



## **Southfields Academy: Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy**

Date: September 2022

Review: Annual

Reviewed by: Headteacher delegated to Deputy Headteachers

Adopted by:

Chair of Trustees, Susan Hayday

Chair of Governors, Sian Tyler

Principal / CEO, Jacqueline Valin

Headteacher, Wanda Golinska



*This policy has been adopted by the Southfields Multi-Academy Trust and will be applied to Southfields Academy. All academies within the Trust are required by the DfE to have their own Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy.*

## **1. Introduction**

**This Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy has been devised by students, parents, staff and governors to raise awareness of bullying and the need for the whole academy community to work together on dealing with incidents of bullying.**

**It is designed to help and protect every member of the academy community, so that everyone can live and work together in a secure and supportive environment.**

Southfields Academy is committed to the view that everyone is of equal value, whatever their race, gender, class, disability, learning need, lifestyle, age, sexual orientation or religion including protected characteristics. Southfields Academy expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect and consideration.

The Academy is aware that bullying and harassment is the abuse of a person's rights and is an offence in law.

We say NO to Bullying – Recognise it – Report it – Remove it

## **2. Aims**

The policy's aims are:

- To prevent bullying
- To ensure that everyone is aware of his/her rights and responsibilities with regard to bullying in Southfields Academy.
- To raise awareness of bullying through all aspects of the curriculum.
- To set out effective measures for dealing with bullying.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Academy's **Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Acceptable Use of ICT & E-Safety Policies, the Home Academy Agreement and the Staff Code of Conduct.**

It should also be read in conjunction with the DfE guidance "Preventing and tackling bullying" (July 2017) and "Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff" (2014).

## **3. Definition**

Southfields Academy defines bullying as:

- a lack of respect for others, their feelings and belongings;
- the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person;
- any action, either verbal or physical, that makes someone feel unhappy or frightened.

**Bullying can take many different forms, and all of them are wrong. Bullying is not acceptable in any form.**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is often repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend him or herself. It may be racist, homophobic or gender-based. A group or an individual may carry it out. It may involve hitting, kicking, name-calling, threats, ridicule, demanding money or objects, or less obvious forms such as excluding someone from a group on purpose, spreading rumours, or using body language such as eye rolling to make someone feel hurt or frightened. It may also involve the use of technology such as cyber-bullying.

More detail on different types of bullying is in section 6.

#### **4. The Academy's anti-bullying commitment**

**At Southfields Academy, we will not tolerate any kind of bullying. Under Child Protection guidelines, bullying must be dealt with consistently by all staff.**

##### **OUR ANTI-BULLYING CODE IS FOR EVERYONE:**

- Everyone has the right to enjoy teaching and learning and to work without fear, free from intimidation.
- Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.
- Everyone has the right to teach and learn in an environment where everyone feels comfortable and safe.
- Everyone, whether they are bullied individuals, friends or onlookers, has a responsibility to report a bullying incident to an adult.
- Everyone should be able to report bullying without fear.
- Everyone should know that all bullying concerns will be dealt with promptly, sensitively and effectively.

A person who is being bullied will often feel helpless and unable to stop it happening. Bullying, even that which seems minor to an observer, can have serious and lasting consequences for the bullied individual.

The person or people doing the bullying may be the same age or older or younger than the bullied person. People accused of bullying may need just as much help as those being bullied. Their behaviour may be connected to personal or social problems; they may be manipulated by others; individuals may be playing a small part in group bullying and not understand the collective harm being done to those being bullied.

All bullying will be treated seriously. The response however will not always be the same. Punishment is not the only way of stopping the problem and in fact punishment itself is sometimes inappropriate in dealing with bullying.

It is vital that all the members of our academy community, that is, students, parents, staff, governors and all others, work together to support our Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Talking about bullying, and bringing it out into the open, is the key to dealing with the problem.**

This means, however, that anyone who encourages an individual to speak out must be prepared to tackle any problems they find, or at least pass on the problem quickly to someone within the academy community who they feel would be able to deal with it.

## **5. Signs of bullying**

### ***Someone being bullied***

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are below, however not all those who are bullied exhibit warning signs.

- unexplainable injuries
- lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery
- frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating
- tiredness due to difficulty sleeping
- declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork
- not wanting to come to academy, truancy
- sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- bullying others
- self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide.

