

# **BULLYING POLICY**

BRANSTON  
COMMUNITY ACADEMY

Reviewed: Spring 2024

Next Review date: **Spring 2025**

### **Our rule/motto/mantra: “Kindness or nothing”**

Life is tough, so we will be kind to one another and if we cannot quite manage that then we will say or do nothing that is unkind.

### **Our vision, aims and values:**

At Branston our students thrive educationally and reach high academic standards, but within a caring, supportive and nurturing environment.

We believe that we foster and develop in our young people values of **kindness, aspiration, resilience, respect** and a sense of **community**. Knowing our students as well as we possibly can is very important to us because then our young people benefit from the best of being part of a large school but within an environment where we respond to their individual needs and personalities

### **Statement of Intent**

Branston Community Academy is committed to ensuring that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to report and be safe in the knowledge that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

### **Definition**

Bullying is any behaviour, which is deliberately intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is repeated and usually unprovoked and can continue for a prolonged period of time. It always reflects an imbalance and abuse of power.

Bullying can be categorised into 6 types:

- Physical Bullying - examples of physical bullying include kicking, hitting, punching, slapping, shoving, and other physical attacks.
- Verbal Bullying - examples include name calling, sarcasm and teasing
- Relational Aggression - this can also be referred to as emotion or social bullying. It is a type of social manipulation to try and influence someone's social standing. It often involves attempts to ostracise others from a group, spreading rumours or breaking confidences by teasing, insulting, excluding and intimidating others.
- Cyberbullying - examples include posting hurtful images, making online threats, and sending hurtful emails or texts.
- Sexual Bullying - examples include sexual name-calling, crude comments, vulgar gestures, uninvited touching, sexual propositioning, and pornographic materials. This can also be linked to cyberbullying.
- Prejudicial Bullying - examples include singling people out based on their race, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation. This type of bullying can encompass all the other types of bullying.

There are also 4 particular elements to bullying:

#### Hurtful:

Behaviour which hurts an individual or group of individuals.

#### Repetitive

This refers to a **pattern of behaviour** rather than a one-off incident. However, a one-off incident may still need action by the school and should be recorded to ensure that patterns of behaviour can be identified.

#### Intentional

This is **deliberate** behaviour by an individual or individuals that is intended to cause hurt, whether it be physical, verbal or psychological.

#### Power Imbalance

The imbalance of power is vital to understand when thinking about bullying and how to tackle it. As soon as a person says 'no' to something and that is ignored, there is an imbalance of power. Other examples of situations where there may be an imbalance of power where the person/people who are the target of the behaviour: are in a smaller group than those experiencing it, are part of a minority group e.g. a minority gender, race or faith group are a smaller stature or physical strength, are younger, have communication difficulties or a disability.

It's important to remember that just because an incident doesn't have all of the elements of bullying, doesn't mean it is something to ignore.

Bullying may occur to anyone and this policy is inclusive of the bullying of school staff, whether by students, parents or other staff. (Members of the school workforce suffering from or concerned about bullying may also contact their trade union or professional association for support and advice).

Bullying can seriously damage a person's confidence and sense of self-worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or taking unusual absences. There may be evidence in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. These signs and symptoms may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

It is important that it must not be confused with the usual childhood/teenage squabbles and arguments where individuals "fall out" with one another.

This kind of behaviour is known as relational conflict and usually involves individuals and groups who are relatively similar in power and status. It is generally behaviour which happens occasionally, and offence might be accidental.

In cases of relational conflict, there is also generally a willingness to make things right, to reflect on what went wrong and to try and plot a way forward.

Not all conflict leads to bullying, but some does. It is important to bear in mind that unresolved bad feelings, or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention is to cause harm or distress, and can create an imbalance of power which makes an individual or group more vulnerable.

For example, a relational conflict that goes unresolved can easily turn into bullying so should be monitored. Another example would be that a one-off verbal or physical attack, whilst not bullying, would still need involvement from adults in the form of sanctions and/or support.

**Just because something doesn't constitute bullying, it does not mean that school involvement is not needed.**

## Academy Objectives

To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.

