Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston Bushfield Academy
Anti-bullying policy

Policy version control

Policy type	Statutory, OAT mandatory template
Author In consultation with	Jane Nolan, Director of Inclusion Nikki Cameron, OAT Safeguarding Manager Steph Morley, OAT Deputy Safeguarding Manager Debbie Kinsella, Lead Practitioner for Behaviour and Attitudes Representative sample of academies
Approved by	OAT Executive, May 2024
Release date	July 2024
Review	May 2025
Description of changes	▪ Updated throughout to reflect Anti-Bullying Alliance terminology ▪ Updates throughout in line with KCSIE 2023

Contents

1.   Introduction

1.1.   Bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable, whether it is on or off the academy site or in the online or offline world. It will never be seen as 'just banter'.

1.2.   If bullying or harassment does occur, all children should be able to inform a trusted adult in the academy and know with confidence, that incidents will be treated seriously, promptly, and effectively.

1.3.   It is an expectation of anyone who knows that bullying is taking place to ensure that it is reported and acted upon using the appropriate academy processes and procedures.

1.4.   Everyone must understand what bullying is and the impact it has on those who have been a target of bullying and those who have taken part in the bullying group behaviour.

1.5.   Everyone must know that there will be ongoing care and support for the bullying target (victim), ringleader and other children who have had roles in the group behaviour.

1.6.   All adults have a duty to support children to practice and build the skills that create better relationships.

1.7.   We also recognise that children develop and mature at different stages and ages; some require additional support, guidance, and reasonable adjustments to be made in line with the Equalities Act.

2.   Behaviour principles

(see also OAT's Behaviour Policy)

2.1.   Underpinning this policy are the beliefs that everyone has the right to:

- Recognition of their unique identity
- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Learn and work in a safe environment
- Be protected from harm, violence, assault, and acts of verbal abuse

2.2.   Outstanding behaviour is achieved through a culture and ethos of high expectations, excellent modelling of behaviour and effective systems that incentivise good conduct and deter poor behaviour.

2.3.   Most social, emotional, and behavioural skills are learned and need to be modelled, explicitly taught, practiced, and embedded. Rather than focusing on unwanted behaviours, OAT's approach puts value on positive behaviours and restorative approaches to conflict when it is appropriate to do so.

2.4.   For staff to build effective relationships with children it is recognized that they need to be supported to develop knowledge, skills and understanding. Staff emotional health and well-being is vital to building positive relationships and this will be supported by the academy.

2.5.   Bullying behaviour can sometimes be an indication of additional learning, social or emotional needs or as a result of attachment, trauma or adverse childhood experiences. It may also be an indication that a child is being bullied themselves or are victims of abuse. The academy will ensure early identification of the causes of behavioural concerns and provide support to children to make improvements over time.

3.   Context

3.1.   This policy takes into account the following legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance (this list is not exhaustive):

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023
- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice
- Education and Inspections Act, 2006
- Equality Act, 2010
- Children Act, 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act, 1997
- Malicious Communications Act, 1988
- Public Order Act, 1986
- Communications Act, 2003
- Human Rights Act, 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act, 1998
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education

3.2.   Related academy policies

3.2.1.   This policy should be read in conjunction with the academy.

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Suspension and Exclusion policy

4.   Policy aims

4.1.   The aim of the policy is:

4.1.1.   To ensure that everyone feels safe in the academy and that the emotional health and wellbeing of all is safeguarded.

4.1.2.   To ensure governors, staff, parents, and children have an understanding of what constitutes bullying.

4.1.3.   To ensure that all bullying is taken seriously and acted upon promptly and effectively.

4.1.4. To inform staff, parents, and children about what to do when bullying occurs.

4.1.5. To ensure procedures and structures are clear, understood and used consistently by all.

4.1.6. To facilitate effective collaboration with parents and children to ensure that bullying behaviours are challenged and cease.

4.1.7. To facilitate effective collaboration with safeguarding partners and external agencies to ensure any relevant supportive measures are put in place in a timely and effective way.