### ***Someone bullying others***

People may be bullying others if they:

- get into physical or verbal fights
- have friends who bully others
- are increasingly aggressive
- have unexplained extra money or new belongings
- blame others for their problems
- don't accept responsibility for their actions
- are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

Any member of staff or student who has concerns about someone being bullied or bullyingshould talk as soon as possible to the relevant Head of Year, a member of SLT or another trusted adult.

## 6. Types of bullying

This is not an exhaustive list.

### ***Physical bullying***

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property. Physical bullying causes both short term and long term damage.

### ***Verbal bullying***

Verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse. Verbal bullying can quickly escalate.

### ***Social bullying***

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as covert bullying, is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Social bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking unkindly
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

### ***Cyber –bullying***

Cyber-bullying is bullying which takes place online using social media. It is 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside of academy. Cyber-bullying can be carried out by a group or an individual.

It could include (this list is not exhaustive):

- bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- bullying by email or hijacking/cloning email accounts
- using mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- sending / posting unpleasant or hurtful photographs by messaging, email, social media or on websites
- posting threatening, abusive, cruel or humiliating comments or material on blogs, personal websites, social media, chat rooms
- deleting someone's name from social media, or ignoring their messages
- encouraging others to do any of the above

Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information on Cyber-Bullying.

### ***Peer-on-peer abuse***

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer-on-peer abuse.

Please see Appendix 2 for further information on the many forms of peer-on-peer abuse and a planned and supportive response to the issues.

### ***Racist bullying***

Racist bullying is when someone's bullying focuses on your race, ethnicity, nationality, colour or culture.

Racist bullying can include:

- being called racist names or being sent insulting messages or threats;
- having your belongings damaged or having to see racist graffiti;
- personal attacks, including violence or assault;
- being left out, treated differently or excluded;
- being made to feel like you have to change how you look
- racist jokes, including jokes about your colour, nationality, race, ethnicity or culture.

### ***Homophobic and transphobic bullying***

Homophobic bullying is when people behave or speak in a way which makes someone feel bullied because of their actual or perceived sexuality. People may be a target of this type of bullying because of their appearance, behaviour, physical traits or because they have friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning or possibly just because they are seen as being different.

Homophobic and transphobic bullying can include:

- making comments about a person's gender or sexuality that deliberately make that person uncomfortable;
- calling a person names or teasing them;
- hitting, punching or hurting a person;
- making sexual comments or asking sexual questions;
- ignoring you or excluding you;
- making comments about you online.

## **7. Procedures**

### **Reporting an incident**

**Anyone who is frightened of a bully or feels that they are being bullied must try to talk to someone.**

**Anyone who knows that bullying is happening has a duty to report it.**People to

tell could include:

- any adult
- a personal friend
- a Form Tutor
- a Head of Year / Deputy Head of Year
- a Mentor or Teaching Assistant

- Designated Mental Health Lead
- a senior leader
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Academy Welfare Officer
- Academy Safer Schools Officer
- Human Resources Department

A person who has been told about a student being bullied must pass on the reported incident **immediately** to the relevant Head of Year.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and acted upon, including when the bullying takes place outside of academy.

The Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral has responsibility for oversight of the Anti-Bullying Policy and practice in Southfields Academy and should be notified of all incidents of bullying. A secure, confidential written record will be kept.

Parents and carers should contact the relevant Head of Year if they are concerned about bullying. They should contact the Headteacher if they have a complaint. Please refer to Appendix 3 for contact details.

Please see Appendix 4 for more information on how to access help regarding incidents of bullying.

Staff are advised to refer to the 'Staff Code of Conduct' if they have any concerns regarding staff behaviour towards colleagues. Any breach of the staff code can be reported through the line management structure or directly to SLT.

### **Dealing with incidents**

It is important to recognise that these are guidelines only. Each case must be treated individually. Some cases for example may require a greater involvement of parents or a face-to-face meeting with the bully/bullied. The Head of Year or, in their absence, a Senior Leader will decide how best to deal with an incident of bullying.

