



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

***This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies such as Equal Opportunities for Students and the Behaviour Management Policy.***

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 At the Belvedere Academy we work hard to ensure that whatever inclination, aptitude or level of ability, every one of our students is presented with a variety of educational and social opportunities which sensitively challenges and supports each of them to maximise their development. Our vision, ethos and strategic statements capture and crystallise these aspirations and intentions, of which seven are stated below:

- Our students will achieve high standards of academic excellence and will pursue fulfilment in their personal and social development.
- Our students will contribute positively to the well being of the school and the wider community.
- Our students will have a strong sense of community.
- Our students enjoy attending the academy and take an active part in learning and academy life.
- Enhance the educational experience (of our students) by working in partnership with parents, schools and the wider community.
- All our students will enjoy their time at the academy.
- Our students have the right to feel respected at all times.

1.2 Bullying, in whatever form detrimentally affects the ability of our students to achieve these statements and will not be tolerated in any form, or to any degree.

1.3 We will work hard to ensure that bullying plays no part in our community by proactively working with all students, their families and our staff to eradicate it and promptly deal with all reported incidents.

1.4 This policy will provide clear guidance for staff on dealing with bullying incidents and the process by which the academy will seek to eradicate this issue.

### **2. Bullying defined**

2.1 Bullying can be defined as behaviours that are repeated over a period of time of number of occasions, intended to hurt another student. This can be aimed at specific groups because of race/religion/gender/gender identity or sexual orientation including homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality, and it manifests itself in a number of ways:

- Physical e.g. assaulting a person or damaging their property
- Verbal e.g. name calling or teasing or banter

- Indirect – damaging the reputation or character of the victim, or socially excluding them.
  - Cyber-bullying e.g. texting, e-mails or other digital communication, e.g. chat rooms, blogs, etc. This is a particularly nasty form of bullying, as the bullying follows the victim into the home and outside school hours.
- 2.2 No matter what form bullying takes, it is all distasteful and damages both the victim and the bully to differing extents. The Belvedere Academy will make use of the best information and practices available to remove this problem.
- 2.3 Bullying affects the ability of a student to fully participate in and enjoy academy life and it is both an equal opportunities issue as well as a disciplinary offence, which the local governors and staff will do all in their power to resolve.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

- 3.1 The responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of all students rests not only on the Principal, Local Governing Body (LGB) and Academy Trust Board (ATB), but on every member of the academy staff and everyone has a duty of care to observe, monitor and report any behaviour, conversation or action which they suspect. Staff have an obligation to ensure that every action, however apparently small or insignificant is dealt with and reported and we will ensure the academy is able to detect bullying at the earliest opportunity so that it can be resolved. Parents should contact the academy so that bullying issues can be investigated at the earliest opportunity. Students also have a responsibility to report any incidents of bullying and discuss them with an appropriate adult.

### **4. Preventing bullying**

- 4.1 The academy will develop a clear strategy, which will then be clearly and comprehensively communicated to all students and staff.
- 4.2 This strategy will be developed using current best practice not only from the UK, but also where appropriate, taking account of successes of schools in other countries.
- 4.3 The academy will take every opportunity to demonstrate to students, through the curriculum, pastoral programmes, displays, outside agencies and assemblies that it is totally opposed to bullying.
- 4.4 The academy designates 'safe places' where vulnerable or sensitive students can freely access at breaks and lunchtimes, such as the safe haven, library, Inclusion, outside seating areas and the Pastoral Office.
- 4.5 Staff will not ignore bullying or suspected bullying. All academy staff will help to prevent bullying incidents from taking place. After initial intervention a referral will be made to the Form Tutor, Head of School (or Assistant Head of School).
- 4.6 The academy will encourage students to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher or other adult at the academy. Students will be told that they may bring a friend with them if they wish.
- 4.7 The academy will ensure that all staff, students and parents are aware of the academy's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 4.8 Staff will praise and encourage students when they show kindness and consideration to others. They will use the credit note system consistently and fairly to encourage the behaviour of a "Belvedere Girl".
- 4.9 All areas of the academy are supervised during break and lunch times by a duty team.

## **5. Recognising the signs of bullying**

5.1 The academy recognises that any student can be bullied but certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- A lack of close friends in the academy
- Shyness
- Race, religion, sexual orientation, including homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality, or social class
- Gender or gender identity
- A disability or some other obvious difference, e.g. stammering or acne

5.2 Staff will receive relevant training on safeguarding and supporting students and they will suspect bullying is occurring if a student:

- Becomes withdrawn and anxious
- Shows a deterioration in her work
- Starts to attend the academy erratically
- Has false illnesses
- Persistently arrives late at the academy
- Prefers to stay with adults

5.3 If you suspect a student is being bullied share your concerns with the student's Form Tutor and Head of School and closely monitor the student and offer support.

5.4 Students will learn about ways to prevent bullying via assemblies, peer mentoring programme, PSHE and form time activities.

