Anti-Bullying Policy

Lodestar Academy

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The Lodestar Academy reserves the right to amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

Policy Owner:	Headteacher (Beth Woodward)
Queries to:	Headteacher (Beth Woodward)
Date created:	September 2023
Date of last review:	September 2026

Date of next review:	September 2027

1. What is this Policy About?

This policy outlines the academy's definition of bullying, its commitment to prevent any form of bullying and the ways in which it will do so. The policy is inclusive of all members of our learning communities and recognises everybody's rights for safety and protection in our schools and academies.

2. Who does this Policy Apply to?

All academy staff, pupils, parents, governing bodies, volunteers and contractors.

3. Policy Requirements

All pupils, staff, parents/carers and governors should understand what bullying is, and their responsibilities regarding it. Although there is no legal definition of bullying, it is recognised to be behaviour that is intended to hurt, is repeated, and takes place where there is an imbalance of power. Bullying will often (though not only) be aimed at individuals of vulnerable groups and can include but is not limited to:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber: threats and/or sexual imaging/messaging using:
    - Any area of the internet, such as email or chat rooms;
    - Telephone, ie. text messaging/calls;
    - Any associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.
- Home circumstances: targeting individuals who are looked after children or because of a particular home circumstance.
- Discriminatory towards a protected characteristic: abuse directed because of or focusing on an individual's characteristic. This can include but is not limited to:
    - Racism
    - Sexism
    - Homophobia and other sexual orientation discrimination
    - Disability/SEN/Ableism
    - Transphobia
    - Ageism
    - Religious discrimination

Please the academy's Equality and Diversity Policy for more information on protected characteristics.

4. Definitions

A bully can be defined as:

- An individual who torments others either through verbal harassment or physical assaults, or
- An individual who torments others through subtle methods of coercion that constitute any of the above activities and is deliberate and sustained.
- A bully can operate individually or with other bullies.

Bullying can seriously damage a person's confidence and sense of self-worth.
A person being bullied will often feel that they are at fault and may show changes in behaviour (see Appendix 1 for possible signs).

5. Policy Objectives

- To stop and prevent any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To respond to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate, and consistent way.
- To safeguard all involved in bullying and to offer relevant support.
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the person causing the bullying and facilitate opportunities for them to learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support.
- Involve all members of the academy, staff, and pupils in helping to prevent bullying and to confront it when it occurs.
- Encourage pupils to report instances of bullying.
- Inform all pupils, parents, and staff of the preventative steps the academy takes and how these are implemented.
- Ensure all pupils, staff and parents know the procedure to follow when bullying occurs.

6. Responding to bullying

When bullying is reported or suspected, the matter will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. However, incidents of bullying are unique in their effect on the individuals concerned; therefore, it is important that staff devise a bespoke set of actions for each incident, or series of incidents, in order to address the situation and to support all involved.

- All incidents or series of incidents will be investigated sensitively and effectively.
- Each person involved will be asked to give their account of any bullying events.
- Relevant staff will be kept informed of all developments so they can support and monitor the behaviour of the pupils concerned.
- Pupils being bullied will be offered the opportunity to discuss their experience with a member of staff and will be offered further support to address any harm caused to them.

- Pupils who have bullied will be supported though discussion of the events with a member of staff. These discussions will look at what happened, explore their motivation and gains from being involved, finding out other ways to meet their needs, and illustrating clear boundaries of unacceptable behaviour.
- In agreement with all parties involved there will also be the opportunity to repair harm caused and rebuild relationships through a facilitated discussion by a member of staff.
- Parents/carers of all pupils involved will be informed and where relevant be included in the response.
- All incidents of bullying will be recorded on SIMS and/or the pupil file by the member of staff investigating the incidents. Records will include the actions taken to safeguard, repair harm and strengthen relationships.
- Where appropriate, staff may impose reasonable and proportionate sanctions on bullying pupils in accordance with our behaviour policy and the law.

Some forms of bullying are illegal and may be reported to the police. These include but are not limited to:

- Physical violence or assault;
- Sexual assault;
- Theft;
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, e-mails, or text messages;
- Hate crimes.

