

## **1 PRINCIPLES**

The Alban Academies Trust is committed to providing a safe, positive, caring and inclusive environment for its children, young people, staff and parents/carers; only if this is the case will all members of the AAT community be able to achieve their potential. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent and stop bullying and this policy contains guidelines for doing so. At the Alban Academies Trust we take bullying seriously; everyone in the AAT community has the right to be protected from bullying and abusive behaviour. Our key aim is to prevent bullying by reinforcing a positive ethos and being proactive in our response.

- 1.1 Bullying and deliberately hurtful behaviour is unacceptable; we will challenge such behaviour
- 1.2 Bullying is a shared problem and all members of the AAT community must work in partnership to resolve incidents.
- 1.3 The safety and welfare of the children and young people concerned will at all times be central to decisions about actions taken in response to bullying.
- 1.4 Anti-bullying approaches are consistent with the values of the AAT and in preparing children and young people for life in an inclusive society.
- 1.5 In dealing with incidents, all parties will be supported and enabled to move on positively.
- 1.6 We are a TELLING Trust. This means that anyone who knows or suspects that bullying is happening, is encouraged to tell a member of staff.

## **2 TRUST ARRANGEMENTS**

This policy has been developed at Trust level and therefore covers policy that is relevant and followed by all the schools within the Alban Academies Trust. If there are appendices they contain specific school level documents and detail of any differing procedures if applicable and relevant to this policy.

## **3 DEFINITIONS**

- 3.1 'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (e.g. cyber-bullying via text messages social media or gaming which can include images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups for example on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. (Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DfE, 2017)
- 3.2 While there is no single definition of bullying behaviour it can be defined as:
  - 3.2.1 The behaviour is intended to cause distress
  - 3.2.2 The behaviour is repeated
  - 3.2.3 There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the target
- 3.3 All schools within the AAT work hard to ensure that all children and young people know the difference between bullying and simply 'falling out'.

### 3.4 Labelling

- 3.4.1 The AAT will not label children as either victims or bullies. It is important that children who have been the targets of bullying/hurtful behaviours are able to see that this experience will end and that it is not the result of something about themselves that has attracted or deserved such treatment by others.
- 3.4.2 Similarly, children who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be supported to resolve the matter and change their behaviour in order to move forward positively.
- 3.4.3 It is possible for any child to display bullying or hurtful behaviour from time to time. As schools within the AAT we all reinforce the message that it is always the behaviours which are unacceptable and not the child.

### 3.5 Hurtful Behaviour

- 3.5.1 Not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all hurtful behaviour is unacceptable. The following are examples of hurtful behaviour which may not be bullying:
  - 3.5.1.1 Children or and young people may fall out with their friends and engage in hurtful behaviour. Such experiences can be extremely distressing to the individuals involved.
  - 3.5.1.2 Children and young people may retaliate against the hurtful behaviour of others.
  - 3.5.1.3 Although not all hurtful behaviour is intentional, all hurtful behaviours are a matter of concern and will be taken seriously. Where children or young people cause harm or distress unintentionally to others the impact of their behaviour will be pointed out to them and any continuance will be regarded as intentional.

### 3.6 Examples of bullying

- 3.6.1 Bullying can take place between children and young people and between children, young people and staff, and can include:
  - 3.6.1.1 name-calling, taunting, mocking and making offensive comments
  - 3.6.1.2 offensive graffiti
  - 3.6.1.3 excluding people from groups
  - 3.6.1.4 gossiping and spreading hurtful or untrue rumours
  - 3.6.1.5 kicking, hitting, pushing
  - 3.6.1.6 taking belongings
  - 3.6.1.7 cyber bullying – including sending inappropriate, offensive or degrading text messages, emails or instant messages via the internet, setting up websites designed to embarrass or upset individuals or excluding them from social networking sites.
  - 3.6.1.8 peer on peer abuse
- 3.6.2 Children and young people may be bullied for a variety of reasons, including:
  - 3.6.2.1 ethnic background, religion or culture
  - 3.6.2.2 disability, special educational needs or a particular ability
  - 3.6.2.3 sexual orientation
  - 3.6.2.4 gender (including sexualised bullying)
  - 3.6.2.5 size, appearance or health conditions
  - 3.6.2.6 social or economic status (poverty, class)
  - 3.6.2.7 age/maturity

- 3.6.2.8 home circumstances – certain groups such as students in public care, or young carers, or those with same sex parents/carers or whose parents/carers have mental health difficulties may be particularly vulnerable.

Note however, that none of these lists are exhaustive.

- 3.6.3 All bullying behaviour is taken seriously, including subtle actions which can build up for individuals over time, eroding self-esteem and building unhappiness or a climate of fear.

### 3.7 Cyberbullying

Where any form of cyberbullying affects another child in a school within the AAT or may bring the reputation of the school into disrepute, the school reserves the right to be involved whether the electronic material was produced within the school or outside. Further the school will review electronic material held or accessed by any child or young person in the school including their email account and their mobile phone if we suspect cyber bullying is occurring. Children and young people must be aware that some forms and levels of cyberbullying are illegal and the school will inform the police where necessary.

## 4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 All members of the AAT have a responsibility to challenge bullying if it occurs. All adults in the school community (staff, governors and parents/carers) are expected to present positive role models to children. All staff at each school are made aware of the procedures, as outlined in their school's behaviour policy, that they should follow.