4.1.8. To ensure that children are supported and guided in the skills to develop positive relationships.

5. Definitions

5.1. Bullying

5.1.1. There is no legal definition of bullying. However, for the purpose of this policy, the definition provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance has been adopted.

5.1.2. Bullying is "*the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online*."

5.1.3. Not all conflict leads to bullying, but some does. Unresolved bad feelings, or relational problems if left unaddressed can start a pattern of behaviour in which the intention is to deliberately cause harm or distress, and this is repeated with no remorse.

5.1.4. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium, and long-term effects on all those involved in the group behaviour.

5.1.5. Bullying is now seen as more complex than previous views that there is only a victim and a bully. In addition to one-on-one bullying, it can also be a group behaviour with children taking on various roles:

- The **target** (previously referred to as the victim) – the person whom the bullying is aimed
- The **ringleader** (bully or perpetrator) – initiating and leading the bullying but not always 'doing' the bullying
- **Assistant(s)** – actively involved in 'doing' the bullying
- **Reinforcer(s**) – supports the bullying, might laugh, or encourage other people to collude
- **Defender(**s) – stands up for someone being bullied. Knows that bullying is wrong and feels confident enough to do something about it. This might involve talking to an adult
- **Outsider(s**) (previously referred to as bystanders) – ignores any bullying and doesn't want to get involved

5.2. Relational conflicts

5.2.1. Not all situations in which children and young people are involved in conflict or relationship difficulties should be understood as bullying.

5.2.2.   Relational conflict is one way of describing such non-bullying situations.

5.2.3.   Relational conflict usually involves individuals and groups who are relatively similar in power and status. It is generally behaviour which happens occasionally, and offence might be accidental.

5.2.4.   In cases of relational conflict, there is also generally a willingness to make things right, to reflect on what went wrong and to try and resolve things moving forward.

5.2.5.   Knowing how to identify and respond to relational issues is part of being able to accurately report and respond to bullying.

5.2.6.   Relational conflict will be monitored to ensure it does not turn into bullying.

5.3.   What bullying is not:
- Single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- Single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- Random acts of aggression or intimidation
- Mutual arguments, disagreements, or fights

5.4.   We recognise that bullying can be in several forms:
- Child to child
- Adult to child
- Child to adult

5.5.   Banter

5.5.1.   This is defined as '*the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks*.'

5.5.2.   Behaviour and use of language is not banter if:

- It's hurtful
- It's not between friends
- Someone has asked for it to stop
- The target isn't laughing
- It focuses on someone's insecurities
- It is discriminatory

5.6.   Sexual harassment

5.6.1.   This is defined as, 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school/college'

5.6.2.   Sexual harassment is a form of child-on child abuse/ bullying.

5.6.3.   All incidents of sexual harassment, abuse or violence are taken very seriously by the academy and details of how the academy will respond are outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

6. Types of bullying

6.1. The law

6.1.1. Some forms of bullying are illegal and may be reported to the police by the academy or families.

6.1.2. These include:

- Violence or assault
- Threats of violence
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails, or text messages
- Hate crimes (any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender)

6.1.3. Bullying can manifest in many ways (see appendices 1 and 2 for further information):

- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of appearance etc.
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Trans - bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views, or beliefs about trans people
- Gender - bullying because of their gender or gender identity or because they may not be perceived to conform to typical gender norms
- Faith - because of their religion
- Social class – because of their background or social class
- Homophobic - because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Ability - because of or focusing on learning and/ or physical disabilities
- Cyber - all areas of internet use, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging, including aggravated sexting & calls, misuse of associated technology

7. Children's voice

7.1.1. In Ormiston Bushfield Academy, children's voice on anti-bullying is gathered through surveys, Tutor sessions, Pastoral support and Student Voice.

7.1.2. In this academy, students have the opportunity to become anti-bullying ambassadors and peer mentors.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1. Trustees and governors

8.1.1. The trustees and governors will oversee the policy, ensure its implementation, and review its content on an annual basis.