#### **First Incident (the first time the bullying has been reported):**

##### **Supporting the bullied individual(s)**

The Head of Year should:

- establish the facts – meet privately with the bullied individual(s), listen to the problem and record the incident. The bullied individual(s) should also write down the details of the problem. This is kept as a written record of the bullying incident;
- reassure the bullied individual(s), that the matter will be dealt with promptly and sensitively;
- if appropriate, refer the bullied individual(s) for support to:



- Designated Mental Health Lead
- Mentors
- outside organisations
- explain which procedures will follow in dealing with the bully;
- keep the bullied individual(s) informed at all times of any action being taken;
- inform the Form Tutor so that he/she can help to monitor the situation (give a copy of the report if appropriate);
- discuss with the bullied individual(s) whether or not it is appropriate to inform parents. (A bullied individual(s) right to privacy is respected, but there may be cases where parents **should** or **must** be informed);
- if possible, the bullied individual(s)/bully will be reconciled through a mediation process with an appropriate staff member;
- monitor the situation by checking with the bullied individual(s), at an agreed time e.g. after the bully has been dealt with; after one week; after three weeks;
- maintain an 'open door policy' i.e. the bullied individual(s) should feel able to return to report the bullying again if it continues.

#### Dealing with the bully

The Head of Year (or Senior Leader in HoY's absence) should:

- establish the facts – meet privately with the alleged bully and explain the allegation. The Head of Year will listen to the problem from the alleged bully's point of view;
- encourage the alleged bully to write down the details of the problem. This is kept as a written record of the bullying incident;
- establish that the behaviour took place;
- explain and talk through the anti-bullying policy with reference to the allegation;
- discuss appropriate sanctions with SLT line manager;
- if appropriate the Head of Year should refer the bully to:
  - Mentor
  - Designated Mental Health Lead
  - External Agencies.
- discuss whether or not it is appropriate for parents to be informed. (In most cases parents **should** be informed.)
- if possible, the bullied individual(s)/bully will be reconciled through a mediation process with an appropriate staff member;
- agree a method of monitoring the situation with the bully e.g. another meeting in one week; three weeks; one month;
- inform the Form Tutor so that he/she can help with the monitoring (give a copy of the report if appropriate);

#### Sanctions could include:

- being placed on Academy Report;
- completing Community Service for the academy;
- agreeing to and signing a Behaviour Contract;
- suspension from certain Extra-curricular Activities.

### Second Incident

The bullied individual(s) are responded to and supported as above. The parents of the bullied individual(s) should be informed.

For a second incident (the second time the bullying is reported) or further incidents, sanctions will become progressively more severe:

- the parents of bully are required to attend a meeting with the Head of Year;
- Head of Year meets with the bully to establish the facts of the incident and compiles a full record of the incident;
- sanctions are applied as appropriate;
- the Safer Schools Officer is informed
- a referral to the Behaviour Panel may be made;
- the bully is guided as appropriate through referral to Mentors, Designated Mental Health Lead, external agencies;
- the situation is managed and monitored closely by the Head of Year and Senior Leadership Team;
- time in Study Support is a possibility (Headteacher's decision);

The records of the second bullying incident are copied to the Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral and filed.

### Third Incident

The bullied individual(s) are responded to and supported as above.

- A full record is again completed by the Head of Year
- The parents of the bully are required to come into academy to meet with the Head of Year and a Senior Leader
- Fixed term in Study Support is likely.
- On return to academy the bully is monitored closely by being placed on Red Report to a Deputy Headteacher.

### Further Incidents

As above.

- The parents are invited into academy again.
- The Headteacher decides on action to be taken for the future education of the bully.

**Serious or prolonged incidents of bullying could lead to a permanent exclusion from Southfields Academy.**

The academy is required to keep a discrete record of racist incidents. This is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral.

## **8. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The purpose of this is:

- to enable the academy to follow up and record progress. It will help to identify patterns of bullying behaviour.
- to identify whether or not the Anti-Bullying Policy is effective.
- to report to all stakeholders on the impact of the policy.

Analysis of bullying incidents will be carried out at least once every term by the Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral and the Deputy Headteachers. The records will be analysed to look for possible patterns to inform practice.

