



Joseph Leckie Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by JLA Trust Board: 10/2021

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1. Introduction

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

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.

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.

Some types of harassment, threatening behaviour or communications – might be classified as a criminal offence, for example under the Protection of Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1998, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.

2. Academy Aims

1. To enable all members of the academy community to be aware of what constitutes bullying.
2. 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 in the first instance.
3. To increase the sensitivity of the academy community to incidents of bullying by using preventative policies.
4. To ensure that there are clearly understood procedures in place to deal with bullying incidents swiftly.
5. To sustain a non-violent, non-threatening and positive ethos in the academy.
6. To provide counselling/help for victims of bullying and for bullies themselves, involving the Form Tutor/the Head of Year /Student Support and Leadership Teams.
7. To ensure that all staff new to the academy are made aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy as part of the induction programme.

3. Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police if they occur:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
- hate crimes

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
- sex
- sexual orientation

- disability

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 school 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.

Some types of harassment, threatening behaviour, or communications – 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. In such instances, students, staff parents/carers should inform the Head of Year, or a member of the academy Leadership Team, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

Incidents that occur whilst “at the academy” will be dealt with, in the first instance, by academy staff. Incidents that occur outside the academy premises and/or outside academy hours – may 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.

4. 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

5. 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 messenger platforms)

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 addressed as a Child Protection Concern via the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL/Principal) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL). These are Marie De Rome (DSL) and all members of the Academy Leadership Team (DDSL’s).

At Joseph Leckie Academy, we aim to promote early intervention - to set clear expectations of the behaviour(s) that is / is not acceptable and to help prevent negative behaviours escalating.

Students should be made aware that where there is a bullying concern, they should seek support or disclose any concerns to their form tutor, their Head of Year, or any member of staff who they feel they can speak to about the incident. **Student confidentiality in all cases must be paramount.** Examples of the effect of bullying on young people could be: 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.

Any concerns in relation to reported incidents of bullying / harassment 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.

Heads of Year should liaise with the link member of the Leadership Team (or if not available, any member of LT)/DSL as required.

In addition, a report via My Concern should be made by the member of staff, to whom the incident was initially reported, if it is felt that the incident reflects a safeguarding concern, or an early indicator of such.

Heads of Year are responsible, rather than tutors or class teachers, for investigating reports of bullying / harassment in their year group and as such: parents / carers / students should aim to speak to the appropriate Head of Year if there are concerns that bullying / harassment is taking place.

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 / harassment is made and is deemed to warrant investigation. Head of Year at all stages should use Sims initiatives to log all actions taken and retain email communication and logs of phone calls and meetings.

6. Raising Awareness

Regular messages to students through year based assemblies or online / virtual platforms are easy to disseminate and should 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.

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.

External speakers/performances/drama productions may be used to promote this message to students.

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.

7. In Class

Curriculum areas incorporate anti-bullying messages along with those of respect and tolerance into their lessons, so that the school 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.

Form time is when students will discuss topical issues, or perform group activities, so that they engage positively with other students. 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.

8. Information for Parents / Carers

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. The safeguarding lead for the academy incorporates anti-bullying messages for staff through monthly bulletins and assembly visits for all year groups.

Parents/carers should contact their child's 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 and check the information has been received.

The sooner that the academy is made aware of any such issues; the sooner action may be taken to stop and prevent bullying. If a student's 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 (DDSL's).

9. Staff

Bullying can occur anywhere: in the toilets, corridors, during lesson changeovers, at break and lunchtime or before/after the academy day, or in class.

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.

Full time teaching staff are placed on twice -weekly duty rotas, before during and after the academy day, in order to maintain positive relationships between students and report and intervene should they feel that a student is being targeted or victimised. Staff who are alerted to incidents of bullying and pass on information promptly so that action is taken.

Positions on duty covers all areas on 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 – duty rota will be adjusted accordingly.