To manage bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.

To safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support.

To apply disciplinary sanctions to the student causing the bullying. To ensure they learn from the experience and understand why they are behaving in this way, possibly through multi-agency support.

## Policy Aims

All students, parents, staff and governors should have an understanding of what bullying is.

Staff and governors should follow the school policy when bullying is reported or suspected.

All students and parents should know what bullying is and inform a member of staff if bullying arises.

The Academy will always take bullying seriously. We use a range of proactive and reactive strategies to combat and prevent bullying.

## Reporting and Procedures

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible by the member of staff who has been approached. A clear account of the incident will be recorded and passed to the Heads of School who will investigate the incident by interviewing all concerned and record outcomes on the files of those involved.

Form tutors and subject staff will be kept informed and asked to monitor the behaviour of the students concerned.

Each incident of actual or alleged bullying will be unique in its representation and its level of impact on the individuals concerned. Therefore, it is important that the school is given the opportunity to tailor a strategy to address the situation and to support the bullied student according to the particular incident/s.

To ensure the issue has been fully resolved victims will meet with members of the pastoral team after the event. They may be offered support as required to restore self-esteem and build confidence.

Students who have bullied others will be helped by: discussing what happened, discovering why the student became involved and establishing an understanding of the consequences of their actions.

If appropriate, and in agreement with both parties involved, there will also be the opportunity to rebuild relationships, involving a discussion mediated by a member of staff as a way of resolving disputes.

### The following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- Official warning to avoid repetition of the bullying behaviour
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises or certain activities
- Detentions
- Supervised Independent Study (Isolation)
- Referral to senior staff and/or external agencies
- External fixed suspension term or permanent exclusion.

## **Prevention**

As a school we take bullying seriously. We use a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying. These include:

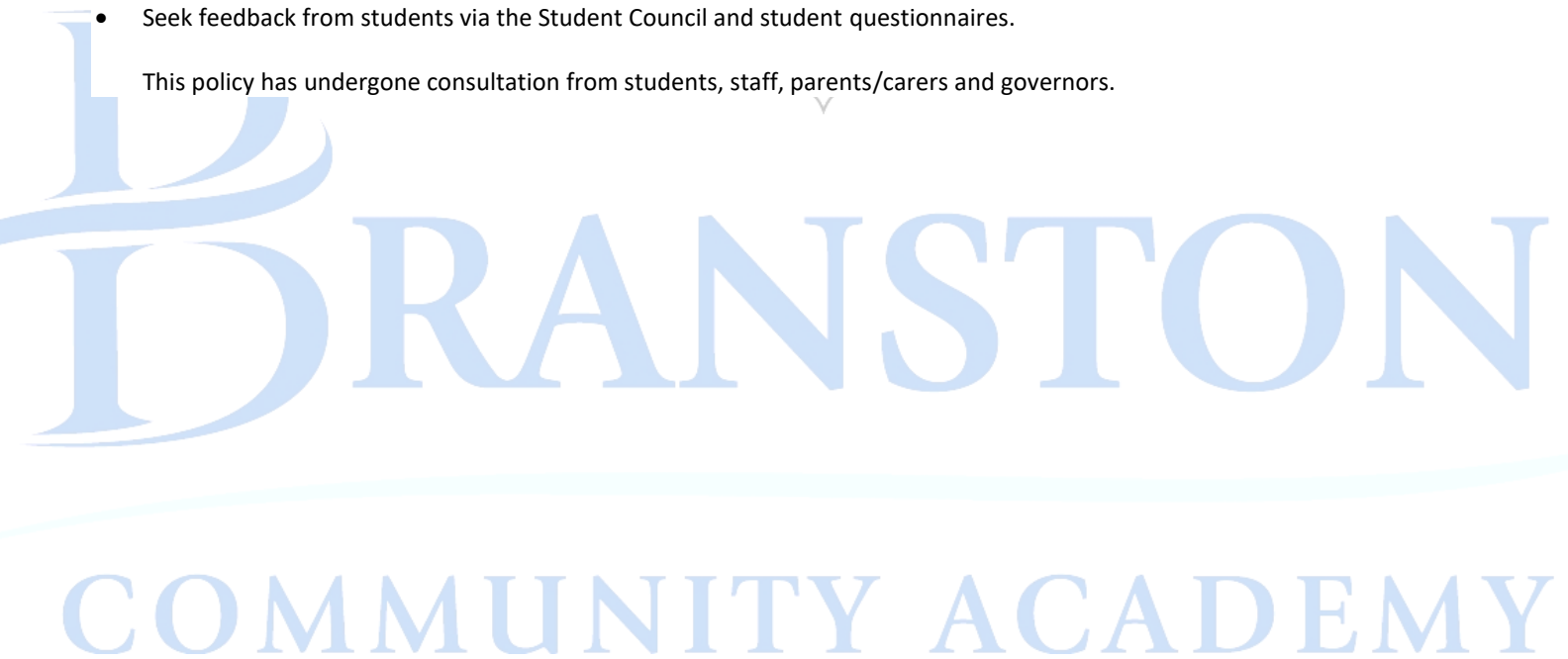
- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular tutor periods and personal development lessons where issues of diversity are discussed and anti-bullying messages are drawn out.
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the impact of bullying e.g., Anti-Bullying week
- Assemblies.
- Student surveys.
- Poster campaigns.
- Effective supervision during non-contact times.
- Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

