

# The Kingston Academy



## **Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy**

**May 2016**

**Adopted by Kingston Educational Trust on 9 June 2016**

**Update:** Note the Trust Board has updated the review frequency of this policy to every 3 years. The next review is now due in May 2019.

## Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch or are aware of it happening, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society, but no one person or group, whether adult or child, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at school.

### 1. Why is an Anti-Bullying Policy Necessary?

The Kingston Academy is committed to equal opportunities. We believe that all our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Our Equality Policy celebrates our diversity and makes clear that sexist, racist or homophobic or other prejudicial behaviour will not be tolerated.

The Academy has a clear Behaviour Policy where the promotion of good discipline and mutual respect are emphasised. It is made clear that bullying is in total breach of our Behaviour Policy: it is wrong and will not be tolerated. Both the Behaviour Policy and this Anti Bullying Policy are made available to parents/carers on our website.

### 2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over a period of time, that intentionally hurts or harms another person or group. Bullying leads to fear, humiliation, feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others and the undermining of self esteem.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber bullying via text messages or the internet), and sometimes depends on people's perceptions. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. It generally fits into two categories: emotional and physical harm.

#### 2.1 Examples of physical bullying:

- A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, pushed, jostled, etc.
- A child may have his/her property damaged or stolen.
- Physical threats may be used by the bully or bullies in order that the victim hands over property to the bully/bullies.
- Intimidation through looks, stares, standing too close, blocking someone's way.

## 2.2 Examples of emotional bullying:

- Verbal abuse – this can be in the form of name-calling, it may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, sexuality, appearance, physical/social disability or personality etc.
- It can be teasing, mocking, making offensive or rude comments, gossiping, spreading hurtful rumours.
- Intimidation - a child may be made to feel frightened or uncomfortable by verbal threats.
- Exclusion - a child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities with those he/she believes to be friends.

All these actions can be done

- Face-to-face
- Via third parties
- By other means such as text messages, emails, web sites (cyber bullying), snapchat.

Sometimes bullying can be fairly low level (e.g. gossiping about someone, laughing at someone, teasing) but it is still bullying if it is persistent and where the motive or intention to be deliberately hurtful is present.

It is not just bullies and victims who are involved in these actions. Other pupils can collude voluntarily or involuntarily by failing to support the victim or tell an adult.

The school policy on e-Safety contains further guidance on cyber bullying.

## 3. Prevention of Bullying

We will always work with our pupils to prevent and certainly minimise incidents of bullying. We will do this in the following ways:

- making it easy for pupils to report bullying, including bullying outside the Academy and cyber-bullying and creating a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying without fear of further bullying or discrimination;
- there is a Confide button on Impero for pupils to report bullying to key staff and we are raising awareness of this and how it works through the School Council;
- ensuring all pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- raising awareness of types of bullying and of how, who and when to ask for help;
- appointing 20 anti-bullying mentors from Years 7 and 8 trained through the Diana Award;

- ensuring staff are proactive and operate a zero tolerance policy, reporting incidents and taking action immediately so that pupils see that bullying is unacceptable;
- openly discussing the differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities;
- teaching that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable and creating an inclusive environment;
- celebrating success as a way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

#### **4. Action to be Taken When Bullying is Suspected**

We will investigate all reported incidents (including those which take place outside the Academy premises, such as at bus stops, on public transport or in the town centre or cyber-bullying) thoroughly including talking to the alleged victim, the alleged bully and any witnesses.

We will put a 'bullying-box' in the School Office so that pupils have an easy method of reporting instances of bullying.

If any degree of bullying is identified we will help, support and counsel both the victim and the bully.

We support the victim in the following ways:

- By offering them the immediate opportunity to talk about the experience.
- By informing the victim's parents/carers.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it – both within and outside school if appropriate e.g. arranging for him/her to be escorted to and from school if necessary.
- By using one or more of the punishments described below to prevent more bullying.

