



THE CONSORTIUM
ACADEMY TRUST

Shaping Positive Futures

Anti - Bullying Policy

The Consortium School Trust (TCAT)
An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee
Company Number 07665828

Status:	Live
Policy Owner (position)	Director of Education Services
Statutory / Recommended	Recommended
Date Adopted	20 May 2019
Review Period	24 months
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Last Review Date	September 2021
Next Review Date	September 2023
Advisory Committee	Trust Board
Linked Documents and Policies	School Behaviour Policy ICT Policy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Equal Opportunities Policy (Learners) Keeping Children Safe in Education Data Protection Policy SEND Policy

**NB – This document can only be considered valid when viewed on The Consortium School Trust website. If the copy is printed or downloaded and saved elsewhere the Policy date should be cross referenced to ensure the current document is the correct version. The linked policies can be viewed at www.consortiumtrust.co.uk*

1.0 Rationale

The Consortium School Trust will not tolerate bullying of any kind and we will ensure that every member of our school community is treated with respect, in line with our core values. Through the application of this policy we will endeavour to take responsibility for dealing promptly and effectively with any issues of bullying to ensure that no one suffers the long term effects of being a victim of bullying.

In any organisation with a high level of integrity we must be open to the fact that bullying may occur. When bullying does occur, everyone should be confident about reporting incidents, knowing that they will be supported to resolve the bullying.

We will be honest with ourselves about the effectiveness of this policy in preventing and resolving issues of bullying in our Trust through rigorous monitoring of the consistent application and subsequent outcomes as part of our review with stakeholders.

Within our organisation the focus on positive relationships is key to providing a culture within which bullying is rare and when it does occur everyone has a sense of responsibility to report it. Our staff relationships role model to our learners that we treat each other with kindness and respect. In addition, the relationships which are developed between staff and learners are key to promoting a safe and supportive culture where we respect each other and challenge unkindness.

Our staff and leaders work hard to create a safe and calm environment where children and young people are placed at the centre and supported to thrive both academically and in their personal development.

2.0 Legal framework

This Policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This Policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021
- Statutory Guidance for Schools on Exclusion (Sept 2017)

This Policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- E-Safety Policy

3.0 Objectives of the Policy

- To have a shared understanding of what bullying is and how it affects lives developed through curriculum delivery.
- To have an agreed set of strategies to minimise and counter the occurrence of bullying.
- To understand how to report and deal with incidents of bullying quickly, consistently and effectively.
- To create a safe environment where people feel free to speak out appropriately, work and play without fear and where there is mutual respect of each other.

4.0 Consultation

This policy has initially been drawn up in consultation with learners, parents, staff and local governors from across The Trust as appropriate and timely. This will be supported by gathering views throughout the life of the policy of those involved in its application. It will not be collected in isolation and without context as the policy is renewed

5.0 Definition

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.

Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.

Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable learners are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some children and young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable learners may include, but are not limited to:

- Learners with SEND
- Learners who are adopted
- Learners suffering from a health (physical and mental) problem
- Learners with caring responsibilities

Not all ‘peer disputes’ are classed as bullying and the experienced pastoral and staff teams will collect all relevant information, and where appropriate, statements from learners (which may include social media information from mobile devices) before deciding which will always be communicated to the Headteacher, or the most appropriate Senior Leader in the School.

6.0 Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything.

Teasing another learner because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Relational Bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone usually through verbal and emotional bullying

Cyber Bullying - the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.

7.0 Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

There are key behaviours that may indicate a learner is being bullied. All adults must be aware of these possible signs and should investigate further if there is (not an exhaustive list):

- absence from the school - truanting, unwilling to go to, or problems with going to school - frightened of walking to or from the school
- problems related to the school - begins to underachieve, becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- indications of physical harm - comes home with clothes torn, has unexplained cuts or bruises, self-harming
- changes in habit or behaviour - becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence, eating habits.
- more aggressive and challenging behaviour
- history of mental health problems, which have led to the learner becoming aggravated
- evidence or history they have been the victim of domestic abuse

8.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board will:

- establish this policy in consultation with senior leaders and keep under regular review for its impact.

