



# Joseph Leckie Academy

## Anti-Bullying Policy

**Approved by JLA Trust Board: 09/2021**

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Joseph Leckie Academy believes that students should learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being victimised, harassed or bullied.

1.2 Bullying, especially if not addressed promptly and sensitively, can have lasting effects on victims. It may form a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental health. Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour, which is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

## **2. Academy Aims**

2.1 Joseph Leckie Academy aims to create a climate where students feel confident to approach staff with any concerns they may have in relation to an incident of bullying; whether this involves themselves or other students.

- To enable all members of the Academy community to be aware of what constitutes bullying.
- To ensure that parents/carers and the Academy community are aware of the student's right to be protected from physical, written, online and oral abuse or intimidation and to feel comfortable to report such incidents to any member of staff.
- To increase the sensitivity of the Academy community to incidents of bullying by using preventative policies.
- To ensure that there are clearly understood procedures in place to deal with bullying incidents swiftly.
- To sustain a non-violent, non-threatening and positive ethos in the Academy.
- To provide counselling/help for victims of bullying and for bullies themselves, involving the Form Tutor/the Head of Year /Student Support and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- To ensure that all new staff are made aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy as part of the induction programme.

## **2. Definitions**

2.1 Bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- Repeated.
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
- Often aimed at certain groups. For example, because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

2.2 Bullying takes many forms and can include:

- Physical assault.
- Teasing.
- Making threats.
- Name calling.
- Cyberbullying\* (bullying via mobile phone or online, for example email, social networks and instant messaging platforms)

\*Some types cyberbullying could be a criminal offence. For example, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive; a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.

## **3. Bullying and the Law**

3.1 Some types of bullying, threatening behaviour or communications might be classified as a criminal offence under the Protection of Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1998, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. Some examples are:

- Violence or assault
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages.
- Hate crimes.

3.2 Schools in England and Wales follow anti-discrimination law. At Joseph Leckie Academy, staff will act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the Academy at all levels. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership or being pregnant
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- gender
- sexual orientation
- disability

#### **4. Raising Awareness**

4.1 At Joseph Leckie Academy, we aim to promote early intervention, to set clear expectations of the behaviours that are/are not acceptable and to help prevent negative behaviours escalating.

Regular messages to students through year based assemblies or online/virtual platforms to encourage students to be kind, keep hands and feet to oneself and to 'do the right thing', by reporting all incidents to any staff member where discrimination or bullying is visible. All staff, but particularly Heads of Year (through year briefings, form time and assemblies) have a key role in raising awareness of all forms of harassment and bullying behaviours.

4.2 **Form time.** Form time is when students will discuss topical issues, or perform group activities, so that they engage positively with other students. Students should be reminded regularly to treat others with respect and kindness and report any instances of bullying or discriminatory behaviours at the earliest opportunity.

4.3 **Assemblies.** Items related to bullying awareness should be regularly incorporated into assemblies, linking to SMSC themes of: religion, or having no religious belief, ethnicity, disability, sexual difference, derogatory or abusive/aggressive language towards others and challenge of harmful stereotypes. This will aid to reinforce the collaborative and inclusive nature of the Academy and cement our stance against any prejudicial behaviour. External speakers/performances/drama productions may be used to promote this message to students.

4.4 **During Lessons.** Curriculum areas incorporate anti-bullying messages along with those of respect and tolerance into their lessons, so that the Academy rules and the Academy Code of Student Conduct may be followed at all times. Staff will discuss and expand upon these principles, so that students understand about developing and nurturing respect for each other.

Teamwork, respect and courtesy are key skills that all students require and have access to through subjects such as PE, external trips, and an extensive Enrichment Week programme and House competitions and tournaments.

## 5. Taking Action

5.1 The Academy understands that bullying can occur anywhere, in the toilets, corridors, online, during lesson changeovers, at break and lunchtime or before/after the Academy day, or in class.