Monitoring and evaluation could also include:

- checking that the Anti-Bullying Code is displayed prominently (Recognise it – Report it – Remove it)
- observation of anti-bullying curriculum activities
- consultation with the Academy Council
- consultation with staff
- curriculum audit

The Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral’s monitoring information is discussed with the senior line manager, with any immediate action to increase the effectiveness of the policy agreed.

The impact of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy is evaluated at an individual, Year Team and whole-academy level at least once each academic year by the Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral through consultation with staff, students and parents. If changes to the policy are needed these are discussed with Senior Leaders and presented to the Local Governing Body. The policy is approved by the LGB annually.

The policy is made available to all staff at the start of each academic year and staff must sign that they have read it.

### **9. Communication and action to prevent bullying**

- Academy Assemblies are used to promoting the policy and the academy’s commitment to anti-bullying. Themes such as friendship, conflict, power and trust can be used as a basis.
- PSHE lessons include lessons on aspects of bullying and strategies for dealing with it.
- An Anti-Bullying display board promotes the Policy with effective artwork on what to do, who to contact, etc.
- Helpline numbers and website addresses (e.g. Childline) for out-of-hours contact are displayed centrally.

- Students are given opportunities in the classroom and through enrichment activities to discuss and understand racism, sexism, homophobia, protected characteristics and other forms of prejudice.
- Students' views are sought regularly using a academy anti-bullying survey, discussion in, and feedback from, the Academy Council meetings.
- Mentors meet Year 6 staff and coordinate transition work. The SEND team will monitor Year 7 vulnerable students.
- Anti-Bullying Week is held annually to promote the key aims of the Anti-BullyingPolicy.

## **Appendix 1: Key staff to support students and parents/carers**

Head of Year 7	Adrian Samuels: <a href="mailto:adrian.samuels@southfieldsacademy.com">adrian.samuels@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Head of Year 8	Stella Gbolonyo: <a href="mailto:stella.gbolonyo@southfieldsacademy.com">stella.gbolonyo@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Head of Year 9	Mahalia Donkor: <a href="mailto:mahalia.donkor@southfieldsacademy.com">mahalia.donkor@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Head of Year 10	Judy Douglas: <a href="mailto:judy.douglas@southfieldsacademy.com">judy.douglas@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Head of Year 11	Jonathan Millington: <a href="mailto:jonathan.millington@southfieldsacademy.com">jonathan.millington@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Head of Year 12	Tara Minto: <a href="mailto:tara.minto@southfieldsacademy.com">tara.minto@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Head of Year 13	Ned Browne: <a href="mailto:ned.browne@southfieldsacademy.com">ned.browne@southfieldsacademy.com</a>

### **Designated Safeguarding Leads**

Years 7-11	Sara Sharpe: <a href="mailto:sara.sharpe@southfieldsacademy.com">sara.sharpe@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Years 12-13	Nathalia Hess: <a href="mailto:nathalia.hess@southfieldsacademy.com">nathalia.hess@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Mental Health	Tricia Nearn: <a href="mailto:tricia.nearn@southfieldsacademy.com">tricia.nearn@southfieldsacademy.com</a>
Looked After Children	Maria Fearon: <a href="mailto:maria.fearon@southfieldsacademy.com">maria.fearon@southfieldsacademy.com</a>

## **Appendix 2: Further support for students and parents/carers**

<http://www.childline.org.uk>

24 hour helpline for children and young people with concerns about bullying 0800 1111

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

Website with information about bullying including a new short video to build the confidence of children who have been bullied

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/confidential-helpline/>

24 hour helpline for parents and carers who have concerns about bullying 0808 8002222. They also have an email facility.

<http://www.childnet.com>

Website with information and advice for parents and carers on how to keep your child safe online including how to make a report online

### **Appendix 3: Guidance for parents on cyber-bullying**

From: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/cyber\\_bullying/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/cyber_bullying/)

#### **Is my child likely to be a victim of cyber- bullying?**

Research suggests that cyber bullying is common among teenagers - at least one in five has been a victim of it. The practice is becoming more widespread. A major difference between cyber bullying and other types of bullying is that the cyber bully can follow your child into the house, even into his or her bedroom. Another disturbing aspect of cyber- bullying is that the bullied individual often feels there's nowhere to hide.

