

TARLETON ACADEMY

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy has been formulated in relation to the Governing Body's Statement of Ethos. The purpose of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to:

- Define acceptable standards of behaviour with regard to bullying.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the acceptable standards of behaviour.
- Ensure that standards are consistently and fairly applied.
- Define the protocol for monitoring bullying behaviour.
- Define the penalties for bullying behaviour.
- To equip students with the skills necessary to thrive and prosper in an ever increasingly competitive world.

Tarleton Academy takes a pride in being a caring community which seeks to maximise the potential of all students regardless of gender, ability, social class, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, culture or background. We seek to provide a framework within which students flourish and become acceptable, responsible and effective citizens through delivery of the curriculum, pastoral structures and the school ethos.

One of the most important preventative strategies to guard against bullying behaviour is the ethos and culture of the school. At Tarleton Academy students learn to take individual and group responsibility for their own and each others welfare so that bullying can be more easily identified and addressed.

Every student has the right to feel safe within our school environment.

Bullying can:

- threaten the safety and happiness of students. When students are bullied their lives can become miserable, they may suffer injury and they may be unwilling to attend school.
- inhibit educational achievement. Students who are not at ease or feel insecure in the school environment will not thrive.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be distinguished from other unacceptable forms of aggression in that it involves the dominance of one student by another, or a group of others; is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident.

Bullying is:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated over time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

The three main types are:

- Physical –e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, taking or hiding belongings, damaging property.
- Verbal – e.g. name-calling, insulting, threatening, writing unkind notes, making offensive remarks, making racist, homophobic or sexist remarks whether they are made directly or indirectly via mobile phones
- Indirect – e.g. spreading unpleasant rumours or hurtful stories; excluding someone from friendship groups; sending malicious e-mails, texts, chat or MSM messages (Cyber bullying)

Preventative strategies

The School uses a number of strategies to highlight the effects of bullying with a view to minimising incidents. These strategies include:

- Immediate intervention with any evidence recorded and acted upon.
- Curriculum intervention via PSHE and Citizenship lessons.
- Promotion of emotional intelligence via educational enrichment days and opportunities.
- The use of assemblies and Form Tutor activities
- The use of prefect 'Buddies' who offer peer support and the use of the 'Buddy room' at lunch and break times for vulnerable students.
- The use of 'Buddies' assigned to Year 7 tutor groups on induction and to new students on entry to the school.
- Consultation – a yearly survey to find out student views on bullying within school and to act upon suggestions and findings of the survey
- The use of a locked 'Bully box' / PDM letter boxes so that students can report cases of bullying privately
- Highlighting awareness throughout the school via the use of posters and the TV information system.
- The use of PDM offices as supervised 'safe rooms'.
- Parent information evenings where a number of issues relating to bullying may be discussed; these issues include the use of cyber bullying by students.
- The School uses restorative approaches where-ever possible to resolve conflict between students.

Cyber bullying

- Cyber bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. It can form the invasion of home/personal space at any time.
- The audience can be very large and reached rapidly
- People who cyber bully may attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing as the cyber bully may never be in the same physical space as their victim
- It can involve text/voice messages, images, viruses, polls

- Some instances of cyber bullying are known to be unintentional – a comment or something said online that was never intended to be forwarded on.
- Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying by passing on a humiliating image.

Bullying is never acceptable. The school community has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines the legal powers which relate more directly to cyber bullying. The Headteacher has the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of students when they are off site. The EIA also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from students

This type of bullying usually takes place outside school but has consequences for students whilst within the school environment. Parents and students are advised that they should download or copy all messages so that they may be used as evidence; to alert the school of cyber bullying incidents; to contact the service provider and the Police. Students are also advised that they should always report such incidents to their parents/teachers and to 'Block the Bully'.

Racial bullying incidents.

Racial bullying is designed to intimidate, humiliate, ridicule or undermines the confidence of another student by reason of the student's race, colour, ethnic or national origin.

