

The Boston Witham Academies Federation



WYGATE PARK ACADEMY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

THE AIMS OF THE ACADEMY

At Wygate Park Academy we want to produce happy, thoughtful children by blending together the best practices of Primary Education. We feel this helps the children to develop individually, secure in the support of encouragement of sympathetic adults. We believe we are a forward looking Academy, seeking to maintain sound traditional values and positive attitudes to work. We feel it is important to develop lively enquiring minds, able to investigate, analyse and solve problems. We provide an atmosphere which enables the children to acquire a wide range of knowledge, skills and practical abilities. We want to assist the development of self-awareness and a sensitivity to others, whatever their religion or culture, thus preparing them for a life in a multi-cultural society.

The Academy has adopted a statement of mission and core values that specifically exist to serve the child and the local community.

The Academy is committed to equal opportunity for all pupils and is working to achieve this in all aspects of its activities and responsibilities.

The Academy is committed to ensuring that the pupils and parents of Wygate Park Academy receive a high quality of education service and opportunity.

The Academy recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure a quality of national curriculum opportunity that is second to none.

The Academy believes that care and concern for each and every person and respect for their rights is central to the community life of the Academy.

The Academy will seek to identify and listen to the views of the parents of the pupils of Wygate Park.

The Academy believes that community links must be strong and supportive to local needs.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- * deliberately hurtful behaviour
- * it is repeated often over a period of time

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- * it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can take many forms but three main types are:

- * physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- * verbal - name calling, insulting, racist remarks
- * indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from social groups

There are a number of very important reasons for challenging bullying behaviour in the Academy.

1. The safety and happiness of pupils - when pupils are bullied their lives are made miserable. They may suffer injury. They may be unhappy about coming to the Academy. They are likely to lose self-confidence and self-esteem. Some may blame themselves for inviting the bullying behaviour.
2. Education achievement - the unhappiness of bullied pupils is likely to affect their concentration and learning. Some children will avoid being bullied by not going to the Academy.

The relationship between discipline and bullying is important that is why this policy document must be read in conjunction with our PSHE and Discipline Policies. We believe that our Anti-Bullying Policy will build upon the Behavioural and PSHE strategies that we incorporate in our Academy's curriculum. Bullying therefore, involves physical and/or psychological intimidation by those in the position of power over those who are less able to defend themselves. It implies a wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone, with the intention of causing distress. It is usually done for the bullies' personal gratification, often aimed at impressing others. The worst cases of bullying have a systematic element to them and take place over an extended period.

It is this intention to cause distress by a stronger over a weaker individual, possibly systematically over a sustained period that distinguishes bullying from other instances of anti-social behaviour.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY BULLYING?

Bullying in the Academy affects everyone in the Academy. Most obviously the victims affected though some of the effects may be less obvious than others, for example, the victim may suffer a decline in what might already be poor self-image. The bullies are also affected, the bullying behaviour may become more habitual and it may lead to other forms of anti-social behaviour. The other children in the Academy are affected too. They may be worried or may be frightened by what goes on. Staff are affected, responding to bullying can be time consuming, difficult and stressful and the difficulty in dealing with bullying can lead to accusations of ineffectiveness.

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WHY IS BULLYING SO DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH?

Bullying can be difficult to deal with for a number of reasons, it is a secretive activity, victims are often reluctant to tell and, as in most all cases of conflict between children, their accounts of what happened differ and so it can be extremely difficult to get to the truth. Another problem, particular at a time when bullying is a high profile issue, is that children sometimes describe an occurrence as bullying when it was something different.

BULLYING AT WYGATE PARK ACADEMY

For the reasons just outlined, it is difficult in any Academy to know to what extent bullying is actually a problem. Even if it is only a small problem at our Academy, our intention is to address it thoroughly and we certainly wish to prevent it from becoming more serious.

