

  	<p>POLICY TITLE:</p>	<p>Anti-bullying Policy</p>
<p>Committee/Person Responsible for Policy: Author:</p>	<p>LGB / Headteacher Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour)</p>	
<p>Date Reviewed by Local Governing Body: Date Approved by RHT Board Next Review Date</p>	<p>6 May 2022 N/A May 2023</p>	

The Taunton Academy is a safe, friendly, tolerant and inclusive community that provides for the development of all members. The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Students must be encouraged to report all bullying.

The Department of Education (October 2014) defines bullying as, **“behaviour by an individual or group, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyberbullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.”**

Therefore, an incident may be deemed to be bullying if:

1. it is meant to hurt - the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it;
2. it happens more than once - there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a ‘one-off’ incident;
3. it involves an imbalance of power - the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

It can be:

1. emotional, e.g. being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening gestures;
2. physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings;
3. verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks including homophobic, racist and sectarian;

4. relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups;
5. intimidation and harassment, e.g. pressure from members of a group against an individual creating a feeling of unease or fear;
6. cyber/virtual bullying, e.g. gaming, texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM), other social media platforms.

Principles that underpin the policy:

- **For pupils who experience bullying that:**
 - They are heard
 - They know how to report bullying and get help
 - They are confident in the school's ability to deal with bullying, and feel happy and comfortable with any plans that are put in place
 - Steps are taken to help them feel safe again
 - They are helped to rebuild confidence and resilience
 - They know how they can get support from others

- **For pupils who engage in bullying behaviour that:**
 - Learning programmes and strategies hold them to account for their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused
 - They will learn to behave in ways which do not cause harm in future, because they have developed their emotional skills and knowledge
 - They will learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused
 - They will have any safeguarding issues, around their circumstances, addressed
 - The school is aware of other circumstances and situations that may be influencing the child's behaviour.

- **For The Taunton Academy:**
 - The whole school community is clear about the anti-bullying stance the school takes
 - Pupils, as well as staff and other members of the school, are fully engaged in developing and reviewing anti-bullying work in the school
 - Occurrences are recorded and audited, anti-bullying work is monitored, and every chance is taken to celebrate success
 - All pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of bystanders
 - The school promotes a culture of unconditional positive regard, tolerance and inclusivity, where bullying (physical or verbal), are not tolerated and cannot flourish
 - Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying
 - Peer support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying
 - The school has addressed site issues and promotes safe play areas
 - All staff are aware, and model positive relationships
 - The school works in partnership with parents, other schools, and with Children's Service and community partners to promote safe communities
 - That inclusive values are promoted and underpin behaviours and school ethos
 - The Taunton Academy's bullying task force/ambassadors promote how the school community can work together to prevent its occurrence.

- **For parents/carers:**
 - They are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying

- They know how to report and get help if they are concerned that their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, and are clear about the complaints procedure
- They have confidence that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way which protects their child.

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- It is usually persistent (isolated cyberbullying incidents may be seen as one-off incidents but if sent to a range of pupils would be seen as bullying)
- Friendship fall outs are seen as accidental, occasional, no power imbalance or hierarchy, those involved show remorse and want to resolve the situation – this is different to isolating or excluding children from groups.

Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying related to race, religion or culture
- bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying relating to sexual orientation e.g. homophobic language
- bullying related to gender orientation e.g. transgender/questioning/pan
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling etc
- verbal abuse such as name calling, insults, threats, offensive remarks etc.
- deliberately isolating people from others.
- sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault
- sexting, including pressuring another person to send a sexual imagery or video content
- teenage relationship abuse - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner
- initiation/hazing - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them
- prejudiced behaviour - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

Cyber bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff, who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

At The Taunton Academy, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of bullying:

- Restorative approaches to ensure all members of the school community understand and issues are not repeated.
- Regular staff training to help staff identify when students are at risk.
- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- RE and PSHE are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities.
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

Statutory duty of schools

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students.

Implementation and Procedures

At Taunton Academy all adults have a responsibility to model positive and supportive behaviour in their dealings with students, and with one another, so that students have the confidence to pass on information. This ethos is stressed during the student transition activities and is regularly visited in assembly and through PSHE. Students are reminded of their part in sustaining the qualities of community life that allow students to learn without fear of bullying.

There are important opportunities in many curriculum areas to raise issues of bullying and allow for contextual tutoring to take place. Staff will be alert to the opportunities and be aware of the need to monitor the responses from students and act on any information that they receive.

At Taunton Academy we are aware that it is the quality of relationships within a school community that allow issues to be resolved effectively. Consistency and continuity are very important, as is the support of parents and the wider community in upholding the values of the school.

The school website, noticeboards, assemblies and tutor programme provide information for Anti-Bullying Policy and informing students about what to do if they feel bullied. Students are advised to tell a member of staff who will arrange to see the pupil to discuss the problem. Parents and

carers are also encouraged to contact the school about bullying and are reassured that the matter will be dealt with in a discreet, sensitive and appropriate way.

Students are encouraged to report bullying on behalf of others if necessary and to realise that it is never acceptable to be a bystander if bullying is taking place. Useful contact phone numbers and website addresses are given on the school website. In most instances it is best to contact the year leader/tutor, who will direct the concern to the most appropriate member of staff.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

The school:

- Reports of any unkind behaviour can be reported to any member of staff who will record this on the whole school record.
- The whole school record of unkind behaviour will help build a picture of bullying and its victims
- If bullying is suspected or reported, this will be dealt with by a member of the leadership team
- A clear account of the incident will be gathered and given to the year leader
- A member of the leadership team will interview those concerned and will document the incident
- Parents will be kept informed
- Sanctions and education will be used, as appropriate (see behaviour policy)
- Referral may be made to partner agencies should this be necessary

Where allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the school will act in accordance with the guidance set out in Part 5 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Students:

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff to reassure the pupil
- offering ongoing support with an appropriate adult for an agreed period
- taking steps to restore self-esteem and confidence to allow the pupil to regain control of their social situation
- in some cases, making a referral to an external agency

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- having appropriate sanctions put in place to reflect the unacceptable nature of bullying
- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong-doing and need to change
- informing parents or carers to help change the bullying behaviour of the pupil
- monitoring the pupil's progress and future behaviour
- in some cases, making a referral to an external agency