5.2 The Academy Positive Behaviour Management Policy means that there are clear routines and processes in place for all staff and students at the Academy to follow to ensure an orderly environment and there is an ethos of positive behaviour both in and between lessons and at social times. Positive relationships between staff and students formed in tutor time, classes or at social times are essential to allow students to feel safe enough to report any issues.

5.3 To help detect and prevent bullying the Academy has full time teaching staff placed on twice weekly duty rotas, before during and after the Academy day, in order to maintain positive relationships between students. Staff should intervene if they feel that a student is being targeted or victimised and make a report to the student's Head of Year. Staff who are alerted to incidents of bullying and pass on information promptly so that action can be taken.

5.4 Staff are placed on duty in areas all over the Academy site, so that there are no 'hidden' or 'no-go' areas for students. There is significant staff presence at break and lunchtimes and there are regular updates to duty positions based on changing trends. For example, if students find somewhere to socialise that is not covered the duty rota will be adjusted accordingly.

5.5 Extensive high resolution cameras have been installed across the Academy premises, in key areas where students congregate. This ensures a visible presence allows the Academy to quickly identify protagonists and instances of bullying, aggression or poor behaviour.

5.6 We work closely with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is persistent or relevant, or indeed where a criminal offence may have been committed.

5.7 **Staff:** Staff should be vigilant for the effects of bullying on young people could be, for example, evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration in class or form group, truanting from the Academy, being unusually withdrawn, feigning illness or remaining unusually close to adults.

Staff need to be aware that those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem, looked after children or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying.

Staff should make every effort to be punctual for registration and lessons, to ensure that students are safe. Academy staff are also asked to proactively engage with students at break times and social times, especially when on duty through active supervision of students, getting in and amongst them to build relationships to ensure there is effective communication between staff and students.

Staff must listen thoughtfully to all reported incidents and assess each incident on merit, without bias. Sometimes, students do fall out of friendship groups with each other and staff need to exercise a common-sense approach, when it seems that students are simply arguing or bickering. However, if in doubt, staff must err on the side of caution and consider the safety of the child in all instances. As if a child's account is dismissed when they report an issue, they will be less likely to do so in the future.

Any concerns in relation to incidents of bullying or reports of bullying should be reported to the student's Head of Year as soon as possible. The relevant Head of Year will investigate fully and complete a full and thorough log on SIMs. Where there is a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) should also be notified.

**5.7 Students:** Students are asked to report any form of bullying, whether it occurs inside or outside of the Academy or online. This applies to themselves as victims, or if they become aware of it happening to someone else.

If cyberbullying occurs, students are encouraged to retain or 'screen-shot' any electronic images and report these to their Head of Year, so that the matter can be investigated fully.

## **6. Reporting**

**6.1** We aim to make it easy for students and parents/carers to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on swiftly. If a student has a concern, either about themselves or another person, they should be encouraged to speak to ANY member of staff, to report it as soon as possible. Students should be encouraged not try to resolve the issue themselves. Those who are bullied can verbally inform any member of staff of the problem. Confidential disclosures can also be made via the SHARP system.

**6.3 The Sharp System:** This is the Academy's anonymised, online, reporting system for all students to access if they wish to inform of a concern they have either about themselves or someone else, in or out of school. Please find it under QUICKLINKS on the Academy website.

<https://www.josephleckieAcademy.co.uk/page/?title=The+Sharp+System&pid=101>

Here, a student can report something that is happening to them, or a friend, so that it may be picked up by the Principal and be dealt with swiftly. Students will be made aware of The Sharp System by Heads of Year in assemblies and at other times throughout the year, by the Principal and members of the Leadership Team.

## **7. Dealing with Bullying Incidents**

**7.1** Bullying incidents vary in many respects and the specific actions taken to deal with each case may be different, but they will broadly follow the steps laid out in Appendix 1.

**7.2** The Principal and designated staff have the power to discipline students who target other students, both in and outside the Academy premises. This could include bullying that occurs away from the Academy premises; for example, on public transport on the way home or in a town centre. The Principal, or designated staff may, in some circumstances, be obliged to report incidents of bullying to the police or local council. This is likely if behaviour is deemed to be criminal, or threatening or poses a serious threat to a member of the Academy, or a member of the public.