## **6. Dealing with bullying**

6.1 All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and staff to make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable.

6.2 In dealing with bullying, academy staff will:

- Not ignore it
- Not make premature assumptions
- Listen to all accounts of the incidents
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages students to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves

- Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed
- Ensure that all relevant personnel within the academy (Head of School / Form Tutor / Inclusion Manager) have been informed

Record the incident if necessary , as soon as practically possible after the incident.

6.3 Procedure to support a student who has been bullied:

- (a) Talk to the student away from other students, but with other staff close by.
- (b) Listen to the student's account of the incident.
- (c) Reassure the student that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do.
- (d) Make it clear to the student that she is not to blame for what has happened.
- (e) Ideally, allow the student to write a statement or make a note of what the student said.
- (f) Explain that the student should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately.
- (g) Ask the student if they would like a friend to be with them.

6.4 Ask the student:

- (a) What happened
- (b) Whether or not this was the first incident, if not how many other incidents have there been.
- (c) Who was involved
- (d) Where it happened.
- (e) Who saw what happened (staff as well as students).
- (f) What the student had already done about it.

6.5 Ideally, the student should be given the time and appropriate accommodation to make a written or verbal account which is jointly checked by the student and member of staff and if necessary amended to ensure clarity. This information must be passed on as soon as possible to the Form Tutor, Head of School (or Assistant Head of School). It is usual to remove the accused bully and any witnesses from class as soon as possible to get them to write accounts on their own about the incident.

6.6 Members of staff who witnessed the incident should be asked to write the relevant details down as soon as possible and give these to the staff investigating.

## 7. Supporting students

7.1 **Victims** - It is likely that pastoral staff will work with these students, but it is essential that the students are fully supported during this difficult time through contact with staff and with students. Ultimately, the student must make the decision to whom they would like to speak. Usual choices are Form Tutors, Heads/Assistant Heads of School, Inclusion Manager or the Pastoral Administrators. The student's own peers could have an important role in acting as counsellors or mediators.

7.2 **Bullies** - It can also be important for the bully to receive counselling to prevent further incidents. Often, bullies themselves have been victims. Usually a member of the pastoral team will carry out this role:

- (a) Talk to the student about how things are going at the academy, her progress and friends.

- (b) Ask why they acted as they did.
- (c) Explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy.
- (d) Discuss with the student how to join in with others without bullying.
- (e) Give the student lots of praise and encouragement for the times when she is being kind and considerate to others.
- (f) Inform and involve parents when appropriate.
- (g) If appropriate, there could be a supervised meeting between the victim and the bully to enable the bully to apologise / explain why, etc.

## **8. Reporting and recording incidents**

8.1 Bearing in mind the seriousness of these incidents it is imperative that all incidents be:

- Promptly dealt with
- Reported promptly (to Form Tutors in the first instance and if unavailable, Heads of School) well before the end of the day
- Recorded using the Behaviour Referral Form available from the staffroom or SIMS
- Returned to the Head of School by the start of the next day.

## **9. Working with Parents**

- 9.1 We recognise that parents and carers have a key role to play supporting victims and counselling instigators and we will work closely with parents to deal with bullying.
- 9.2 Bullying in the academy is everyone's problem. All staff, students and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the academy a happier place for everyone.
- 9.3 Parents, carers and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability.
- 9.4 The academy will encourage parents who suspect that a child is bullying or being bullied to immediately contact the academy and make an appointment to see the child's Form Tutor or Head of School as soon as possible.
- 9.5 Parents and carers will be informed of incidents and will be involved in discussions. The academy will discuss with parents how they can work together to stop the bullying.

## **10. Reinforcement of the Anti-Bullying Policy**

10.1 This policy will be reinforced effectively across the academy via the following:

- (a) PHSE lessons will cover bullying in Year 7 and in response to incidents where appropriate.
- (b) Assemblies will focus on issues associated with bullying and in response to incidents where appropriate.

- (c) Self esteem and assertiveness training will be carried out in PHSE.
- (d) The Anti-Bullying Policy will be included in the Student Planner.

## **11. Dealing with Persistent Bullying**

11.1 If counselling and other preventative measures, such as peer support strategies do not succeed, persistent bullying will be dealt with under the academy's discipline policy. The bully may for example:

- (a) Be removed from the form group and placed in an alternative form.
- (b) Be put in detention.
- (c) Be put in internal isolation.
- (d) Be banned from an academy trip or other events where these are not an essential part of the curriculum.
- (e) Be excluded for a fixed period.

11.2 In the most serious cases, permanent exclusion may be considered if the bullying:

- (a) Involves serious actual or threatened violence against another student.
- (b) Amounts to persistent and defiant misbehaviour.

## **12. Review**

12.1 This policy and procedure will be reviewed when there are changes in the law, or in accordance with the schedule drawn up by the Principal and agreed by the LGB.

**Last Revised and Modified by SMT, Heads of School and Student Council Representatives:** April 2019

**Date of next review:** May 2021