### 4.2 The Role of All Staff

- 4.2.1 All staff across the AAT take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.
- 4.2.2 All staff employed by the AAT will, where relevant, talk with children and young people in their care about bullying and what they should do as an individual if they are bullied, or are witness to or are aware of any bullying;
- 4.2.3 All staff employed by the AAT will, where relevant, help the children distinguish between one off instances of hurtful or unkind behaviour and bullying
- 4.2.4 All staff employed by the AAT will, where relevant, use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They will use various media, within the formal curriculum, including in our RSE, PSHE and Personal Development curricula to help children and young people empathise with the feelings of bullied children, and to develop the self-awareness and self-regulation required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour.
- 4.2.5 All staff employed by the AAT will keep records of incidents that happen that they are aware of in an AAT school.
- 4.2.6 Whole school assemblies raise awareness and promote anti bullying;
- 4.2.7 If an incident of bullying occurs, it will be fully investigated and all those involved will be spoken to as appropriate by the teacher, senior teacher or Headteacher and sanctioned in line with each school's Behaviour Policy
- 4.2.8 The child affected will be offered support, guidance and comfort;
- 4.2.9 Facts will be established as clearly as possible and those involved made aware of the seriousness of their behaviour. Children will be told the consequences of their actions (in line with each school's Behaviour Policy). Parents/carers will be informed;
- 4.2.10 All incidents are logged and Governors and Trustees will scrutinise reports detailing the numbers and types of bullying incidents regularly

#### 4.3 How staff across all AAT schools deal with bullying

- 4.3.1 Bullying is taken seriously and, in each school, in response to bullying, AAT staff will follow their own school's behaviour policy, as for all inappropriate behaviour.
- 4.3.2 All staff in AAT schools will support the child who is being bullied to help them feel safe and find responses to these behaviours that work.
- 4.3.3 All staff in AAT schools will work with the child who is the perpetrator, in order to reflect on and change their behaviour. It is our aim to repair damaged or broken relationships where possible.
- 4.3.4 All staff in AAT schools will work in partnership with the parents/carers of all children and young people involved.
- 4.3.5 Where necessary, all staff in AAT schools will seek to involve the support of other professionals in supporting these children.

#### 4.4 The role of children and young people within the AAT

- 4.4.1 Children and young people are encouraged to:
  - 4.4.1.1 tell a trusted adult if they feel they don't feel safe in school and if the situation hasn't been resolved, they should keep on letting people know.
  - 4.4.1.2 follow each school's rules
- 4.4.2 As part of the AAT community children and young people have a responsibility to help combat bullying by following these DOs, in a language that is appropriate to the age of the child

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| <p><b>DO</b><br/><b>DO</b> be assertive and say 'NO' to bullying<br/><b>DO</b> tell someone if you think you are being bullied<br/><b>DO</b> be observant for signs that another child is unhappy<br/><b>DO</b> tell a member of staff if you think someone is being bullied<br/><b>DO</b> support other children when they are vulnerable.</p> |
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#### 4.5 The role of parents / carers

- 4.5.1 Parents / carers have a unique role to play in guiding and supporting their child through their school years and have a responsibility to support this anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of their school.
- 4.5.2 Parents / carers should:
  - 4.5.2.1 Model positive relationships – being kind and respectful to others;
  - 4.5.2.2 Work with their child and discuss together how to handle difficult situations;
  - 4.5.2.3 Establish physical boundaries; helping their child to understand that their body belongs to them and that everyone has their own physical boundaries.
  - 4.5.2.4 Make sure your child knows where to go for help;
  - 4.5.2.5 Contact the school immediately if they are concerned that their child is being intentionally hurt or targeted in school or suspect that their child may be the perpetrator;
  - 4.5.2.6 Monitor their child's access to and use of the internet and mobile technology ;
  - 4.5.2.7 Support the strategies which are proposed to tackle the problem.

- 4.5.3 Parents/ carers are expected to exercise reasonable confidentiality around incidents in which the child is involved and must not attempt to resolve matters informally.
- 4.5.4 If parents / carers are dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body responds in line with the Trust's complaints procedure.
- 4.5.5 If parents / carers remain unhappy, having followed these standard procedures, the school may refer them to Hertfordshire school complaints team or to relevant outside agencies.

## **5 MONITORING AND REPORTING**

Schools within the AAT analyse annual surveys which ask children and young people about their experiences of bullying and use this data to:

- 5.1 ensure all AAT schools are safe and positive places for the whole school community;
- 5.2 ensure that all members of the AAT community are protected from bullying behaviour;
- 5.3 increase awareness of bullying, its cause and its negative impact, ensuring that all trustees, governors, staff, children, young people and parents/carers have an understanding of what bullying is;
- 5.4 ensure there are consistent, constructive and fair responses to bullying incidents;
- 5.5 ensure procedures for dealing with bullying are clear, and that all members of the AAT community know what the AAT policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises

## **6 EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

All schools within the Alban Academies Trust review this policy biennially and assess its implementation and effectiveness. This policy is promoted and implemented throughout each school, in each school it is underpinned by the school's behaviour policy. Schools' analysis of at least annual surveys which ask children and young people about their experiences of bullying also inform future practice and policy.