8.2. Principal

8.2.1. Will ensure that:

- All staff, children and parent/carers are aware of and follow this policy
- A senior leader has responsibility for behaviour including the anti-bullying policy and procedures
- All incidents of bullying are recorded
- Relevant data is collected, analysed, and used to support improvements in policy and practice
- Governors receive termly reports to include information on bullying in relation to protected characteristics
- Sanctions imposed for bullying are proportionate and reflect the serious nature of the incident and are in line with the behaviour policy, child protection and safeguarding policy
- All children are supported to develop effective communication and relationship building skills
- All staff have training on recognising, reporting, and responding to bullying

8.3. All staff

8.3.1. Are responsible for:

- Reading, understanding, and following this policy
- Ensuring they take a zero - approach to bullying behaviours and never dismiss it as 'banter'
- Ensuring all incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS, SIMS and our internal Protected Characteristics database.
- Taking all incidents of bullying seriously and dealing with them promptly and effectively
- Being aware of the indicators that someone is being bullied and identifying the individual roles of group behaviour
- Taking part in relevant staff training
- Promoting a culture of anti-bullying

8.4. All children

8.4.1. Are responsible for:

- Following the academy code of conduct and behaviour policy
- Reporting incidents of bullying
- Being a defender not an outsider or contributor to group bullying behaviour (see appendix 4)

9. Reporting

9.1.   The academy recognises that it needs to provide a variety of means for children to report bullying including a means of anonymous reporting.

9.2.   In Ormiston Bushfield Academy the following are in place to support children to report bullying:

- Non-teaching Pastoral Support team available throughout the school day
- Non-teaching Welfare Support team available throughout the school day
- Daily access to a Pastoral Tutor
- Link to CEOP Reporting services on Academy Website home page
- "Worry Box" anonymous online reporting form, accessible via the Academy Website Safeguarding page

10. Responding to bullying

10.1. Procedures for dealing with bullying

Allegations of bullying:

If an allegation of bullying occurs, the academy will:

- Take it seriously
- Investigate as quickly as possible to establish the facts
- Record and report the incident; depending on how serious the case is, it may be reported to the principal
- Provide support and reassurance to the target (victim)
- Make it clear to the 'ringleader' (bully) that this behaviour will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group. It is important that children who have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, redress their actions, and staff will make sure that they understand what they have done and the impact of their actions
- Discuss the matter with both parties, using a variety of approaches to decide on a way to move forwards for all parties
- Ensure that if a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the 'ringleader' will be told why it is being used
- Inform parents

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with an appropriate member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the child

Aftercare:

- Offering continuous support with a designated member of staff
- Restoring self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Referral to a peer mentor if appropriate.
- Participation in an intervention group where appropriate e.g. 'Circle of Friends'
- Referral to a counsellor
- Referral to outside agencies where appropriate
- Offering continuous support and advice to parents/carers
- Being informed about the outcome of the investigation into their concerns.
- Including children's services where appropriate (e.g. where there are linked child protection concerns)

Children who have been involved with bullying behaviour will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the child became involved including establishing if they are a target of bullying themselves
- Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change.
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the child
- Involving other agencies, including police and children's services, to support a change in behaviour.
- Attend a restorative meeting with the target (both must agree freely to this)
- Aftercare:
- Participation in an intervention group where appropriate e.g. 'Friendship Skills', 'Cool to be Kind' etc
- Referral to a counsellor where appropriate

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The target, alleged ringleader, reinforcer(s), assistant(s), defender(s) and outsiders (witnesses) will be interviewed separately
- Members of staff will ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the children interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a child is injured, they will be given medical attention immediately
- Interviews will be conducted in a room which allows for privacy
- Staff will take a statement from each child involved
- All children concerned will be informed that they must not discuss the incident with other children
- Staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

10.2. Bullying which occurs outside of school premises

10.2.1. Academy staff members have the power to discipline children for misbehaving outside the academy premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that an academy's disciplinary powers can be used to address conduct when they are not on academy premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of academy staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the academy to regulate children's behaviour in those circumstances.

10.2.2. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the academy premises, such as on academy or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside the academy is reported to academy staff, it will be investigated and acted on.

10.2.3. The principal will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a child.

10.2.4. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

10.2.5. While academy staff members have the power to discipline children for bullying that occurs outside the academy, they can only issue the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the academy premises or when the child is under the lawful control of academy staff, for instance on a trip.

