

Bedford College Academies Trust

## **Pupil Anti-Bullying Policy**

<b>Status:</b> Statutory	<b>Member of staff responsible:</b> Headteacher/Principal	<b>Implementation date:</b> <b>April 2021</b>
<b>Issue No:</b> 1A	<b>Approved by: BCAT Board,</b>	<b>Next Review Date:</b> <b>April 2023</b>

### **1. Introduction and Statement of Intent**

Bedford College Academies Trust (BCAT), of which Wixams Academy and Wixams Tree Primary are a part, is committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any of our schools. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts and no-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At Wixams Academy and Wixams Tree Primary, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our antibullying policy.

### **2. Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2) and The Children Act 2004.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

- Whole school initiatives (staff training, assemblies etc.) and proactive teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Health & Social Education] lessons, etc.) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

### **3. What is bullying?**

BCAT has adopted the following definition of bullying:

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is usually repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times on Purpose). Bullying is uncaring and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to victims.

### **4. Bullying can be:**

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic: because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Online/cyber: setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

#### **4.1. Peer on Peer Abuse:**

The following types of behaviour constitute peer on peer abuse:

- Sexual harassment or sexual violence
- Discriminatory or prejudiced behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, sexist, disability and homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying
- Use of derogatory language and racist incidents
- Physical assaults
- Threatening behaviour

Wixams Academy will always fully investigate such incidents and will involve external agencies e.g. The Police when applicable.

### **5. Bullying is not:**

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP) or with clear malicious forethought. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, occasional name calling or childish prank.

## **6. Where does bullying happen?**

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school. In such cases, the Headteacher/Principal is empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the school's policy.

At Wixams Academy and Wixams Tree Primary, we are concerned with our children's conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises. The following steps may be taken:

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on school buses and in school taxis
- Talk to the Head Teachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises
- Map out safe routes to school for children, linking them to the School Travel Plan
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- Talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises

## **7. Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school/in the taxi
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to under-perform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

## **8. Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs**

Wixams Academy and Wixams Tree Primary are inclusive. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are.

We have some children who have learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

High attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

### **9 (i). Academy actions to prevent bullying.**

- All complaints taken seriously and dealt with quickly and firmly
- Appropriate levels of adult support in the playground
- Staff awareness training
- Discussions with children on aspects of bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other embedded with PSHCE, our values and assemblies
- Provision of equipment to occupy children at lunchtime
- Providing a curriculum that stresses the importance of children learning tolerance, learning to take responsibility and caring for others
- Recognising and rewarding positive behaviour
- Using peer group pressure actively to discourage bullying (mentoring, kindness and anti-discrimination initiatives)
- Providing targeted intervention and help for children to develop positive strategies and assertion

If a child reports an act of bullying, this is taken seriously and is investigated thoroughly. We believe that a reduction in bullying is directly related to an increased willingness of teaching and support staff to intervene in bullying incidents and an increase in confidence of children to report bullying.

### **9 (ii).Academy action when bullying is suspected.**

If bullying is suspected, we talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is confirmed and identified, the following action will be taken:-

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We support the victims in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experiences.
- informing the victims' parents/carers
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it such as access to in-house support provision i.e. counsellors/therapists and senior members of staff
- where necessary, arranging for special supervision in the playground
- by taking targeted action to prevent more bullying such as restorative justice meetings and workshops.

We will discipline any perpetrators in line with our behaviour policy, yet also try to help these students in the following ways by:

- talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved
- involving the bullies' parents/carers
- continuing to work with the bullies in order to change their behaviour
- requesting targeted support help from internal or external support services

#### **10. Academy expectations of parents/carers in preventing bullying.**

Wixams Academy would strongly advise families within our community to action the following guidelines:

- take an active interest in your child's social life. Talk about friends and their activities (including online communications)
- watch for signs of distress in your child
- inform the school immediately if you suspect your child is being bullied. Your concerns will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow
- advise your child not to fight back. It makes matters worse and your child could be accused of bullying. Always inform an adult immediately.
- make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying

#### **11. Support for staff who are subject to bullying behaviours.**

This document has set out measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils. It is equally important that Wixams Academy make it clear that bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is also completely unacceptable. Wixams Academy will thoroughly investigate any accusations of bullying made by staff. Wixams Academy will be proactive in supporting its staff and will inform all relevant parties as to the outcomes of an investigation. School staff will also be informed on how to protect themselves, particularly from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens.

#### **Cyberbullying of school staff – Guidance Links.**

<https://neu.org.uk/media/1081/view>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying\\_Advice\\_for\\_Headteachers\\_and\\_School\\_Staff\\_121114.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf)

#### **12. Behaviour from parents/carers and visitors to the Academy.**

Wixams Academy encourages close links with parents/carers and the community in general. We believe that children benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

As role models, and for the safety and wellbeing of our children, staff and parents, parents and other visitors are expected to behave appropriately both when on Academy premises and when communicating with the Academy, be it via e-mail or on the telephone.

Parents and other visitors are expected to show respect and concern for others and support the respectful ethos and values of our Academy by setting a good example in their own speech and behaviour towards all members of the Academy community.

The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our Academy set a good example. This policy addresses those rare occasions when behaviour is inappropriate.

The Principal reserves the right to formally ban a parent/carer from the Academy premises for a period, subject to review, if a persistent incidents or a sufficiently serious one-off incident were to occur. Channels of communication with the Academy may also be restricted in cases such as these to protect the welfare of staff.

### **13. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy**

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Questionnaires completed by the whole school community, together with surveys, focus groups, children's and parents'/guardians' comments will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Following an annual review any amendments will be made to the policy and everyone informed. An annual report will then be issued to governors and parents and the policy will be distributed to all parents.

### **14. Sources of further information, support and help**

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	<a href="http://www.ace-ed.org.uk">www.ace-ed.org.uk</a>	020 8888 3377
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	<a href="http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk">www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</a>	N/A
Anti-bullying Network	<a href="http://www.antibullying.net">www.antibullying.net</a>	info@antibullying.net
Beatbullying	<a href="http://www.beatbullying.org.uk">www.beatbullying.org.uk</a>	N/A
Bully Free Zone	<a href="http://www.bullyfreezone.co.uk">www.bullyfreezone.co.uk</a>	N/A
Bullying Online	<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>	0808 800 2222
ChildLine	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>	0800 1111
Kidscape	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a>	020 7730 3300
NSPCC	<a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a>	0808 800 5000
The Children's Legal Centre	<a href="http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com">www.childrenslegalcentre.com</a>	0345 345 4345
UK Government Website	<a href="http://www.dfe.gov.uk/bullying">www.dfe.gov.uk/bullying</a>	N/A