

Darwen Vale

Anti-Bullying Policy 2020/21

Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures

Our mission statement makes clear the entitlement of all in the academy to be equally valued and respected and the responsibility of all to show understanding and respect for others. In the light of this, bullying in any form has no place in Darwen Vale and will not be tolerated.

Overview

It is very important to be clear about what is, and is not, bullying. There are many definitions and perceptions of bullying, but all recognise that bullying is sustained and takes place where there is an imbalance of power.

Two useful and comprehensive definitions are:

- A bully is an individual who tends to torment others either through verbal harassment or physical assaults, or through subtle methods of coercion.
- Bullying is the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted (cyber bullying), or emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another. It may include, but not be limited to, actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal putdowns, and extortion of money or possessions.

Cyber bullying is bullying through the use of communication technology like mobile phone text messages, social media apps, e-mails or websites. This can take many forms, for example:

- Sending threatening or abusive text/instant messages or e-mails, personally or anonymously.
- Making insulting comments about someone on a website, social networking site (e.g. Facebook, Instagram and snapchat) or online (blog or YouTube).
- Making or sharing derogatory, inflammatory or embarrassing videos of someone via mobile phone or email (such as 'Happy Slapping' videos or physical/verbal assaults).

'Sexting' is the sending and receiving of sexually inappropriate images or messages, using a mobile phone or the internet. It is illegal for children under the age of 16 to do this and will be referred to both the police and social care. An investigation will be undertaken and appropriate action taken.

It is illegal for a student to retain a sexually inappropriate image of another student and show it to other students. Again, this will result in a referral to the police and social care. It is likely that any student doing this will be excluded for a fixed period. Inference of such images existing, without appropriate proof, will also be sanctioned by the academy.

As an Academy we wish to establish very clear guidance and responses to bullying, our aim is to establish a healthy, stress-free environment with zero tolerance of poor behaviour

Our aims and objectives in relation to bullying are to:

- Ensure all students, teachers and parents know that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Ensure clarity and agreement about what is and is not bullying.
- Ensure whole school awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all students with regard to bullying.
- Involve all members of the school, staff and students in helping to prevent bullying and to confront it when it occurs.
- Encourage students to report instances of bullying.
- Ensure that all students, parents and staff know what preventative steps the school takes and how these are implemented.

In dealing with bullying we aim to

- Eliminate the bullying itself.
- Support the victim by resolving the problem and by building up his/her self-esteem and where appropriate developing strategies to avoid bullying.
- Bring the perpetrator to realise the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and the consequences should it continue.
- Investigate the cause of the bullying behaviour and where appropriate work with him/her to modify his/her behaviour.
- Reconcile the perpetrator and the victim (RJ).

We pre-empt and respond to bullying in a variety of ways:

- All year groups are taken through anti bullying procedures in their induction during our Vale Value activities and year group assemblies.
- The Student Council will work in conjunction with the DoPs to raise awareness and to form support groups. They will also receive training.

Assemblies will be delivered to the students to highlight the issues. These assemblies focus on:

- Clarifying and defining what is and is not bullying, raising awareness of the difference between disputes, endings of friendships and bullying behaviour.
- Cyber bullying as part of safety.
- Encouraging zero tolerance of bullying behaviour, encouraging a sense of social responsibility and the courage to speak out when necessary, and ensuring students know what they can do if they or someone else is being bullied.

Tutor time and the Vale Values programmes will be used to discuss further what is and is not bullying, and what students feel could or should be done. Work and ideas emanating from these lessons will be fed into the system to inform and add to the strategies already being used. Form tutors will be trained in restorative justice techniques to ensure that issues of bullying can be properly aired and addressed within the lessons. The PATH centre will provide guidance and support to form tutors.

Ways to report bullying:

- To form tutor or any other member of staff
- PATH centre 'drop in' sessions at break and lunch time
- Email bullying@darwenvale.com
- The Student Council will be consulted on anti-bullying policy and strategies. As the 'voice of the students', the Student Council which is led by the Chair, will support the eradication of bullying incidents and devise strategies for supporting those who feel affected.

Key pastoral staff will always mediate between the bully and the victim, where appropriate. The victim will be encouraged to tell the bully how the bully's actions made them feel. The bully will be given an opportunity to apologise and agreed action steps will be implemented.

All of the above reporting systems are checked by the Directors of Learning and SLT.

Record keeping

Incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS by the member of staff investigating the incidents. Serious concerns about bullying will result in the parents of the student being invited into school to meet with the Director of Progress.

Students who feel they are being bullied will be asked to keep a detailed record of incidents.

Sanctions

The varying nature and varying degrees of bullying require a range of responses and a range of sanctions. Academy sanctions are described in detail elsewhere in this document.

Anyone who bullies someone – in any way – will be seen and spoken to about this by their Director of Learning / SLT.

In appropriate cases, (and particularly, though not exclusively, where the perpetrators do not attend the school and the bullying occurs elsewhere), the police will be notified, to advise the victim on what steps can be taken. Where the perpetrator is part of the school he/she would stress the seriousness of the matter and the possible consequences if it were to continue.

In the cases of a first and minor incident an informal warning from a Director of Learning may be sufficient. This would be recorded as a detention for bullying on Class charts.

Where a student is found to persist in acts of bullying, despite warning, it may be necessary for the student to be removed from lessons and sent to Internal Exclusion for a fixed period and sit an after school detention. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to recommend a fixed term exclusion to the Principal.

A fixed period exclusion might also be given even if there have not been previously recorded warnings if the seriousness of the bullying warrants it.

As a last resort, or in extremely serious cases, permanent exclusion would be considered.

Teacher Guide

React – Don't ignore what you have seen or heard. It could be historic and/or an on-going issue. Question the student(s) and don't dismiss as playful/banter if you are concerned.

Report – Email the Director of Progress and Form Tutor as soon as possible.

Record – Log details on CPOMS. Be clear and only bullet point the facts. Free of emotion. List name(s) of students involved – including witnesses; this is helpful when tracking bullying trends.

Return – This does not have to be immediate and/or just once. Find the student and check in with them. Ask if there's been any further incidents of bullying. The 'return' stage is imperative in tackling bullying.

Student Guide

Report – Don't ignore what you have seen or heard. It could be historic and/or and on-going issue. Report it by:

- Emailing bullying@darwenvale.org.uk
- Speaking to student council rep
- Speaking/emailing a teacher
- Anti-Bullying Box in the LRC

Support – There is nothing worse than feeling alone or that everyone is 'talking about you' or 'ignoring you' or that you 'you don't have friends'. Put yourself in their shoes. Now you have reported it – support his person by including them in your conversations at break and lunch, making them feel comfortable and listened to. Looking out for someone is a special thing and they will remember you for it when they are adults many years later.

Return – Return to the issue. Check in on your friend/person you witnessed being bullied. This doesn't have to be once. This isn't the same as the support stage as this is directly asking the person about the bullying incident you reported and checking it has stopped.