

essa

Academy

Anti – Bullying Policy

Date of review: October 2021 by Stacey O'Connor (Essa Academy DSL)

INTRODUCTION

ESSA Academy is a happy learning community where staff and students feel safe and secure. School life is underpinned by relationships built upon mutual respect. Our expectation is that all students and staff will behave in appropriate and socially acceptable ways.

Every member of staff has a key role to play in promoting and sustaining the highest standards of behaviour for learning. We aim to provide a safe learning environment where everyone feels able to enjoy and achieve and fulfil their potential free from bullying. The well-being of every young person is of paramount importance; every student has the right to a high quality learning experience at school, free from harm, neglect and abuse. **All staff have a duty of care and a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of students.** The school community share the definition of bullying as **'deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time in an attempt to hurt or humiliate someone'**

There is a consistent approach to how bullying incidents are dealt with. Parents are involved at the earliest opportunity. Students are empowered to develop effective personal strategies rather than building dependency upon staff and others to solve issues. Please also refer to the following policies: Safeguarding; Behaviour for Learning; Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; E-Safety. Other relevant documents are The Rights Respecting School Charter and the Five Respects.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

There are five recognised features of bullying:

- It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour
- It is repeated over a period of time
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- It is difficult for those who bully to learn new social behaviours
- Those who bully have and exercise power inappropriately over others.

Bullying is not an isolated, one off incident where there is no intention of gaining power over others.

All forms of bullying can be damaging to the development of both the person being bullied and the person bullying. Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

Physical – Pushing, hitting, kicking, punching, taking belongings or an act of violence with intent to harm

Verbal – Name calling, insulting, threats/intimidation or making offensive remarks

Indirect – Spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups or being made the subject of malicious rumours

Cyber – Tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted using text messaging, e-mail, instant messaging or any other type of digital technology e.g. social networking sites such as: BEBO; Facebook; Instagram, MySpace; BBM; Twitter; Kik. Misuse of associated digital technology such as cameras and video aids.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment – unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual comments, upskirting, jokes and taunts; physical behaviour; or on-line sexual harassment. More details around this are also covered in more detail in our safeguarding policy

IMPLICATIONS OF BULLYING

Bullying is always taken seriously because of the potential impact upon young people. Many of the outward signs of bullying can be the same as other indicators of abuse such as non-accidental injuries, self-abuse, low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety and, if unchecked:

- Others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable within the school
- Victims can become bullies of younger or more vulnerable students
- Bullying will have long term effects on victims which may extend into their adult lives.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Teacher has ultimate responsibility for the day to day well-being of all students. The Assistant Principal-PDBW (Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) share an oversight of the safeguarding and well-being of students. All staff, students, parents and governors must be aware of the policy and share responsibility for enforcing its principles.

DEALING WITH BULLYING

The school takes a proactive stance to raise awareness about bullying. This is done through a range of strategies including staff training, assemblies, PSHE lessons, peer mentoring and a high staff presence and visibility during lessons change over, break, lunch time and at the end of the school day. Minor incidents or disagreements should be addressed by the member of staff who witnesses it; however, any suspicions of bullying must always be reported to the appropriate Head of Year as soon as possible.

All allegations of bullying by students must be referred to the Head of Year immediately.

The Head of Year will investigate the concern or allegation to clarify the facts through a thorough investigation, taking statements from the alleged bully, victims and witnesses and informing the AP-PDBW, AAP and DSL.

Careful consideration of all circumstances will be made before sanctions or next actions are decided. In the vast majority of cases this will involve parents/carers of both alleged bully and victim being informed at the earliest opportunity.

A range of approaches will be used to support the victim and help them build resilience:

- The school could offer coaching and problem-solving strategies (via Ivy Cottage) to enable the victim to tackle what has happened; this builds their resilience and confidence, nurturing lifelong learning in resolving problems. This approach is suitable for lower level problems and where the victim wants to regain some control.
- The school may work alongside the victim to resolve the problems actively through restorative justice; this will involve meetings facilitated by the school with all parties involved.
- In serious incidents such as safeguarding, violence, threat of weapons, or sustained serious bullying, the school will take over and deal with the issue. In some cases the matter may be referred to The Police/ Youth Justice Team.

Students have a responsibility to ensure that victims of bullying are not isolated and to intervene when someone is being bullied. This could be a request to stop and a clear warning that staff will be informed.

Students should inform a member of staff if they suspect bullying is taking place. Racial, homophobic, sexual orientation and sexual incidents are recorded in CPOMs along with proven bullying incidents. This information is shared with Governors and the Local Authority (LA).

Serious or persistent cases of bullying will be referred to Senior Staff and could lead to fixed term exclusion or ultimately permanent exclusion.