

## Anti-Bullying

### Policy Control Page

<b>Responsible Person</b>	Inclusion Officer
<b>Approved By</b>	Approved by SLT 9/6/25 Approved by ESC 25/6/25 Approved by CSC 25/6/25
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<b>Policy Applicable to</b>	The Deaf Academy or whole Charity

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Change / Action</b>
June 25	1.0	KWM	Updates to definition, incident reporting and staff addition of counter-connection

This should be read in conjunction with the following Policies:  
Equality & Diversity, Safeguarding, Behaviour and PHSE Policies

## **POLICY**

The Deaf Academy's vision is to see Deaf people valued by themselves and their society; being confident, well educated, and independent, with fulfilling and appropriate employment and housing. We are committed to ensuring that all students, staff and any other parties at The Academy are provided with an environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect regardless of their age, race, sexual orientation, religion/belief, gender or disability.

## **Guiding Principles**

We believe that all students and staff have a right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and free from harassment, discrimination and bullying. We recognise that creating a safe, supportive environment for bullied members to talk about their experiences, and to learn and practise effective responsive behaviour, is essential for everyone within The Academy to reach their full potential. If anyone feels intimidated or unhappy, due to the behaviour of others, they have a right to express their feelings and know that appropriate action will be taken.

## **AIMS**

1. To ensure that all students and staff within The Academy community, are able to work in a safe and secure environment free from humiliation, harassment, oppression and abuse.
2. To communicate clearly that bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Everyone must act in a positive way to ensure that bullying is challenged and reported.
3. To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop the continuation of harmful behaviour.
4. To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way
5. In the case of bullying amongst students, to apply disciplinary sanctions to any student causing the bullying and to ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi agency support.
6. In the case of bullying amongst staff, HR will be informed and their complaints procedure will be followed. This may involve disciplinary measures.

## **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying can happen to anyone.

Bullying is defined as "Behaviour of an individual or a group, usually over time, that intentionally hurts an individual or group either emotionally or physically. Bullying can involve verbal taunts, name calling, physical injury, shunning or ridicule, it can be manipulative and can be done through mobile phones, websites and email" (DFE Safe to Learn).

Although a specialist school like the Deaf Academy may not experience bullying in the same manner as a mainstream school might, the issue needs to still be addressed in a positive manner. The behaviours of some of our students and the vulnerability of others make it essential that the whole Academy remains sensitive to the subject. We should also be aware that although not deliberate, perceived bullying for some of our students might result from behaviours from others, which excludes deliberate intent and empathy.

There are four key elements to consider when defining bullying:

- Hurtful
- Repetition
- Power imbalance
- Intentional

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect - Can include the exploitation of individuals, spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups

### **Counter-Connection**

Counter-connection behaviours should also be considered, where incidents occur with one person trying to connect with another and it being demonstrated through negative behaviours. This leads for learning opportunities for both regarding how to seek positive interactions and connections.

- Involves a pattern of behaviour repeated over time.
- Can occur peer-to-peer but also between pupils and teachers.
- Can take many different forms, including physical contact, words, mean gestures, exclusion from a group, or negative contact via digital device or platform.
- An act that causes unintentional victimisation of another. There is a victim.
- Harm may be inflicted unintentionally

### **Definition of Teasing**

In conjunction with the definition of bullying it is important to understand the definition of teasing and when it can become bullying. According to the Anti-Bullying Alliance teasing or banter is described as “the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks”. It can cross the line into bullying when:

- The banter is not funny to both parties involved.
- When something that is said causes hurt or upset.
- Someone fails to stop when the other is clearly no longer enjoying the banter or has asked you to stop.

- Banter focuses on someone's insecurities.

Banter can be friendly where there is no intention to hurt and everyone knows the limit. Ignorant banter is banter which 'crosses the line' but with no intent to hurt and often involves an apology. Malicious banter is done to humiliate a person, often in a public setting (Anti-BullyingAlliance.org)

Understanding the four elements of bullying is vital to knowing whether something is bullying: intentional, hurtful, repetitive, involves a power imbalance or ignorant banter. Under the guidelines of this policy, just because 'banter' doesn't constitute all the elements of bullying doesn't mean it is acceptable and Academy staff will manage the situation ensuring the well-being of all involved whilst taking actions to resolve the issue, to manage the inappropriate behaviour and to restore any relationships.

The students enrolled at The Academy have a wide range of SEN and/or complex needs. As a community we understand that bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and raise issues that are in themselves complicated to resolve. Not all students at the Academy will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it, equally not all students would recognise their own behaviour as bullying towards another individual.

As such, The Academy uses the following strategies to support students:

#### **Encouragement to Tell**

It is important that we create an atmosphere in The Academy where anyone who is being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to, and that action taken will be swift and sensitive to their needs. Disclosure (telling an adult) can be direct and open, or indirect and anonymous.