We will also punish, yet try to help the bully in the following ways:

- By explaining to the bully why his/her actions are unacceptable.
- By using the school's consequences system or one or more of the punishments described below to prevent more bullying.
- By talking about what happened to discover why it happened.
- By informing the bully's parents/carers.
- By continuing to work with the bully in order to get rid of prejudice or other negative attitudes as far as possible, using learning mentors and counselling services, including outside agencies where appropriate.
- By further emphasising that bullying will not be tolerated at The Kingston Academy and must stop.

Where pupils do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, we will take tougher action to deal with persistent and violent bullying. In situations where damage, injury or theft and other incidents demand a serious response parents/carers will be involved early on.

Sanctions might include:

- Removal from the group/class – referral to their Head of House who will determine next steps.

- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges.
- Detention.
- Withholding participation in any school trip or extracurricular events that are not an essential part of the curriculum.
- Fixed period exclusion.

Serious, violent or persistent bullying could lead to a permanent exclusion. Following a serious bullying incident we will consider whether there is a safeguarding issue which should be reported to the local authority and other agencies and assistance may be sought from the police if we believe a criminal offence may have taken place. Serious incidents include:

- Threatening or actual physical assault;
- Threatening or actual sexual assault;
- The use of technology to bully and harass;
- Theft;
- Coercing others to commit a crime; and
- Hate crime (for example a racist attack).

All incidents of bullying are recorded and we constantly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our strategies and modify and add to them as required.

## 5. Guidance for Staff

Individual colleagues will not be asked to resolve incidents of bullying. Bullying is a very sensitive and complex issue and involves a team of different people and often specialist intervention and expertise.

However, we do expect all staff/site workers to be involved in the following ways:

- To be aware of possible bullying both in the classroom and around the school.
- To take every reported incident of bullying seriously.
- To play a part in relaying any awareness/knowledge of bullying to the relevant House team.
- To be involved possibly in talking to/interviewing individual pupils about possible bullying, either as a subject or form tutor, or as an adult in whom a pupil may wish to confide.

Never tell a pupil that he/she can talk to you in confidence. You must explain that you may need to take action and that this will involve informing other people.

Any child can be bullied and although none of these characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- Lacking close friends in school.
- Being shy.
- An over-protective family environment.
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority.
- Being different in some obvious respect – such as stammering.
- Having Special Educational Needs or a disability.

- Behaving inappropriately, intruding, being a nuisance.
- Possessing expensive accessories such as mobile phones or computer games.

It is sometimes difficult to tell whether pupils are just play fighting/mucking about or whether individuals are being bullied. Particularly whilst on duty you should challenge any behaviour you are unsure of and continue to observe even when you are reassured that nothing is going on.

If a pupil tells you he/she is being bullied, you should find out the following:

- What has happened
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Who saw what was happening
- Where it happened
- If it has already been reported
- If the pupil has already done anything about it
- If it was a text or email, whether he/she has saved it or printed it

You should then pass the information on to the Assistant Head Teacher for Pupil & Staff Wellbeing & Support, who will liaise with you about how the situation will be dealt with and resolved.

You must reassure the victim that it is not his/her fault and that he/she has done the right thing to tell you; that bullying is wrong and will be dealt with in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for the individual pupil.

All reported incidents of bullying must be taken seriously and dealt with immediately. Some children might prefer to put submissions into the anti-bullying box in the School Office, and this will be immediately followed up by a senior member of staff.

## 6. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy is kept under regular review by the SLT and termly reports are made to the Trust Board as part of the Head Teacher’s Termly Report.

The views of parents/carers and pupils are sought using surveys and this policy is reviewed annually by the Kingston Educational Trust’s Quality, Curriculum & Safeguarding Committee.

**The next review is due in May 2017.**

**Sources:** DfE: *Bullying – Don’t Suffer in Silence; and Preventing and Tackling Bullying*  
The Anti-Bullying Alliance

Signed:.....	9 June 2016	.....	9 June
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Quality, Curriculum & Safeguarding		Head teacher	