



# Anti-Bullying Policy

Updated February 2020



Awarded for excellence



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Ashcroft Technology Academy is committed to:

- Providing a safe, caring and friendly environment where no type of bullying (virtual or actual) or abuse is tolerated.
- Providing a curriculum, which enables all students to develop respect for themselves, for others, and on dealing with instances of unpleasantness of bullying – against themselves or peers.
- Providing a clear and robust behaviour management policy in which guidelines for staff and students are clear and consistent.
- Developing a system, and identifying key staff within this system, which supports both the victim and the bully in order that all instances of bullying are stopped immediately.
- Working with parents and external agencies where necessary to overcome intense difficulties.
- Recognising that bullying can have a profound and negative effect on victims and therefore all reports of bullying received by the Academy will be investigated and will be dealt with swiftly and fairly.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression, coercion or manipulation with the intention of hurting or belittling another person. Bullying can take place face-to-face or online. It can be direct (actual harm) or indirect (social exclusion). It is a pattern of behaviours repeated over a period of time and causes pain and distress to the victim.

Children can on occasion be unpleasant towards each other in the same way that adults can also on occasion behave in an unpleasant manner towards other adults. It is important, therefore, to distinguish between a one-off unpleasant incident and a repeated pattern of bullying behaviour. While a one-off incident of unpleasantness can be equally upsetting for the victim, the process by which we will investigate will be different to the way in which we will approach a case of persistent bullying. We will naturally take into account the severity of the incident and the character of the individuals involved.

## It can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Verbal	cussing, name-calling, threats and spreading rumours
Physical	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or using any other form of violence
Exclusion	deliberate exclusion or making a student feel unwanted
Extortion	forcing victim to give money or possessions, buy food
Racist	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, names or mimicking
Sexual	unwanted suggestive or physical contact, or sexually based comments
Homophobic	comments or gestures made because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Disability	discrimination on grounds of differences

Transphobic	discrimination against or aversion to transsexuality and transsexual or transgendered or gender fluid people
Online	any form of abusive or coercive behaviour on any social media platform or chatroom – to include trolling, generation of fake accounts, group chats or direct messaging

## Procedures

It is important that all allegations of unpleasantness or bullying are taken seriously, thoroughly investigated and that steps are taken to ensure that the situation is not made worse and that there is no reoccurrence.

The member of Leadership Group (LG) responsible for the year group of the child who has reported bullying (either themselves or their parents) will coordinate the investigation. Their knowledge of the children involved and of the initial report they receive will influence the approach taken. It is most likely that the member of the LG will ask mentors from our Inclusive Care and Support (ICAS) provision, to conduct the investigation on his or her behalf; however, the Head of Year (HoY) or member of the LG may wish to conduct the investigation himself or herself.

When an incident of bullying is reported, the following protocol act as a guide:

- Brief notes of what the student says should be made
- The student might be asked to write a full account (this will be dependent on emotional state at the time) or the member of staff will take notes
- The incident will be investigated. Students will be interviewed and statements or notes should be taken.
- Once a full and complete picture is formed, the incident will be discussed with the Principal to agree sanctions and support
- In most cases (this will be dependent on situation and characters involved), the victim will be offered an opportunity to meet the Bully and express their feelings
- Ensure both the victim and parents are aware of the sanctions that have been imposed. The LG member and/or HoY will meet with the parents of those responsible for the bullying to go through the investigation
- Both Victim and Bully may need further support to ensure that the situation is fully resolved and does not reoccur.
- The situation should be monitored to ensure that it has been finally resolved.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, particularly if, in the professional judgement of the HoY or LG member, parents of both parties need to be contacted or external agencies need to be involved.

## How to Identify Bullying

Students may not always be willing to disclose when bullying is occurring. If a member of staff suspects that there is a difficulty, they should report this concern to the student's HoY without delay.

Students are encouraged to 'call out' bullying when it is seen (even if simply a perception), whether as a victim or as an observer. Students are educated on the importance of reporting issues and concerns to staff and providing evidence, if needed.

**Signs to be aware of are:**

- Early signs of distress
- Deterioration of work
- Unnecessary appointments with the Medical Welfare Officer
- Isolation
- A desire to remain with adults
- Erratic attendance or punctuality
- Truancy
- Marked changes in personality

It is important that ALL incidents of bullying are taken seriously and are dealt with sensitively and effectively. If there is any doubt at all, staff should seek support from a HoY or a member of the LG.

**Help Organisations**

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0207 354 8321
Children's Legal Centre	01206 873820
Kidscape	0207 730 3300
Parentline Plus	08088 002222
Youth Access	0208 772 9900