



LEVER ACADEMY TRUST  
Local People, Inspiring Excellence



Little Lever School  
learning together, achieving together

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**RATIFIED BY THE LEVER ACADEMY TRUST:**

**18.07.16**

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## Summary

Lever Academy Trust takes bullying very seriously. The Trust's policy is designed, together with key policies, to maintain a caring and supportive community thereby minimising the incidence of bullying behaviour. Where it does occur, all incidents will be dealt with swiftly in accordance with this policy.

## 1. Principles

The Trust is committed to working with pupils and parents to provide a learning environment that is secure and supportive so that all individuals can develop academically and socially free from fear of ridicule, harassment or physical threat.

Incidents of bullying will always be taken seriously and followed up by staff.

Parents have an essential role to play in counteracting bullying. Where bullying is clearly established, parents of both victim and perpetrator will always be contacted and the school will seek to involve them in securing solutions.

## 2. What is bullying?

Whilst there is no legal definition of bullying, the Gov.Uk website define bullying in schools as behaviour that is repeatedly intending to hurt someone, either physically or emotionally.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less pro-active pupils who can be drawn in by group pressure.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

- **Physical:** a child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.
- **Verbal:** verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, sexuality/sexual orientation or personality etc.
- **Exclusion:** a child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.
- **Dirty looks etc.:** staff will not underestimate the power of looks or huddles of sniggering school mates to exclude and/or intimidate.
- **Damage to property or theft:** pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully to force the pupil to hand over money or property to them.
- **Cyber -bullying:** sending messages or photos, or making comments about another person whether by text or e-mail, or through social media, chat rooms or websites such as You Tube.

## 3. Signs of bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags, and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Room with symptoms such as stomach pains
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Self-harming
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away.

## 4. Measures to counteract the incidence of bullying

- Ensure adequate supervision of pupils before school, at breaks and lunchtimes and after school
- Through the Student Leadership Committee (SLC), half termly pupil surveys and PSHCE lessons, review the effectiveness of the school's measures in counteracting bullying and identifying 'hot spots' around the site.
- Provide a range of opportunities at lunchtimes so that pupils have positive activities in which to engage and bolt-holes to go to should the need arise
- Identify and use opportunities within the school curriculum to discuss aspects of bullying, to emphasise that the school does view bullying as a serious issue, and to explore the appropriate ways of behaving towards each other e.g. within the PSHCE programme, in expressive arts, as part of the assembly schedule.
- Teachers will ensure that they do not use teaching materials or equipment which portrays a bad or negative view of any group because of the ethnic origin, gender, ability/disability etc.
- Teachers will encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect, as outlined in the Respect Charter, through:
  - Modelling the behaviour, they expect through their own dealings with pupils
  - Always challenging inappropriate responses from pupils towards other individuals or groups (including racial or minority groups)
  - Implementing the school's guide to rewards and sanctions (Behaviour *for* Learning Policy)
  - Promoting positive and caring attitudes towards all through the curriculum, assemblies and charity work.
- On the school intranet, restrict access to certain websites and monitor e-mail traffic through security software
- Regulate the use of mobile phones during the school day.

## 5. Action to be taken when bullying is suspected

All staff have a responsibility to tackle bullying. If bullying is suspected staff will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses and take statements. It is recognised that in some situations 'victims' may exaggerate or invent bullying incidents and members of staff need to be aware of this.

If a child is being bullied or feels at risk of being bullied there are many ways in which they can report this. They may report this to their Form Tutor initially, or their Year Leader, or any member of staff who can then take the appropriate course of action. Students can also discreetly email the [stayingsafe@little-lever.bolton.sch.uk](mailto:stayingsafe@little-lever.bolton.sch.uk) address if they feel more comfortable reporting it in this way which is checked by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If parents suspect the child is being bullied their first port of call should be the Year Leader, who in some circumstances may refer it to a member of the Senior Leadership Team designated to the specific year group.

Social networking sites are sometimes used for bullying and any threats made on such a site and acted on in school will be classed as pre-meditated and are likely to result in a more severe sanction. Students should never respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Instead, it is important that they save evidence of the abuse; take screen prints of messages or web pages and record the time and date.

It is equally important that bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable. Evidence indicates that one in five (21%) teachers have reported having derogatory comments posted about them on social media sites from both parents and children. All staff have the right to a fulfilling career free from harassment and bullying and, therefore, staff should report any instances of this to the DSL or a senior member of staff.

In order to discourage any form of cyberbullying the Little Lever School launched its 'Keep it Positive' campaign, which is an initiative developed by the Student Leadership Committee (SLC) to encourage all young people to use social media in a positive manner and to stop online bullying.

In recent years there have been a number of tragic cases of young people in Bolton committing suicide, all of whom seem to have been victims of online bullying. Little Lever's SLC are determined to try to stamp this kind of abuse out and to encourage young people, both in the Bolton area, and hopefully on a wider scale, to 'Keep It Positive' when using social media.

If any degree of bullying towards students is identified, the following action will be taken in consultation with the Year Leader or member of the Senior Leadership Team designated to the specific year group:

#### FOR THE VICTIM:

- Help, support and counselling (where appropriate) will be given as required
- Parents will be contacted as soon as possible
- Practical steps to reassure the victim will be explored e.g. potential changes to class groupings, transport arrangements, somewhere to go in 'free time' and 'buddies' allocated

#### FOR THE BULLY:

- Investigation to take place work to ascertain what happened and to discover why they became involved
- Inform the bully's parent/carer
- Restorative work to be completed with the bully.
- Appropriate action will be taken by the Year Leader / Senior Leader with regard to consequences. Bullying is a very serious issue in school and will not be tolerated. This should be reflected in the punishment that is served. Ultimately, if pupils do not respond to the punishments issued and continue to bully then they will be recommended for permanent exclusion.

### **6. Training**

All staff need regular training in identifying and addressing bullying:

- For teacher and classroom support staff, this will happen once a year in conjunction with Child Protection Training
- Admin support staff will also receive annual training.

### **7. Communicating the policy to parents and pupils**

#### PARENTS:

- In the prospectus
- On the school website
- Through the school newsletter

#### PUPILS:

- The school's approach to eradicating bullying will be promoted at the start of each academic year to raise the issue, secure commitment and communicate the school's disapproval of bullying behaviour
- Throughout the year during assemblies
- Through the PHSCE programme
- Pupil planner
- School intranet
- The KIP campaign

### **7. Monitoring**

- The school record any incidents logged as bullying on a central spreadsheet. This record is kept by the headteacher's PA who automatically receives any referrals for "disrespectful behaviour towards another student", "bullying", "homophobia" or "racism" from the reward system so that appropriate action can be taken and detailed analysis can take place.
- The deputy headteacher/Year Leader will discuss issues as they arise so that appropriate action can be taken and restorative work completed. Any change in the frequency of incidents will be readily apparent.