



## Anti Bullying Policy

July 2010

## **1.0 PURPOSE/BACKGROUND**

Freebrough Academy aims to ensure that all members of the Academy community feel welcome, safe and happy enabling them to learn and make progress. Bullying of any kind prevents this happening. Bullying makes people feel unsafe and unhappy, affecting individual confidence and self-esteem.

As an Academy, we have a zero tolerance on bullying. Students, parents and carers should understand that reporting bullying is essential, and be assured that the Academy will support them fully whenever bullying is reported. It is the responsibility of all members of the Academy community to implement the Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **2.0 POLICY OBJECTIVES:**

- To establish an anti-bullying culture and ethos in the Academy.
- To ensure all staff, students and parents and carers have a clear understanding of what bullying behaviour is.
- To ensure all governors and staff know and understand the Academy policy on bullying and follow it when bullying is suspected or reported.
- To ensure that all students, parents and carers know the Academy policy on bullying and feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems.
- To challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour.
- To increase understanding for students who are bullied.
- To establish a good understanding of the types of cyber bullying and personal responsibility in eliminating this.

## **Students in or on the way to Freebrough Academy are entitled:**

- to feel safe and not to be made unhappy by others;
- not to be frightened by others;
- not to be touched inappropriately;
- not to be teased about race, religion, disability, social class, gender, personal differences, performance at Academy or any other matter;
- Not to be made unhappy by unpleasant notes, letters, text messages, e-mails, phone calls, information posted on social networking sites, any form of gossip, or by any other means.

## **3.0 PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES**

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour. It can be a one-off incident, but more commonly it is repeated over a period of time. It can be carried out by individuals, or by groups. It can be emotional, physical, racist, sexual, verbal, and homophobic or a combination of these. It can take the form of name-calling, threatened violence, actual violence, intimidation, isolation, ridicule, or other action such as spreading unpleasant stories and gossip,

inappropriate use of social networking sites, sending inappropriate text messages, e-mails and telephone calls. All bullying is designed to make the victim feel threatened, humiliated and unsafe.

Not all negative interactions between students can be characterised as bullying and the Academy works hard to ensure that students understand the differences between bullying and 'falling out' or arguing.

### **Signs of bullying might be:**

**Physical:** bruises, scratches, cuts, damaged clothes.

**Health:** loss of appetite, stomach-aches, headaches, soiling/bedwetting.

**Emotional:** unwillingness to go to Academy, withdrawn or secretive behaviour, unhappiness, unusual shows of temper, refusal to speak about problems, high levels of anxiety.

**Change of routine:** asking to be taken to Academy, coming home for lunch, taking longer to get home, asking for more money, using different routes to Academy, lost or missing belongings.

**Academic:** concentration difficulties, damage to work, missing work.

## **4.0 PREVENTING BULLYING**

Prevention is better than cure. At Freebrough Academy everyone is vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of bullying incidents seriously. We use the curriculum to reinforce the ethos of the Academy and to help students to develop strategies to combat bullying behaviour.

We make sure that students understand that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult and that, when another student tells them that they are being bullied, or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff. There is guidance in the student planner about the action a student should take if they have been bullied, or if they are aware of other students being bullied.

## **5.0 REPORTING BULLYING**

Students who are bullied, who witness bullying or who have even participated in bullying should feel confident to report it to any member of the Academy staff whom they trust enough to tell. Each incident will be dealt with on its merits, but all reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and fully investigated.

Incidents will be recorded electronically through the MIS using the same procedure as positive behaviour points and behaviour issues. The tutor of the student who has been bullied will be responsible for this and will give a copy of the report and the action taken to the Pastoral Leader. Older students may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to ensure effective monitoring of bullying behaviour and to facilitate co-ordinated action to prevent it, all proven incidences of bullying will be reported to the Principal. If the bullying has a racist element then it will also be treated as a racial incident and recorded in the Racial Incident Book.