10.3. Online/cyber bullying

10.3.1. Online bullying is increasingly prevalent and will be treated as seriously as real-world bullying.

10.3.2. The academy will promote an understanding about online bullying through the academy's online safety curriculum, assemblies, PSHE curriculum, Pastoral curriculum and Tutor time.

10.3.3. Children will be taught how to recognise online bullying and how to take action.

10.3.4. Targets of online bullying will be helped with securing crucial evidence from social media etc., by taking screenshots and not deleting messages.

10.4. Recognising the signs that someone is being bullied
(see appendix 3)

10.5. Sanctions

10.5.1. For children who have demonstrated bullying behaviour, the academy's behaviour policy will be followed.

10.5.2. In addition, using several strategies, including the use of restorative practices where appropriate and in line with the ethos and culture of the academy, a plan will be implemented to identify the steps that need to be taken to change the behaviour in future and support all children in being able to do this.

11. Recording

11.1. The academy will ensure that detailed bullying logs are kept and analysed to look for trends and patterns so that actions can be taken to reduce bullying in the academy.

11.2. Targets of bullying and those involved in the various roles of the bullying group behaviour will be analysed against protected characteristics and vulnerable groups.

11.3.   All incidents will be recorded Incidents are recorded using SIMS, CPOMS and the Protected Characteristics database. This is analysed and reported to SLT on a half-termly basis. This is analysed and reported to Governors on a termly basis.

12.   Curriculum

12.1.   Through the curriculum and other means, such as assemblies, anti-bullying week and the whole school project 'United Against Bullying', the academy will ensure children know and understand what bullying is, including online/cyberbullying, and how to report it. It will teach children how to stay safe both offline and online and about the antisocial nature and effects of bullying. It will teach about the role of the defender and outsider in bullying (see appendix 4).

12.2.   It will also teach, appropriate to age and stage, skills including self- regulation, assertiveness, communication, negotiation, restorative practice, anger management, conflict management, empathy, and resilience.

13.   Vulnerable groups

13.1.   The Anti-Bullying Alliance reports that the following groups are more likely to experience bullying than their peers:

- Disabled children and those with SEN
- Young carers
- Looked after children
- Children who are perceived as LGBT
- Appearance targeted
- Some race and faith minorities
- Sexual and sexist bullying
- Those on free school meals

13.2.   At Ormiston Bushfield Academy we provide opportunities for children to talk with a trusted adult who may have expertise with a particular vulnerable group (e.g. SENCo, DSL, School Counsellor, Safe Schools Officer)

13.3.   We recognise that it might be more difficult for some children with SEND or EAL to express their concerns about bullying therefore we have put in place the following additional arrangements to support reporting of incidents:

  ○   Provide additional training for those identified as having significant additional needs
  ○   Hold additional meetings with the young person so they have the opportunity to voice their concerns
  ○   Providing accessible information. Information should be:

- Available, if required, in a range of accessible formats for pupils with SEND, for example Braille, Easy-Read, BSL interpreted. Materials should also be available on request in the students first language.
- Easy to access for pupils. This means that they should be easy to navigate, have a clear commitment to children and young people, be accessible, inclusive, and have a range of ways for children and young people to leave feedback and comments.

Appendix 1

Type of bullying

Physical	This includes hitting, kicking, tripping or the destruction of a person's property. This may involve a group of children attacking another, but usually is seen as a larger, stronger child picking on a smaller child
Verbal	This includes repeated insults, teasing, name calling, spreading rumours, sexual harassment, or racist language. It also includes threats. Victims of this type of bullying may not immediately react, but in time, their grades and relationships may suffer.
Emotional	Isolating others, tormenting, hiding belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
Covert	This is usually done behind the target's back. This technique is meant to damage the target's reputation and can include rumour-starting, mimicking the target, playing unkind jokes with the intent to humiliate the target, or making faces while the target isn't watching. Covert bullying is the most frequently utilised form of bullying, and because adults may not be aware of it, it can be hard to control and stop.
Online (cyber)	This can happen anywhere and at any time thanks to the access of the internet 24/7 both at school and at home. It can occur through text messages or over the internet and may be known only to the target and the ringleader or others involved in bullying group behaviour (assistant and reinforcer), making it difficult to control. Children displaying bullying behaviours online are often the target of real- world bullying and take their frustrations out on their targets behind the privacy of a computer screen or mobile phone.
Indirect	Can include the exploitation of individuals. This could include the target but could include the ringleader exploiting other group members.

