



Top Valley Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by Governing Body 11 November 2015



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy forms part of our Behaviour Policy and complies with Department for Education guidance, “Preventing and tackling bullying” 2014 and the Equality Act 2010.

At Top Valley Academy, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every student should be able to participate in all Academy activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Top Valley Academy. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our students by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. We will also ensure we uphold the Academy core values of pride, opportunity respect and belief; actively promote British Values and operate within the objectives as set out in SMSC.

At Top Valley Academy all students and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included in the Academy community.

Students and staff have the right to work in an environment without harassment, intimidation or fear.

All bullying, of any sort, is therefore unacceptable.

Students who experience bullying will be supported.

We recognise the effects that bullying can have on students’ feelings of worth and on their learning, and the members of our Academy community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

Students who bully will be supported to change their behaviour. If, however, after such support they continue to carry out acts of bullying, then appropriate action will be taken including, if necessary permanent exclusion. In these situations the rights of the victim are paramount.

WHY WE HAVE PRODUCED THIS POLICY

- To express our belief that all students should be included fully in the life of the Academy.

- To reduce and wherever possible stop incidents in which students are subject to any form of bullying.
- To state clearly our ways of dealing with bullying.
- To state clearly our ways of supporting those involved in bullying incidents.
- To ensure that all students and staff are aware of this policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.

OUR DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying involves the dominance of one student or a group of students over another, or others. It is planned or premeditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour.

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

It can take many forms but the main types are:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings
- Verbal - name-calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours
- Cyber bullying - using mobile phones, social networking sites and Internet to transmit bullying messages

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only against the individual, but also against the group to which he or she may belong. To protect these vulnerable and usually minority groups and in reference to the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, the following will be given particular attention:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and/or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The use of derogatory language or comments will be appropriately challenged by Academy staff, who have been provided with supporting guidance. Incidents of this nature are reported through SIMS and added to an Equality incident log. This log is shared with the Local Governing Board on a regular basis.

CREATING AN ANTI-BULLYING CLIMATE IN OUR ACADEMY. TAKING ACTION TOGETHER

At Top Valley Academy we promote positive behaviour to create an environment in which students behave well; where students take responsibility for their behaviour, for each other's emotional and social well-being and include and support each other.

We encourage this through the modelling of appropriate behaviour by staff, through direct teaching and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where these skills can be both learned and practised.

Through our curriculum and other means we will:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy
- Increase understanding for victims
- Build an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach our students how to manage their relationships with others positively
- Provide support where necessary, for staff to model appropriate behaviour
- Promote race equality and cultural diversity

We will endeavour to keep the issue of bullying alive in the minds of students, their parents and staff through the following means:

- Assemblies will be used to reinforce our message that bullying will not be tolerated.
- The message that bullying will not be tolerated will be made clear in the information given to students and their parents/carers when they join our Academy.
- Posters in the Academy will be used to remind students that bullying is not acceptable, and to tell them what to do if they are bullied or if they see others being bullied.
- Childline posters will be displayed in the Student Centre.
- We will continue to develop our Peer Counselling Scheme as an anti-bullying strategy.
- Publicise the annual "Anti-Bullying Week" (usually in November) through awareness raising activities and fund-raising.
- Regularly consult with students, parents and staff around the issue of bullying and how it is dealt with by the Academy through focus groups and online surveys.

- Promotion of the School Help Advice Reporting Page (SHARP) as a means of reporting bullying incidents online and anonymously, as well as a source of information and advice to students and parents.
- Utilising the SID tutor campaign as a way of promoting team work, tolerance and the themes of safety, identity and difference.
- Exploring anti bullying themes through our PSHE and citizenship curriculum.
- Further development of our Student Council to promote student voice and participation in Academy life.

THE TOP VALLEY ACADEMY ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE

Students, staff and parents are encouraged to sign up to our Anti-Bullying Pledge on the Hub:

We at Top Valley Academy agree to stand together against bullying and cyber bullying.

We believe that everybody should feel safe, secure and accepted regardless of colour, race, disability, gender identity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

We accept that bullying and cyber bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying or cyber-bullying.

By signing this pledge, we agree to:

- Value personal differences and treat others with respect.
- Not become involved in bullying or cyber bullying incidents or be a bully.
- Report honestly and immediately any incidents of bullying or cyber bullying.
- Support others who have been or are subjected to bullying or cyber bullying.
- Raise any concerns and issues regarding bullying or cyber bullying.
- Accept that if we see someone being bullied and we don't report or stop the bullying, we are equally as responsible.