7. Prevention

Lodestar Academy will apply a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying.
These include but are not limited to:

- Leadership that promotes safe learning environments with an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Staff embodiment of our vision, always providing role models of good people and reinforcing this modelling in our conversations with pupils.
- Establishing tutor periods, PSHE classes, common spaces, and group activities to formally and informally, initiate, draw out and discuss relationships, differences, and anti-bullying messages.
- Using opportunities throughout the school calendar to raise awareness of the consequences and effect of bullying, e.g. Anti Bullying Week.
- Analyse pupil surveys and create continuous opportunities for pupils' voices to be heard.
- Anti-bullying campaigns.
- Ensuring staff presence and pupils' engagement in common spaces and unstructured times.
- Include anti-bullying in staff induction and continual professional development.

8. Related policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Weapons Policy

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Signs of Bullying

Emotional and Behavioural Signs of bullying

- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in eating patterns
- Frequent tears or anger
- Mood swings
- Feels ill in the morning
- Becomes withdrawn or starts stammering
- Becomes aggressive and unreasonable
- Refuses to talk about what is wrong
- Begins to target siblings
- Continually 'loses' money or starts stealing

Physical Signs of Bullying

- Has unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- Comes home with missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- Comes home hungry

School Signs of Bullying

- Doesn't want to go to school
- Changes their route to school or are frightened of walking to school
- Doesn't want to go to school on the bus/tram/train
- School grades begin to fall

Other Signs of Bullying

Sometimes signs bullying can be hidden. They can include:

- Often being alone or excluded from friendship groups at school

- Being a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule at school
- Being unable to speak up in class and appears insecure or frightened

Annex 1:

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Summary

This EIA is for:	Anti-Bullying
EIA completed by:	Headteacher
Date of assessment:	September 2024
Assessment approved by:	LGB

The Lodestar Academy is committed to always: avoiding the potential for unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool for identifying whether or not strategies, projects, services, guidance, practices or policies have an adverse or positive impact on a particular group of people or equality group. Whilst currently only public bodies are legally required to complete EIA's under the Equality Act 2010, the Lodestar Academy has adopted the process in line with its commitment to continually improve our equality performance.

Policy owners are required to complete or review the assessment indicating whether the policy has a positive, neutral or negative impact for people who it applies to and who share one or more of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
Definitions are based on the Equality & Human Rights (EHRC) guidance.

Objectives and intended outcomes

This EIA has been completed in order to ensure that the implications and potential impact, positive and negative, of this policy have been fully considered and addressed, whether or not people share a protected characteristic.

2. Potential Impacts, positive and negative

Equality Area	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Please give details including any mitigation for negative impacts
Age Does this policy impact on any particular age groups or people of a certain age?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of age. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their age.
Disability Does this policy impact on people who have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of any disability. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of any disability.
Gender reassignment (transsexual, transgender, trans) Does this policy impact on people who are transitioning from one gender to another (at any stage)	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of their gender at any given time. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their gender.
Marriage and civil partnership Does this policy impact on people who are legally married or in a civil partnership?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of marital status. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their marital status.

Pregnancy and maternity (in work this is linked to maternity leave, non-work this is for 26 weeks after giving birth) Does this policy impact on people who are pregnant or in their maternity period following the birth of their child?	☐	☒	☐	It is not considered that the policy positive or negatively impacts on pregnant women or on staff on maternity or paternity leave.
Race Does this policy impact on people as defined by their race, colour and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of their race, origin, colour or nationality. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively in these respects.
Religion and belief Does this policy impact on people who practice a particular religion or none, or who hold particular religious or philosophical belief or none?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of religion or beliefs. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively in these respects.
Sex Does this policy impact on people because they are male or female?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all members of staff and pupils regardless of their sex. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their sex.
Sexual orientation Does this policy impact on people who are sexually attracted towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes?	☐	☒	☐	The policy applies equally to all staff and pupils regardless of their sexual orientation. It is not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on members of staff or pupils because of their sexual orientation.