The Headteacher will:

- have overall responsibility for the implementation and review of the policy and procedures.
- ensure that the policy is publicised within the school and explicitly bring it to the attention of learners, parents and staff.
- ensure that appropriate and proportionate action is taken to identify bullying accurately and take decisive action to address it.
- consider excluding a bully from the school if the bullying is persistent or a serious attack has taken place. Where this is a serious breach of the School Behaviour Policy this bullying behaviour may result in a permanent exclusion in extreme cases.

All staff will:

- respond appropriately to all reported incidents of bullying and ensure that the Policy and procedures are followed and applied consistently.
- thoroughly investigate all reported bullying cases and communicate effectively with learners and parents about the outcome of such investigation and the subsequent action. This will highlight the investigation has been concluded within the remit of this policy and will not identify or discuss action taken explicitly against other learners in line with GDPR and the Data Protection Policy.
- keep accurate records of reported incidents and where a decision to categorise the behaviour as bullying has been taken and the subsequent action taken.
- provide appropriate supervision in key areas.
- use opportunities to promote positive behaviour strategies.
- build good relationships so learners and staff demonstrate mutual respect for each other and learners feel confident about confiding in staff.
- put in place support plans to address bullying issues.

Parents will:

- have access to the Anti-Bullying Policy via the individual school website.
- contact the appropriate school if they feel that their child is the victim (or perpetrator) of bullying without fear of 'making things worse'.
- meet with school staff to help resolve any bullying issues (both perpetrator and victim)
- have access to Appendix 3 – How to deal with bullying.
- work with the school to ensure that learners (victims and perpetrator) can move forward in their school life.

Learners will:

- be made aware of the Trust's Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures to be followed to deal with incidents of bullying via for example; assemblies, displays, workshops, curriculum time and learner handbooks (see Appendices 1 and 2).
- tell a member of staff, friend or parent if they are being bullied or know someone who is being bullied.
- talk about what is happening and listen to advice given.
- not make counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- walk away from dangerous situations and avoid involving other learners in incidents.
- keep evidence of cyber bullying and inform a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

9.0 Statutory implications

The Trust understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Trust understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have claims brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The Headteacher will ensure that this Policy complies with the HRA; the Headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

10.0 Prevention

- All reported instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff to create a culture where bullying will not be overlooked or tolerated.
- Staff will, without exception, acknowledge and challenge 'banter' and informal language that may lead to more serious relationship issues
- Staff will encourage learner cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work.
- All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum.
- Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through the curriculum offer.
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- All members of the school are made aware of this Policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

- All staff will offer an 'open door' policy allowing learners to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst learners, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- Through curriculum delivery the school will ensure that learners know the signs of bullying and can develop early intervention behaviours to support positive peer relationships
- The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

11.0 Staff principles

The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.

Unpleasantness from one learner towards another will always be challenged and never ignored.

All staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident

Staff will always respect the learner's privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a learner is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the **DSL immediately**.

Follow-up support and 'check in' will be given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped. The length of time and methodology of this check in will be determined on an individual basis.

Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying

Each case of bullying is different and will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Based on the individual incident a professional judgement will then be made on the appropriate course of action.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all alleged incidents of bullying must be reported to a member of staff • where incidents are reported, details of what happened will be recorded and referred to the relevant staff team. A further referral may then be made to the DSL. Further action will be taken in the light of details about the severity or persistence of the incident • in case of peer disputes, the matter will be approached using restorative principles to foster a positive forward relationship where possible (this will be with the agreement of the perceived victim) • in many cases the class teacher/form tutor will discuss the matter with DSL (or other designated person), the alleged bully will be informed that they are the subject of a formal complaint of bullying • all parties, together with other witnesses, will be given the opportunity to provide information appropriate to the allegations made • parents of both parties will be informed of the outcome of investigations by a phone call and/or a letter, sent home in the post. Though this will be done appropriately without sharing confidential information regarding the other party. • arrangements for sanctions/support will be put in place as soon as possible • Fixed Term exclusion may be deemed necessary • in extreme cases the Headteacher may recommend a permanent exclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incidents of cyber bullying will be passed on to the school's CEOP ambassador/Cyber Lead. Where cyber bullying is reported the DSL will be informed and be part of the resolution to reflect their statutory responsibility • CPOMs will always be kept up to date as a true and accurate record of reporting, investigation, decision making and action taken, including communication strategies • The categorising of reported incidents of bullying will be done in consultation with senior staff to ensure an accurate representation of the impact of this policy |
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Longer term anti-bullying strategies

- the school will include anti-bullying strategies in the staff training programme for all staff and specifically for key student services or wellbeing staff
- the school will respond positively to advice/support provided by outside agencies and take full advantage of training opportunities provided
- the school will continue to involve all members of the school community in formulating developments in the area of anti-bullying strategies and policy review including advising parents how they can help their child (Appendix 3)
- the school will provide an e-mail/alert facility to report bullying incidents and pass on information to key staff
- the Anti-Bullying Working Party will meet annually to discuss and implement new and appropriate strategies for dealing with bullying, this is likely to be part of the Student/School Council Agenda

13.0 Bullying outside of the school

The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline learners for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Headteacher the power to regulate learners' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a staff member.

Teachers have the power to discipline learners for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside the school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted upon.

In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the learner on school premises, or elsewhere when the learner is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police, of the action taken against a learner where this may impact on legal proceedings.

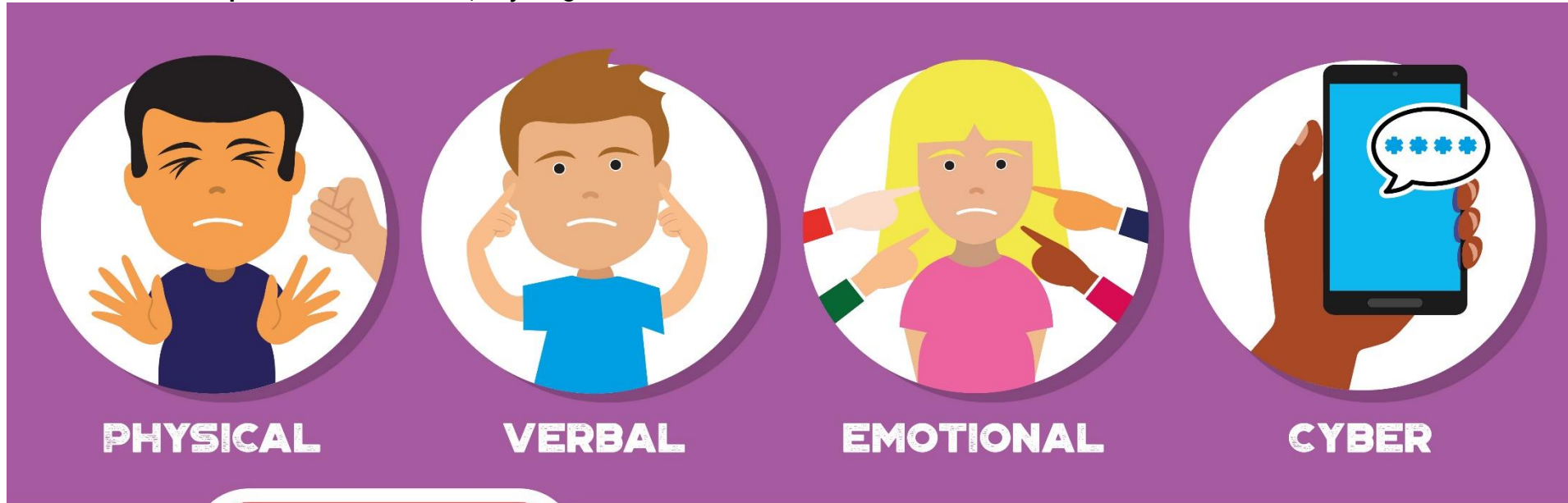
If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed. In addition, the parent should be advised of their right to report perceived bullying of any kind to the police independently of the school or investigation.

14.0 Monitoring the Impact of the Policy

Each incident of bullying will be followed up by the school with a discussion with parents/carers and learners involved (both victim and perpetrator) to gather an evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy application. This information will inform the review cycle of the policy. The review cycle may be brought forward if the evidence suggests the policy is not achieving its purpose.

Data around repeat offender/victim incidents will also be used and gathered from CPOMs.

In addition, we will consider all other forms of feedback both internally, from staff and the Anti-Bullying Working Party and externally, from for example Parent View or OFSTED to inform our policy review.



APPENDIX 2 - Information for Learners

1. Dealing with Bullying

In all schools, as in all walks of life, bullying does take place and must be taken seriously

- bullying is destructive. It can interfere with your learning and enjoyment of school
- bullying can happen to anyone and affects learners, parents and teachers
- bullying can be by one person or many people
- bullying happens until it is stopped so we all have a responsibility to do something about it

2. What Is Bullying?

It is the conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It may involve one serious incident but it is more likely to occur more than once over a period of time. Not all peer disputes are classed as bullying and the experienced Student Services and Staff teams will collect all relevant information, and where appropriate statements from learners (which may include social media information from mobile devices) before making a decision which will always be communicated to the Headteacher.

It can include

- name calling and cruel nicknames
- writing untruthful things about someone including the use of social media
- deliberately leaving someone out
- spreading rumours
- being unfriendly
- physical violence-being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked
- taking or hiding property
- isolating someone
- making people feel frightened
- insults
- putting people down

It can happen

- in the classroom
- in the corridor
- in the playground
- on buses
- outside of the school
- via mobile phones
- via the internet

3. Why Do People Bully?

- to pretend they are tough
- to try to get others to like them
- to hide their own fears and unhappiness
- because they have been bullied themselves

4. How Can You Stop Bullying?

- tell a teacher or member of staff, a friend, a mentor or parent - as we all have a responsibility to help to stop the bullying carrying on and making some people miserable
- inform school staff by using the dedicated email address for reporting bullying
- talk about what is happening and listen to advice given - we can change behaviour and make things better

5. Why should I tell if there is bullying?

If you do not tell someone

- the bullying carries on and gets worse
- the bully could bully other people
- the bully and victim would not get help

What will the school do?

- Listen: staff and other appropriate people, are available to talk to you about your concerns
- investigate what has happened
- talk and counsel all the learners concerned
- take appropriate action
- inform parents
- exclude a bully from the school if the bullying continues
- where appropriate the school may refer the matter to the police
- where appropriate a child protection referral may be made
- make a referral to an external agency

APPENDIX 3 - How can parents help?

If your child is being bullied

- talk to your child about their experience, listen to their thoughts/feelings and encourage them to ask for help when necessary
- regularly check with your child on how things are going at school and give lots of praise when they are cooperative or kind to others
- look for unusual behaviour, e.g. not wanting to go to school, not completing work to the usual standard
- contact the class teacher / form tutor/ House Leader /Year Leader immediately (and persist in reporting any further incidents if they occur) if you feel that your child is the victim of bullying without fear of 'making things worse'
- work with the school to resolve any issues that are preventing your child from learning and socialising confidently and successfully

If your child is bullying

- remember children sometimes bully others because they don't know that it is wrong. They may be copying the behaviour of others in the family
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want. Show how they can join in with other children without bullying
- talk to your child and explain that the way they are behaving is wrong and makes others feel unhappy
- ensure that your child does not leave the home harbouring ill feeling towards other children
- contact your child's class teacher / form tutor/ House Leader / Year Leader and explain the problems your child is experiencing. Discuss how to deal with the bullying.