MINIMISING THE INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

1. Influencing the child's attitude through means such as class discussion, assemblies, video and experience of literature and drama, the children will be taught about the nature of bullying and help to distinguish it from other types of conflict in situations which they might find themselves.
2. Through our PSHE policy we will develop an understanding of what is meant by bullying and distinguishing it from other conflicts is important if we are
 - a) to successfully bring incidences of bullying to light
 - b) to avoid the exaggeration of any bullying problem in the Academy through children claiming to have been bullied when their experience was, in reality, of a different type of conflict

We are aware that in general raising the children's and parents' awareness of the issues of bullying could give a sense of a serious problem when we do not actually believe we have such, and that this can in itself be a problem.

Children will be helped to recognise the moral unacceptability of bullying and the kind of problems it can cause victims, bullies and the wider Academy community. The children are to be encouraged to see any case of bullying that might occur as being of concern to everyone in our Academy. The aim of all this is to influence the attitude of children in our Academy towards bullying. In so doing, we hope to:

- a) reduce the likelihood of each child resorting to bullying him/herself
- b) create an anti-bullying climate of opinion within the Academy which will make children more likely to support in spirit and in practice our efforts aimed at minimising and responding to bullying

PRACTICAL, PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

1. Supervision on the playground

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Not surprisingly, research suggests that where bullying does occur, it tends to take place at times when supervision is low. It is therefore imperative that there is constant supervision of pupils throughout the Academy day. It is also essential to identify areas in the building which are less likely to be supervised, i.e. the toilets and some corridor areas.

2. Supervision in the Academy

Class teachers supervise classes entering the Academy building and passing through cloakrooms at the beginning of each session, and similarly children are supervised going to and through cloakrooms and on to the playground at the end of sessions. In class rooms children are closely supervised as they do their work.

3. Strategies for children

If children have been the victim of bullying or fear, they can be made aware of common sense strategies to minimise the risk. They can go round with friends or stay with groups of people even if they are not friends. They can avoid going into places where bullying might happen unless they have friends or an adult nearby, and they can play near a teacher or dinner lady at break times. If the bullying occurs on the way home, the child can ask his/her parents to meet them after Academy, perhaps around the corner to minimise embarrassment. Above all, the children should report the incidents.

IDENTIFYING INSTANCES OF BULLYING

The identification of cases of bullying has an important proactive element, it is widely known by the children that the staff and indeed the whole Academy, is vigilant in watching out for and reporting bullying, this is likely therefore to have a deterrent effect on children who bully. There may also be a significant reactive aspect, when the identification of a case of bullying is made through the claim of a victim, the process of identification merges with that response to bullying as we become involved in counselling the victim. Cases of bullying may be identified by direct observation by a member of staff or through communicating with a member of staff, or by the recognition of symptoms.

COMMUNICATION

For effective communication in these matters, much depends upon the children's (and parents) attitude towards bullying and the extent to which they believe that the teachers who are dealing with it. Hence the importance placed on influencing children's attitudes throughout the Academy. Both victims and other children are at all times to be encouraged to report instances of bullying. We should try to foster the sense that such reporting is a responsibility they have to themselves and to the wider Academy community and is not an act of "tale telling".

RECOGNISING SYMPTOMS

Staff must be aware that a victim of bullying may be unwilling to report it. Victims may feel ashamed they have been bullied, they may feel that the bullying cannot be stopped, they may be afraid of

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retaliation by the bullying child. Great sensitivity may be required when talking to a victim. Symptoms that might indicate that a child was a victim of bullying could include deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, lateness, low self-esteem and cuts and bruises. We should be on the lookout for such signs but recognise that they could be symptomatic of other problems.

REACTION, RESPONDING TO CASES OF BULLYING

The Response of Teachers

1. Although they are extremely rare, observed cases of bullying must be stopped straight away and dealt with either immediately or later in the day if more appropriate.
2. The parents of both the victim and the bullying child should be informed where appropriate. Parents will be invited in to the Academy to discuss the matter.