## **6.0 RESPONDING TO BULLYING**

When an incident of bullying is discovered, staff will discuss issues relating to the incident with the students involved, in a way suitable to their age and level of understanding. We try to make use of the problem-solving approach. Each student will be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion will remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and preventing any recurrence of the bullying. Students who have been bullied will receive appropriate support, including help from external agencies, where needed. Students who have bullied will be offered help or counselling, and may be placed on a behaviour contract.

If bullying persists, one or a combination of the following actions will be taken:

- An official report will be made and filed in the pupil's personal record.
- Form tutors will be informed.
- Existing disciplinary sanctions will be used.
- Parents or carers will be contacted to discuss the issues. They will be given feedback on progress in dealing with the incident. Additional external help may be sought for example from educational psychologists or Behaviour Support Services.
- The names of students who have been bullied/have bullied others will be placed on a central bullying register and monitored through the small school system.
- Exclusion from the Academy – this is dependent on the severity and/or persistence of the bullying and will be a final resort.

Staff are trained to use strategies to prevent bullying and to respond to bullying incidents. These include:

- Role-play and other drama techniques to help students understand and appreciate the feelings of others.
- Various approaches to help students share information and to provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour.
- Training in the use of senior students and peer mentors some drawn from the Academy Council.
- A programme of form tutor sessions focusing on bullying.

## 7.0 INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND CARERS

The parents or carers of students who bully and those who have been bullied will be informed of the incident and will be asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem.

Students who bully will be helped to understand the pain this causes to others and reminded of the possible consequences of bullying. The sanctions for repeated incidents will be explained clearly to them. Support will be agreed to ensure they do not repeat bullying behaviours and their behaviour may be monitored. This monitoring process will usually incorporate a reward for acceptable behaviour. Parents and carers will be involved in ensuring that the monitoring process runs smoothly, and in all other decisions designed to reduce bullying behaviour.

Parents and carers are reminded regularly, through letters and newsletters, that their children must tell someone if they experience bullying. If students keep information from the Academy, or from their parents or carers, the problem is unlikely to be solved and the period of suffering will be prolonged. Freebrough Academy believes that even one case of bullying is a case too many, and we know it is essential to keep this policy under continual review. Where necessary, we call on outside resources such as the Behaviour Support Service and the Educational Psychology Service.

## 8.0 INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

This information is in the student planner, posted on notice boards and around Academy.

### **If you are bullied:**

- Remember that it is not your fault. Nobody deserves to be bullied.
- Try to stay in a friendly group.
- Try to be confident even if you do not feel it, but remember walking away is not cowardly.
- If you are worried or frightened you can go to any member of staff at lunchtime.
- Keep a diary recording what happened, when, where, and with whom.

Who you should tell:

- Your tutor;
- Your Pastoral Leader;
- Your class teacher;
- Any member of staff you feel happy to talk to, or feel you can trust;
- Your parent, carer or anyone at home;

- Your friend, if this helps;
- In an emergency tell the nearest adult.

**When to tell:**

- **If you are afraid** – report the bullying immediately.
- **Otherwise** – report the bullying when you are not in lessons – before the start of the Academy day, at break, at lunchtime or at the end of the day. Staff will make time to listen to you.

**Important**

- It does not help to by keep the problem to yourself. You need support, and students who bully need help so that they can change their behaviour.
- The problems are unlikely to go away if you ignore them, and they could get worse.
- Take a friend with you if you are worried about telling someone – your friend may help you do this.
- Staff will listen to you in confidence as far as they can, but you must be aware that they may have to pass on certain information to get you the help you need. They will always tell you what they are going to do.

**9.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The policy has been developed in line with advice from the Local Education Authority and the DfE guidance contained in ‘*Don’t Suffer in Silence*’.

Monitoring and evaluation of this policy forms a regular part of our self-review process. All policies are evaluated and reviewed with involvement from staff, students, parents and carers.

The governors will review the policy along with relevant data collected, on an annual basis.

**Adopted by Freebrough Academy**

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**Chair of Academy’s Trust Board**

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**Principal**

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**Review Date**

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