  - What occurred;
  - Names of perpetrators and any possible witnesses;
  - Scale and frequency of the bullying.

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<sup>1</sup> [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident](#)

3. Restorative Justice approaches will be used to resolve bullying issues in the first instance. Where Restorative Justice approaches don't work or they are deemed inappropriate (those involved are unwilling to participate or the bullying behaviour is considered extreme) a contract between all parties will be used.
4. Parents of all parties will be contacted and informed of the incident and outcomes.
5. Support will be offered to the victim (through peer mentoring for example) and it may also be considered appropriate to offer support/retracking to the bully/ies, to ensure that such behaviour does not happen again.
6. If the bullying continues, parents/carers of the bully/ies will be invited to Academy for a meeting with the Head of Year. Further incidents will require a meeting between parents/carers and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and a support plan written with a view of removing the perpetrator from times of the day the incidents occur (lessons or social times).
7. All incidents, investigations and discussions with parents/carers will be recorded on My Concern, our internal bullying log and the SIMS files of all students involved.
8. A bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, Academy staff will follow and report their concerns in line with the Academy Safeguarding Policy: Child Protection. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the Academy may need to draw on a range of external services to support the student who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to causing the bullying.

#### **Section G: Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Policy**

Information relating to incidences of bullying will be reported to the Community, Conduct and Welfare committee of the Governing Body.

Student, staff and parent questionnaires will be conducted every academic year and will include questions relating to personal development, behaviour and welfare.

#### **Section H: Links to other Policies**

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Equality Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy