



## Anti-Bullying Policy

### Background

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone in the learning community. It limits everyone's opportunities to learn and thrive and we therefore aim, by means of this policy, to prevent bullying at Open Box Education Centre.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every student attending Open Box Education Centre is able to reach their potential and learn within an environment that encourages a positive culture free from bullying.

### Definition

Bullying is defined as: "Any deliberate, hurtful behaviour, which is repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself." Repetition may also be a series of acts by the bully towards a number of different students. Bullying and violence can take many forms, including:

- Physical (hitting, hitting back, retaliation, kicking, spitting, theft, happy-slapping)
- Verbal (name calling, racist remarks, homophobic remarks, threatening or offensive phone calls)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- Cyber (texting offensive remarks, offensive emails, abuse through social networks)

Students who are bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming anxious and withdrawn, having a series of unexplained minor illnesses, taking unusual absences, being frightened of walking to and from school and lacking confidence. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Students must be encouraged to report bullying, either to a member of staff, to the counsellor or to the Principal. Students may wish to have their identity protected if they are reporting bullying to a member of staff – this request should be respected whenever possible.

### Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and students are responsible for their behaviour; consequently they must be alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

## **The Role of the Bystander**

The whole school community, including students, teachers and other members of staff, have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying if they witness or know of its existence.

## **Objectives of the Policy**

Open Box Education Centre will:

1. Aim to work towards a culture of prevention through a whole organisation approach.
2. Aim to raise awareness of bullying, and to develop a positive approach to handling its effects.
3. Ensure the Anti-Bullying Policy is revisited each year in PSE lessons, during the Emotional Wellbeing unit, and consider issues relevant to bullying, using a variety of approaches to ensure students understand and own the policy
4. Aim to improve self-esteem, confidence and social skills generally through a variety of approaches (e.g. in PSE lessons, one-off activities for team building, weekly Fitness and Wellbeing lessons and counselling sessions).
5. Make use of daily starter activities to raise issues and encourage reflection, particularly during anti-bullying week.
6. Publicise the Policy wherever possible (e.g. through our website, the 'Induction Packs' for new parents and students, displaying the policy within the learning environments)
7. Provide regular training for teachers to enable them to handle issues within their lessons in an effective manner which increases teaching and learning opportunities for all learners.
8. Encourage every member of staff (both teaching and non-teaching) to use opportunities to promote the 'safe learning environment' ethos, whenever they may arise in lessons.

## **Managing incidents**

The following steps should be taken when dealing with an incident:

1. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be investigated by the Principal.
2. All suspected or reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and treated sensitively by the Principal.
3. The Principal will interview all concerned and a clear account of the incident must be recorded outlining the action to be taken and any outcomes. This should be shared with the students involved to produce a written report.
4. Students concerned will be kept informed at the appropriate stages of the investigation.
5. Parents will be notified of all decisions and outcomes.
6. In instances of bullying where safeguarding issues are raised, action will be taken in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
7. In instances of bullying where criminal behaviour is involved the police will be notified and appropriate action taken.

## **Appropriate Sanctions**

Sanctions will be used as appropriate in consultation with all parties concerned.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

1. Being provided with an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with the Principal or member of staff of their choice,
2. Reassurance from the member of staff and Principal,
3. Continued support from the member of staff and Principal,
4. Help with rebuilding self-esteem and self-confidence,
5. Referral to the counsellor, if appropriate,
6. Their parents or carers being offered support and being informed of action and outcomes.

Students who have been bullying others will be helped by:

1. Discussing what happened,
2. Discovering why they became involved,
3. Establishing the wrong-doing and the need for change.
4. Informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the student.

## **Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with our behaviour policy.

## **Procedures for Parents or Carers**

1. Stay calm, listen and talk with your child.
2. Contact the Principal with your concern.
3. The matter can be discussed on the phone or a meeting arranged with the Principal, as appropriate.
4. Support the Principal in agreed actions that are seen as appropriate to resolve the situation. If a parent or carer feels unable to support the decision, at that point they may follow the Complaints Policy and Procedure.
5. Encourage your child's self-esteem and confidence, and try to establish some support networks at home.

## Helpful References

Websites:

- [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)
- [www.childline.org.uk/](http://www.childline.org.uk/)
- [www.kidpower.org/](http://www.kidpower.org/)
- [www.youngminds.org.uk/Bullying](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/Bullying)
- [www.antibullying.net/](http://www.antibullying.net/)
- [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/)
- [www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx](http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx)
- [www.beatbullying.org/abw2012/](http://www.beatbullying.org/abw2012/)
- [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)
- [www.learningtrust.co.uk](http://www.learningtrust.co.uk)

**Approved by:** ..... (Principal) ..... (date)

**Authorised by:** ..... (Chair of Governors) ..... (date)

**To be reviewed every:** 2 Years

**Next review date:** July 2021