Appendix 2

Types of online bullying

Exclusion

Exclusion is the act of intentionally leaving a person out from an online group such as chats and social media sites. The group then subsequently leave malicious comments and harass the one they singled out.

Flaming

Flaming is similar to harassment, but it refers to an online fight exchanged via emails, instant messaging or chat rooms. It is a type of public bullying that often directs harsh languages, or images to a specific person. Incidents of flaming that occur during the evening, weekends and holidays will not be dealt with by the academy.

Outing

Outing is when a bully shares personal and private information, pictures, or videos about someone publicly. A person is "outed" when his information has been disseminated throughout the internet.

Masquerading

Masquerading is a situation where a bully creates a fake identity to harass someone anonymously. In addition to creating a fake identity, the bully can impersonate someone else to send malicious messages to the victim.

Harassment

Harassment involves the bully sending offensive and malicious messages to an individual or a group and is often repeated multiple times. Cyberstalking is one form of harassment that involves continual threatening and rude messages and can lead to physical harassment.

Appendix 3

Signs of being bullied

The signs and behaviours (below) could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

- Other signs may also manifest themselves not mentioned here
- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Does not want to go to school by public/school transport
- Insists on being driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school after previously enjoying being part of the school community
- 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 schoolwork
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or unexpectedly go missing
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- Is bullying/ harassing other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received
  - Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Appendix 4

Bullying as a group behaviour

Target

The person who the bullying is aimed at. Sometimes known as the victim in previous language used.

Ringleader

Initiating and leading the bullying but not always the person 'doing' the bullying on their own. The ringleader does the majority of the bullying activity and often encourages others to get involved too.

Outsiders (previously referred to as bystanders)

Someone who witnesses bullying, either in person or online, is an outsider. Friends, other children, school staff, parents, coaches, and other adults can be outsiders.

Children who are bullied often feel even more alone because there are witnesses who do nothing. When no one intervenes, the child being targeted may feel that outsiders do not care, or they agree with what is happening.

There are many reasons why an outsider may not act, even if they believe that bullying is wrong. They may be afraid of retaliation or of becoming the target of bullying themselves. They might fear that getting involved could have negative social consequences.

Defenders (previously referred to as upstanders)

The defender supports and defends the target. They may do this openly by confronting the ringleader, but may to it more covertly, for example by telling a teacher. They may also provide friendship and encouragement to the target, empowering them to say no to the bullying happening.

A defender is someone who sees what happens and intervenes, interrupts, or speaks up to stop the bullying.

There are many things that outsiders to bullying can do to become defenders:

- Question the bullying behaviour e.g., changing the subject or questioning the behaviour can shift the focus
- Inform an adult – trusted adult school staff, family members
- Reach out privately to check in with the person who was bullied to let them know you do not agree with it and that you care. It makes a difference

Reinforcers

They give power to the ringleader. They may not get involved directly with the bullying, but they incite the ringleader and gather others to see what is happening. They may laugh along with the bullying and give the ringleader encouragement.

Assistants

They join in with the bullying, even though someone else has started it and provides physical and/or other assistance to the ringleader.

Baiting

To 'bait' someone is to intentionally make a person angry by saying or doing things to annoy them.

Baiting is a provocative act used to solicit an angry, aggressive, or emotional response from another individual.

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretively to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get into trouble.

False friendships

These are relationships where someone pretends to be your friend, or is your 'friend' sometimes, but actually uses their power to bully you.

Some children are more likely to have false friendships than others, for example disabled children. It is especially important that disabled children understand what makes a good friend.

Appendix 5
Useful links

Anti-Bullying Alliance

Childline

Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying | NSPCC

Internet Matters

Kidscape

The UK Safer Internet Centre

UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)