It includes:

- Ridiculing an individual because of cultural differences;
- Embarrassing or derogatory remarks, racist jokes and name calling;
- Written abuse and the display of offensive material including graffiti or the wearing of emblems or insignia;
- Deliberate physical and/or verbal abuse;
- Differential treatment e.g. isolation or non-co-operation or exclusion from social activities.

All reported incidents of racial bullying MUST be fully investigated. If proven, the incident MUST be recorded, reported to the Education Authority via the 'Racist Incident' form and to the Governors. Parents MUST be informed of proven racist incidents.

Homophobic Bullying

What is homophobic bullying?

Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexuals or transgenders or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

These actions might be:

- verbal, physical, or emotional (social exclusion) harassment, insulting or degrading comments, name calling, gestures, taunts, insults or 'jokes'
- offensive graffiti
- humiliating, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing or threatening refusing to work or co-operate with others because of their sexual orientation or identity.

Any reported incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Strategy outlined below.

Sexist or sexual bullying

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name-calling, comments and overt 'looks' about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.

Any reported incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Strategy outlined below.

School response to bullying

Tarleton Academy takes a 'zero-tolerance' approach to all forms of bullying. Staff respond consistently and effectively to incidents. This indicates to students that incidents are taken seriously thereby encourages them to report incidents and discourages those behind the incidents. However, Staff can only deal with incidents that are reported to them by students or parents, or those incidents which alert concerns.

1. All staff will be vigilant at all times and watch for potential bullying situations. Students will be observed in both formal and informal situations, i.e.
 - Prior to the start of school
 - In lessons
 - At break time
 - At lunchtimes
 - On the stairs and corridors during lesson changeover
 - At the end of school
2. All staff will respond to a bullying incident or concern where it is observed first hand or reported by a student or parent.
3. Where incidents of bullying are observed, staff MUST report the incident to the relevant Personal Development Manager (PDM) who will record and investigate the incident.
4. All incidents of reported bullying must be fully investigated by the appropriate PDM who will decide upon the most appropriate course of action.
5. PDMs must report all proven incidents of bullying to the Director of Student Support (DPS) and entered onto the Central Record of Bullying.

6. Parents must be informed of proven incidents of bullying.
7. Agreed support strategies must be put into place for those falling victim to bullying to ensure that there is no repeat.
8. Agreed support strategies must be put into place for the bully to prevent a repeat of the behaviour.

Level of response

This will depend upon the severity, nature and frequency of the offence.

- For one-off incidents such as mild teasing or name calling a reprimand by the teacher or PDM may be sufficient with a warning that such behaviour must not be repeated. It will be made clear that if the behaviour is repeated then further action will follow.
- The school will use all of the disciplinary penalties (suggested in DCSF Circular 10/99) including, as appropriate, the removal from the group/class or particular lesson and being placed in the Isolation Unit; withdrawal of break or lunchtime privileges; detention; withholding participation in educational visits or sports events which are not essential to the curriculum; completion of work or extra work; or carrying out a useful task in the school.
- If a member of staff believes that an incident may escalate during the course of the day, he/she MUST inform the PDM immediately who will determine the action to be taken.

Contact with parents

Where an incidence of bullying has been brought to the attention of the PDM and has been proven, the PDM will decide upon the nature of the contact with the parents.

- As a general rule, if the incident has been dealt with successfully in school contact with parents may be restricted to information via a letter or in some cases a telephone call. The PDM should make a record of the telephone call.
- If the incident is more serious parents should be invited into school to discuss the matter with the PDM or DPS

In both cases the parents should be asked to support the school in enforcing it's Anti-Bullying Policy and should be made aware that any repetition would result in more serious action being taken.

The PDM should also make contact with the victim's parents to discuss the situation and offer guidance.

Parental Concerns.

If parents are unhappy that their expressed concerns about incident of bullying have not been addressed they should, in the first instance, contact the Director of Student Support. If they are still not satisfied they should seek an appointment with the Headteacher.

The Governing Body will review this policy on an annual basis.

Adopted by the Governing Body

Date: 30th March 2010