#### **Advice to Students**

##### **You should:**

- tell someone straight away
- ask parent(s)/ carers and or family or staff for advice or help. If you are too scared to tell an adult on your own you can ask a friend to go with you

#### **Student Voice**

At The Deaf Academy we welcome student feedback and encourage open discussions. We have an active Student Council with whom students could raise concerns, personal presentations within their Annual Reviews, student surveys, half termly meetings with their allocated keyworkers within Education and Care, as well as opportunities to meet with members of the Welfare Team. Any claims of bullying made by students will be taken seriously.

#### **Advice to Parents/Carers**

Parents and carers have a responsibility to inform The Academy immediately if they believe their child is being bullied or suspect their child may be a perpetrator of bullying, and to work alongside The Academy to resolve any issues arising from an incident causing anxiety for their child.

##### **Parents/carers should:**

- watch for early signs of bullying (see list below);

- listen to any comments your child may make to you about bullying and take it seriously.
- reassure your child that they are doing the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- contact The Academy immediately.
- encourage your child to talk to someone they trust at The Academy. This could be their tutor, subject teacher, key worker or any support staff.

Staff and parents/care givers should be aware of possible early signs of bullying, this can include:

Any obvious signs of distress such as tearfulness or constantly miserable expression; unwillingness to come to school/college; frequent headaches, stomach aches or complaints of feeling generally unwell; isolation from other students; a sudden deterioration in standards of work; a reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of the lessons or at the end of the school day; a tendency to stay close to staff during breaks; unexplained damage to a student's property; any other uncharacteristic behaviours

### **PROCEDURES**

All incidents of bullying are promptly recorded and subsequently monitored on CPOMS our recording system, with agreed actions noted and updated regularly.

The exact course of action will vary with each situation; however the main objectives should be that all bullying incidents are brought into the open, discussed, and strategies agreed to help resolve the problem.

It is always important to make clear that:

1. The bullying behaviour is unacceptable, and the bullying must stop.
2. Everything that happens is carefully recorded
3. The application of sanctions will depend on the individual circumstances of each incident.
4. Revenge for the victim is not acceptable.
5. The Academy will work with the parents of both the victim and the one who has bullied.
6. Support will be available for the victim.
7. Support will be available for the one who has bullied to help change his/her behaviour.

The impact of any intervention will be reviewed as appropriate on an individual, case by case basis.

### **Strategies**

In responding, staff will use a range of strategies to resolve issues according to the age and needs of the student. The aim of any anti-bullying intervention is to safeguard and support the victim, and discipline and modify the behaviour of the one who has been bullying with a view to preventing further incidents of harmful behaviour. Strategies include:

- Ensuring that there is promotion of an open and honest anti-bullying ethos in the school.
- Investigating all allegations of bullying.
- PSHE (Personal Social Health & Education) programme that discusses issues such as diversity and anti-bullying messages.
- Assemblies and meetings for whole school and college that promote a sense of community.
- Class discussions and role plays as appropriate in subjects that draw out anti-bullying messages.

- Acceptable Internet Use policy, signed by all, and e-safety is discussed in ICT lessons.
- Ongoing staff induction and training programme.
- Adequate staff supervision at lunch and break times as well as clear and consistently applied policies for Behaviour.

### **Incident Reporting**

Incidents are recorded on CPOMS by the staff member initially reporting the incident. Once completed, it will be reviewed by the Welfare Team and Head of Behaviour who will decide on the appropriate next step by applying the principles of the Behaviour Policy. **All bullying incidents will be reviewed half termly by the Senior Leadership Team in Education and the Head of Care.**

If a bullying behaviour is not changed or prevented, and strategies do not show indications of working, then the matter should be referred to the Head of Care or the Principal of the Academy.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

#### **Governors**

- Creating the right ethos for The Academy that ensures it is an inclusive environment.
- Ensure biennial review of anti-bullying policy and practice including analysis of data scheme.
- Ensure The Academy is promoting equality for its whole community.

#### **Principal & Head of Care**

- Determine, publicise and ensure implementation of The Academy's measures on behaviour support and anti-bullying.
- Consider what adjustments may be needed to policy and practice in this area.
- Ensure the whole Academy is promoting equality and inclusion.
- Ensure the Anti-Bullying Policy is kept up to date.

#### **Deputy Heads of School, College and Deputy Head of Care**

- Deliver and/or organise any necessary training for staff to ensure they understand and implement the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Keep up to date on bullying related data from the behaviour report analysis and plan appropriate interventions either at an individual or whole provision level.
- Promote anti-bullying week and anti-bullying work in general. Ensure the curriculum covers anti-bullying.
- Work with families so that they are aware of The Academy's policy/practice and specific circumstances if they arise.
- Act as a port of call to advise staff on any bullying related matter.
- Work with the students on work relating to anti-bullying.
- Liaise with external agencies as necessary in partnership to support anti-bullying strategies.
- Ensure bullying is factored into any analysis of student behaviour.

#### **Staff**

- To be constantly monitoring the students for bullying-related behaviour and follow the correct procedure where evidence points towards bullying taking place.

- To be constantly modelling high standards of behaviour and to have high expectations for all the students.
- Staff will also understand the increased risk of bullying that children face in residential care and our strategy will inform our approach to prevent this from happening.

**The Governors with oversight of this policy are the Care and Safeguarding Committee and the Education Standard Committee.**