## **Development, Monitoring and Review**

We plan to:

- Monitor, evaluate and review our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis
- Ensure that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively
- Seek feedback from students via the Student Council and student questionnaires.

This policy has undergone consultation from students, staff, parents/carers and governors.



## **Appendix 1**

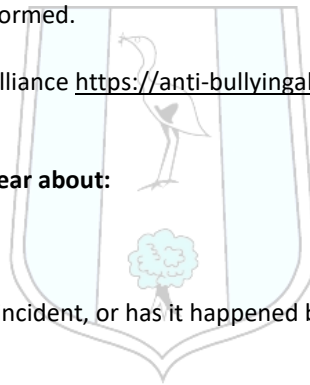
### **Advice for students.**

If you are being bullied:

- **Tell a teacher, another member of staff in your school or an anti bullying ambassador.** You can do this face-to-face, via email or using the 'Tell Us' system. The QR code on the back of your new planner in September 2023 will take you straight to the Tell Us system.
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own ask a friend to go with you.
- If the bullying is online or through social network site, keep evidence of what is being said and bring this into school to show your Head of School or Form Tutor. Also, report the content to the social media platform.
- Keep your parents/ careers and teachers informed.
- Seek further advice from the Anti-Bullying Alliance <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/if-youre-being-bullied>

**If you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about:**

- What has happened to you.
- How often it has happened. Is this the first incident, or has it happened before?
- Who was involved?
- Who saw what was happening?
- Where it happened.
- If you have tried to do something about it already.



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## **Appendix 2**

### **Advice for parents**

Watch for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

#### **If your child has been bullied:**

- Calmly talk with your child about their experience
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where, when and what has happened.
- If the issues are related to the internet or social network sites, keep evidence of what is being said and share this with your child's form tutor and report it to the social media platform.
- Reassure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that they should report any incident(s) to a teacher immediately and subsequently if the problem is not resolved.
- Parents/Carers are welcome to report concerns using our Tell Us system by scanning the QR code on the back of the new student planner from September 2023 or via our website here: [Tell Us](#)
- Advice for parents is also available from <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/advice-parents-and-carers>
- Training for parents is also available at <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/information-tool-parents-and-carers>

#### **Talking with teachers about bullying**

- Try and stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child say has happened – give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- If the issue relates to internet or social network sites, make sure you have evidence of what has been happening, to share with your child's tutor in the first instance.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school; let us know if things improve as well as if problems continue.
- Above all, students must be encouraged to report all issues to staff in school. We also ask for your support as parents in dealing with issues of bullying and encourage parents to report issues if they occur.

If your child has been accused of bullying there is further advice available at <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/advice-parents-and-carers/my-child-has-been-accused-bullying>