Students are requested to report any form of bullying, if it occurs. This applies to themselves as victims, or if they become aware of it happening to someone else.

All bullying issues that are reported will be treated seriously and will be followed up as soon as possible by the relevant Head of Year or member of the Academy Leadership Team, or where a safeguarding concern, via the DSL/DDSL.

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. This extends beyond the classroom.

Extensive high resolution cameras have been installed across the academy premises, in key areas where students congregate, to ensure a visible presence and to be able to quickly identify instances of bullying, aggression or poor behaviour so that we may identify swiftly where incidents of bullying may have occurred and to identify protagonists.

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.

10. 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.

11. Students

We aim to make it easy for students to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on swiftly. Students are encouraged to report bullying which may have occurred both inside / outside school including cyber-bullying. Students are encouraged to retain or "screen-shot" any electronic images and report these to the relevant Head of Year so that the matter can be investigated fully.

Statements will be taken and retained. When a student reports a bullying incident, staff ***must listen*** thoughtfully to reported incidents and assess each incident on merit, without bias. Staff must not jump to the conclusion, because of historic issues that, for example: "They always argue and have just fallen out." **If a child's account is dismissed when they report an issue, they will be less likely to do so in the future.**

Parents/carers must always be informed by the relevant Head of Year (and the incident and contact logged on Sims initiatives), where there is a report of bullying made to a member of staff. 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, staff must err on the side of caution and consider fully the safety of the child in all instances.** 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 because of difference.

Children in care, that are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable due to changes of provision, for example from one school to another. These young people are often the same young people who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis.

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

SMSC activities, 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. Assemblies and form time activities raise awareness around bullying and give students a forum for discussion to reinforce appropriate behaviour and challenge all forms of bullying.

12. Taking Action

An effective system is in place ensuring that students and parents/carers feel comfortable reporting incidents, knowing that appropriate action will be taken and reported back to them. Those who are bullied can verbally inform their form tutor or any member of staff of the problem. Confidential disclosures can also be made via the SHARP system on line.

Bullying incidents vary in many respects and the action taken to deal with each case may be different.

An approach is taken that involves work with both the victim and the supposed bully.

Parents/carers should be contacted and made aware, by telephone or meeting, at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers should be invited to meet with their child's Head of Year where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

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.

If a child has a concern, either about themselves or another person – they should be encouraged by ANY and ALL staff, to report it as soon as possible, to any member of staff. Students should be encouraged to speak to a member of staff so that they do not try to resolve the issue themselves.

13. Academy Procedures

STEP 1:

All disclosures, whether from a student, a parent, 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. If the member of staff suspects that the incident is one of bullying, or of another serious nature, then the Head of Year (of both the alleged child being bullied and alleged perpetrator) is informed. Parents/carers are informed in a timely manner, following investigation, if their child has been found to be either a victim or a perpetrator. The School Management System (Sims) is used to record incidents of bullying. LT link is informed of the incident if suspected bullying, following initial investigation. Sims logs are maintained.

STEP 2:

Victims, alleged victims and witnesses of an incident are interviewed separately and asked to complete written statements. Camera footage may be reviewed. Statements are taken separately and information (as far as possible) not disclosed, to the other party. Any witnesses disclose to member of staff what has happened. Staff write down independent factual accounts of what happened and what was said. Avoiding leading questions.

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 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 those being bullied are informed *in all cases of bullying*, and will be invited to discuss the issues and to seek solutions with the academy and sometimes between students/families, through mediation

Summary:

Procedures aim 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. The bullying behaviour must cease. 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 on a regular basis by pastoral / teaching staff. All incidents of bullying, with intervention taken, must be recorded formally and accurately in the relevant Sims area.

Websites that may support students and parents/carers who are concerned about bullying are listed below:

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

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

https://www.kidscape.org.uk/zap?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIzLy9xZXV5QIVCbDtCh37fQSVEAMYAiAAEgJ7xfD_BwE

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