#### *What should I do if my child is being cyber- bullied?*

If you suspect your child is being cyber bullied, don't ignore it. Consider the following approaches:

- make sure your child is aware of cyber-bullying;
- be aware of your child's internet and social media activity;
- try to understand the technology and communication networks your child uses;
- ask your child to show you any nasty messages she receives;
- tell your child never to respond to an abusive text message or post - what the cyber bully most wants is a reply;
- talk to staff at your child's academy if other students at the academy are involved.

#### **Could my child be a cyber -bully?**

No one wants to think of their child bullying other children. But cyber bullying is different from other forms of bullying - tactics can often be hidden and more subtle -so it's sometimes difficult to detect.

Cyber -bullies don't need to be bigger or more aggressive or even in the same place as the child they're bullying. But like all bullies, they often rely on the support of bystanders - other children who observe what they're doing and don't challenge them.

Ask your child if they've ever done anything online to hurt or upset anyone. It's important to emphasise to your child that being cruel to other children and taking part in an activity that could hurt them is wrong.

Cyber- bullying also gives children the opportunity to bully adults. Teachers are sometimes the victims of messaging or posts that undermines or ridicules them. Make sure your child is aware that these activities are unacceptable and that academies will deal harshly with the students involved.

**Plases refer to the e-safety policy for more information concerning online safety.**

## Appendix 4: Guidance and procedures for staff - Peer-on-peer abuse

### **Introduction to abuse and harmful behaviour**

Abusive behaviour can happen to students in academies and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be instituted to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It is important to consider the forms abuse that may take and the subsequent actions required.

### **Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

#### *Physical abuse*

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally, before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

#### *Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse*

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse. This may not be a common occurrence amongst the students at Southfields Academy however this is something that the young women could experience in their life outside academy.

#### *Sexting*

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people could be breaking the law, as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

#### *Prejudiced Behaviour*

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and

equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (forexample in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual) or other protected characteristics.

#### *Teenage relationship abuse*

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

#### **Expected action from all staff**

Staff are required, in the first instance, to report all matters where abuse is thought to have taken place to the relevant Head of Year to discuss further.

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. Forexample; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of peer-on-peer abuse, it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

#### **Action from Heads of Year**

##### *Gather the Facts*

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

##### *Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess)*

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

##### *Decide on your next course of action*

If, from the information that you gather, you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must speak to the DSL and make a safeguarding referral to social care. If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on



what will happen next then you will be informed of your next steps. If you do not consider the young person to be at significant risk of harm but recognise that help is needed you would make the relevant referrals to the extended team (e.g. Academy Social Worker / Safer Schools Officer)

If social care intend to pursue this further they may ask to interview the young people in academy or they may ask for parents to come to academy to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

It may also be that social care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case you may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents.

### **Informing parents**

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from social care, you have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved then you need to inform the parents as soon as possible. If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. If a young person is deemed to be 'Gillick Competent' following the 'Fraser' guidelines and does not wish you to share the information with parents, then the academy must consider this, especially for example if the young person is pregnant and this is why they are being bullied (unless this has occurred through significant harm in which case a criminal/social care case is likely or the young person is under the age of 13)

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the academy should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent or even with them (they may be scared to tell parents that they are being harmed in any way). Where academy can evidence they are acting in the best interests of the young person they would not be criticised, however this would be the case if they actively breached the rights and choices of the young person.

The best way to inform parents is face-to-face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

### **Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

#### *For the young person who has been harmed*

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable, it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in academy so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

*For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour*

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an EHA/strengthening families/early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multiagency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

The academy may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

*After care*

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

## **Preventative Strategies**

It is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

Firstly, is recognition that peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

This can be supported by ensuring that there is an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This will be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another. To enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure the whole workforce feels confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order to create such an environment, it is necessary for whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice. It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.

It is important that signposting is available to young people in the event that they don't feel confident raising an issue to staff or a peer. It is useful to have a resource board with support services on a wide range of issues so young people can seek their own solutions should they wish to. In the same way external services or support programmes could be brought in to talk to young people about specific issues in support of the prevention of peer on peer abuse.

Finally, it is useful to ensure young people are part of changing their circumstances and that of the procedures within academies. Having an academy council and student voice and encouraging young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour' will go far in helping to create a positive ethos in academy and one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.