Responding to the victim:

1. The victim must be sensitively supported and advised how to minimise the risk of being bullied again and advised as to how to respond if actually bullied again. Victims will be made aware their "case" will be monitored so they feel safe in the Academy.
2. The victim must be encouraged to feel that they do not deserve to be bullied, but when appropriate, should be helped to think about anything in his/her behaviour which might actually make him/her more likely to be bullied.

Responding to bullying children:

1. The teacher should avoid a bullying manner.
2. The bullying child should be helped to become aware that his/her actions were considered to be bullying, that these were hurtful to the victim and were very much contrary to what constitutes acceptable behaviour.
3. Where possible, we should ascertain why he/she bullies and help the child to resolve his/her problems.
4. We should break up any children who are known to bully others together by preventing them from sitting together, playing together etc.
5. Children who are known to bully other children on the way home should be either collected by their parents or held back for a short time to allow others to leave safely.
6. The movements of any child who is known to bully on the playground should be subject to control (e.g. playing in a restricted area, asking permission to use the toilet and reporting on

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coming out, reporting to a duty teacher/dinner lady at intervals, confinement to the infant hall), though more free movement will be needed at times to give him/her the opportunity to demonstrate that he/she has stopped bullying.

7. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to consider if, and in what way, the bullying child might make reparation to the victim. This might simply take the form of an apology. It would be essential however, to be very aware of the sensitivities of the victim.

The Response of the Victim

After the incident, the child should always report what happened.

During bullying situations, children, particularly known victims, should be advised:

- a) to try not to show they are upset;
- b) to try to walk and behave confidently;
- c) to try to ignore name calling;
- d) that if they are in danger, to get away (without worrying about keeping possessions), if possible to a member of staff or otherwise into the company of other children.

EXPECTATIONS IN SPECIFIC CONTEXTS

When seeking to implement our expectations we must bear in mind the child's age and any other factors which may be considered to have a bearing on his capacity to meet those expectations.

1. Playground

Playtime is an important opportunity for the children to develop social skills, to let off steam and simply to have fun with their friends. During this time we expect them to enjoy themselves without impinging on the rights of others to enjoy themselves too. They should show respect for others, their belongings and their games, and where appropriate, offer help and support to other children. They should play only within the permitted playing areas at permitted activities, and would normally be expected to make only one visit to the toilet, and this before the bell to signal the end of play. They should not go back inside the building during playtime unless they are required to do so, or unless they gain permission from a member of staff. In this regard, it is helpful if teachers of younger children always decide whether or not the children need their coats, and if teachers remind children to take whatever they need at the beginning of the break. The children should end their play without delay on the appropriate signal. Children do not leave the playground during breaks.



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2. Dinner Time

Expectations regarding playground behaviour are as above. In addition, dinner ladies, of course, are to be accorded the same respect as any other member of staff. Children lining up and coming in for dinner are expected to do so in an orderly manner. Voices should be low and movement controlled and steady. Hands should be washed properly and paper towels put into the bin. No toys, balls etc should be taken into the dining room. In the dining room we expect behaviour befitting that room. In particular, the children should sit properly on their chairs, use utensils in the right way and be polite to adult helpers. They should not speak with mouths full of food and should avoid taking food that will not be eaten. They are expected to finish the food in their mouths and to replace their chairs before leaving. As elsewhere inside, voices should be low and movement steady.

3. Inside the Building

The children are expected to move in a controlled and steady way. Voices should be low. Running, loud voices and excitable behaviour are not acceptable in the building. The children are expected to show consideration for the things around them, e.g. work on the walls, other children's coats and Academy resources.

PUNISHMENT FOR MISBEHAVIOUR

Other than the expression of disapproval by teachers and parents which can have a punishing effect and which can be signalled in a range of responses reflective of the gravity of the misbehaviour, the main punishment available to us in the Academy is deprivation of playtime. In applying sanctions of any kind, whether perceived by the teacher as "punishments" or not, the teacher should bear in mind the Discipline Policy.

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