As a member of Nottingham City Secondary Education Partnership (NCSEP), we have agreed to adopt the Anti-Homophobia Charter alongside other city secondary schools:

- We believe that ALL people should be treated with respect and have the right to learn, teach and work in an environment that is free from prejudice
- We have a culture that is inclusive and celebrates diversity
- We are committed to pro-actively challenging all prejudiced based bullying including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and language
- LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and intersex) members of our school community will feel safe and supported in an environment that will enable them to reach their full potential.

OUR AIM IS TO CREATE A CLIMATE WHERE BULLYING IS NOT ACCEPTED BY ANYONE WITHIN THE ACADEMY COMMUNITY.

OUR ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES

A range of strategies are available, which include those designed to identify, reduce or prevent bullying; as well as measures to support victims and constructively challenge bullies. Where students do not respond to preventive strategies to combat bullying we will take action under the Academy's Behaviour policy.

- Mediation by adults
- Peer Counselling
- CCTV
- Victim support
- Place of safety
- Anti-bullying education via PSHE and other subjects

Action under the Academy's Behaviour Policy includes:

- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Detention
- Removal from class
- Change of Tutor Group/Teaching Group (where appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned)

Sanctions will also include, where necessary, fixed term and permanent exclusion.

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and followed up.

What students should do:

- Students who have been bullied should report this to a member of staff
- Students who witness bullying that they believe will not be reported by the victim should report this to their Tutor or Achievement Leader
- When incidents take place at lunchtime, they should be reported to the Student Centre
- Once the reported incident has been dealt with, students should report any further incident of bullying immediately
- Students have the option of referring themselves to a Peer Counsellor
- Victims and witnesses have the option of reporting incidents anonymously using the online SHARP system

What the Academy will do:

- Provide support to the victim
- The victim will be reassured that they were right to tell
- The victim will be told that action will continue until the bullying stops
- The victim's safety will be our first concern and appropriate arrangements will be made to try to safeguard this. These strategies will be discussed with the victim
- On receiving a report of bullying the member of staff will make a judgement about the most appropriate person to deal with it based on the seriousness of the incident and the history of those involved.
- If the incident needs to be referred on this will usually be to the Tutor or Achievement Leader
- The more serious cases may be referred to the Head of Support Services
- Reports of bullying should be made by the member of staff who first received the information using the Sleuth behaviour management system, providing additional information as necessary
- Where incidents link to protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010, details will be logged and reported regularly to the Local Governing Board
- Parents of the victim and bully will be kept informed

THE INVESTIGATION

Victims, bullies and witnesses will be interviewed separately. Their written accounts of events will also be written separately.

Once all necessary information has been gathered, a judgement will be made about the most appropriate strategies to use (see earlier section 'Our Anti Bullying Strategies'). Where possible we will adopt a joint problem solving approach and ask the students involved to help us find solutions to the problems. This will encourage them to take responsibility for their actions and for the emotional and social needs of others.

We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, that we expect it to stop and we will seek a commitment to this from the bully/ies. Bullies will be made aware that we will be checking to ensure that the bullying has stopped and the likely consequences should it not do so.

Parents of victims and bullies will be contacted and kept informed.

BULLYING OUTSIDE THE ACADEMY PREMISES

Top Valley Academy will respond to incidents of anti-social behaviour and bullying that occurs anywhere off the Academy premises. We will respond using strategies outlined

in the Behaviour for Learning policy (e.g. detention) for any incidents of bullying when the student is:

- taking part in any Academy-organised or Academy-related activity
- travelling to or from the Academy
- wearing the Academy uniform
- in some other way identifiable as a student at Top Valley Academy

In addition, any poor behaviour that:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the Academy
- poses a threat to another student or member of the public
- could adversely affect the reputation of the Academy

In the case of bullying by students from other schools/Academies or by people who are not at school at all we will work with other agencies to help them deal with it. This may include the Headteacher of another school/Academy and the police.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Parents can help by:

- Supporting and promoting our anti-bullying policy and procedures in discussions with their child
- Discussing with their child 's teacher any bullying concerns they may have about their child and working with the Academy to resolve them
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of the Academy
- Monitoring their child's use of social networking e.g. Facebook and Blackberry Messenger

Students are expected to:

- Report all incidents of bullying
- Report suspected incidents that victims may be afraid to report
- Support each other and work with Academy staff to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in Top Valley Academy

IS OUR ANTI BULLYING POLICY WORKING? HOW WILL WE KNOW?

We will monitor and evaluate the success of our policy by using the following measures:

- Regular analysis of the number of reported incidents, including whether any particular student groups are over-represented
- Periodic questionnaires will be used to measure students' and parents' perceptions of the scale of the problem

Approved by Governing Body on 11th November 2015

To be reviewed by the Headteacher and Governing Body annually