7.5 Incidents that occur on Academy premises will be dealt with, in the first instance, by Academy staff. Incidents that occur outside the Academy premises and/or outside Academy hours will be dealt with by Academy staff wherever possible. However, actions committed away from site may require police involvement (if for example students are not in school). This will depend on the nature of the incident and where/when it occurred.

7.6 If, through a disclosure of bullying or should members of the Academy staff be of the opinion that there is “reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm,” then the bullying incident should be reported as a Child Protection Concern via ‘My Concern’ or directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL).

7.5 Disciplinary measures must always be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs, disabilities or vulnerabilities that the student may have. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.

## **8. Information for Parents/Carers**

8.1 As a proactive Academy, we look to prevent bullying before it occurs. This is possible, where an open culture exists between parents/carers, their child(ren) and the Academy. Parents/carers are informed through the Academy Prospectus, the website and this policy, of the issues and measures that are open to them in terms of dealing with bullying.

8.2 Parents/carers should contact their child’s Form Tutor or Head of Year if they suspect that their child is being bullied in any way. Form tutors must report any such communication to Head of Year as soon as possible. The sooner that the Academy is made aware of any such issues, the sooner action may be taken to stop and prevent bullying.

8.3 If a student’s Form Tutor or Head of Year is not available, any member of the Academy Leadership Team or Principal may be contacted. For safeguarding or child protection concerns, Marie De Rome (DSL) should be informed asap, or any member of the Academy Leadership Team (DDSLs).

## **9. Further Information and Linked Policies**

9.1 The websites listed below may support students/parent/carers who are concerned about bullying.

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-parents/>

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-parents-and-carers/>

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

<https://respectme.org.uk/adults/bullying-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers/>

9.2 Linked policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

## **Appendix 1: Dealing with Bullying Incidents Procedure**

### **Summary:**

This procedure aims to ensure that the bully realises that their actions are both wrong and are wholly unacceptable within the Academy community. A process of counselling and conciliation may be adopted in the first instance, this involves working with both the victim and the supposed bully to find a solution. If the action taken does not remedy the situation, then further action will be taken according to the severity of the offence.

Possible actions include the whole range of sanctions, which are available to the Academy. Incidents of bullying will be monitored by pastoral/teaching staff. All incidents of bullying, with intervention taken, email communication and logs of phone calls and meetings should be recorded on SIMs.

### **Step 1:**

All disclosures, whether from a student, a parent/carer, a member of staff or a member of the public, are taken seriously and treated with sensitivity. The victim is made aware that his/her safety is considered to be of paramount importance. The member of staff should notify the Head of Year of both the victim and alleged bully.

Heads of Year are responsible, rather than tutors or class teachers, for investigating reports of bullying in their year group. Where an incident takes place across more than one year group, Heads of Year from those year groups involved should work in collaboration to achieve a resolution. The year-based leadership link must be informed where an allegation of bullying is made and is deemed to warrant investigation.

### **Step 2:**

The investigation is completed by the Head of Year and the Senior Leadership Team Link. Victims, alleged bullies and witnesses of an incident are interviewed separately and asked to complete written statements. Staff should avoid leading questions and write down the individual accounts of what happened and what was said. If available, camera footage, screen shots, etc... may be reviewed.

### **Step 3:**

A decision is made as to whether the circumstances indicate that bullying, as distinct from other forms of unacceptable behaviour, has occurred. In the course of this procedure, enquiries are made to ascertain whether or not the alleged bully has been involved in similar incidents previously. Parents/carers of both parties are informed and/or met with and a record of the bullying sanction and the intervention taken.

### **Step 4:**

The type of action that is taken depends on the seriousness of the offence, and may also refer to whether the bully has previously been involved in bullying incidents, this does not mean a first instance will not be treated seriously. Parents/carers of the bully and parents/carers of the victim are informed of the outcome of the investigation and will be invited to discuss the issues and to seek solutions with the Academy.