



Anti-Bullying & Hate Crime Policy

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1 Introduction

The Brook Academy is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all members of its community. This document sets out our policy in relation to the issue of bullying and hate crimes; it reflects our belief that bullying / hate crimes are not acceptable, under any circumstance, and that they are best prevented through the development of an academy ethos based on mutual respect, fairness, and equality.

At The Brook Academy, we will NOT tolerate bullying / hate crimes of any description. We recognise the rich diversity of our community, emphasising the importance of respecting and celebrating differences in ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and all other aspects of identity – no member of the academy community should ever feel threatened, intimidated, mocked, or abused.

The Brook Academy acknowledge that bullying / hate crimes are problematic to both the person who displays harmful behaviour and the victim alike and employs a range of support and management strategies to ensure that we operate in a pragmatic and non-oppressive way.

2 Principles

All students have a right to be educated in a safe and secure environment, knowing that they will be protected from possibility of being harmed, mocked, or abused by other members of the school community.

There is no justification whatsoever for bullying / hate crime behaviour and it will not be tolerated in The Brook Academy in any form. We actively embrace individuality and reject the idea that differences including race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, poverty, ability, or appearance are ever reasons to be bullied.

Bullying / hate crime behaviour must be addressed in a positive and constructive way to provide opportunities for both the victim and the person who displays the harmful behaviour, fostering growth and development of those involved.

Everyone has a role to play in the development of the academy's ethos and we will call upon students, parents, carers, school staff and other professionals to share the responsibility for the strategies put in place.

3 Aims and Objectives

To define bullying / hate crimes and outline their forms, with an emphasis on discrimination based on individual differences.

To promote an inclusive school ethos whereby each student is encouraged to realise their full potential within a safe and nurturing environment; an environment that celebrates diversity and fosters mutual respect among all students and staff.

To demonstrate The Brook Academy's zero-tolerance towards bullying / hate crime behaviour through clear and consistent procedures.

To ensure students learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment where bullying / hate crimes cannot flourish and where all members of the school community can feel safe, respected, and valued.

To work as a community to help both the victim and the person who displays the harmful behaviours of bullying/hate crimes.

4 Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff, parents, and other members of the school community. It pertains to behaviour presented on school premises - during school hours or school-sponsored activities - and extends to interactions on school trips, school transport, and any contact that occurs in digital spaces and online communities.

The Brook Academy are committed to embracing a holistic approach to student safety and wellbeing and will respond positively and appropriately to any information received about the welfare and conduct of its students outside of school.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

The Academy Council will regularly review the Policy, which the Principal must consider, in determining measures to promote good behaviour and discourage poor behaviour choices.

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team have overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation. Cases will be managed according to the circumstances. They will be recorded on CPOMs and analysed to see whether patterns emerge from the nature of the bullying / hate crime or the identity of the person who displays the harmful behaviours.

When dealing with bullying issues we pay regard to the Prevent duty. All staff complete annual Prevent training.

All Staff (teachers, support staff, and volunteers) share responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed and consistently and fairly applied, without regard to ethnic origin, cultural differences, gender, disability or sexual orientation. Mutual support amongst all staff is essential for creating a high-quality and safe learning environment, promoting good behaviour and implementing the agreed policy and procedures consistently. They will ensure that students are listened to and that their concerns are appropriately addressed.

Parents and Carers will be encouraged to work in partnership with the Academy to ensure high standards of behaviour are maintained, both in and out of school, and that students respect both similarities and differences between themselves and other members of the school and wider community.

Students will be expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and will be made fully aware of the school's Anti-Bullying & Hate Crime Policy, the procedures arising from cases of bullying / hate crimes, and the rationale behind them. All students have a collective responsibility to ensure they are considerate towards one another and respectful of each other's differences.

6 Definitions

Bullying is defined as any intentional, repetitive behaviour, between an individual or group of people, intended to cause hurt, pain, suffering, humiliation, or degradation. We follow and teach the STOP acronym (Several Times on Purpose).

Hate crime is defined as any hate incident which constitutes a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by hostility or prejudice.

Bullying / hate crime can be exhibited in various forms, inciting both physical and emotional harm, and is often, but not always, characterised as an imbalance of power or strength.

6.1 Identifying Bullying & Hate Crimes

Bullying / hate crimes can be outlined by four key characteristics:

- Repetitive and persistent – although there could be isolated incidents
- Intentionally harmful - although there may be instances where there is a lack of awareness that the actions are harmful.
- Involving an imbalance of power – the victim may not be able to defend him / herself
- Causing feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, or lack of confidence

Bullying / hate crime behaviour can be direct / indirect; simple / complex.

Direct bullying / hate crime behaviour includes physical threats, verbal insults or taunts, and directly contacting a person with obscene or insulting messages using, for example, mobile phones.

Emotional bullying / hate crime behaviour includes excluding someone from social groups, tormenting, threatening gestures.

Sexual bullying / hate crime behaviour includes unwanted physical contact or abusive comments, including homophobic references.

Indirect bullying / hate crime includes persistently ignoring a student so that they feel socially isolated, spreading malicious rumours or insults - often via social network sites on the internet - or writing offensive graffiti.

Cyber-bullying / hate crime uses technology to harm a person, group of people, or a relationship and can happen both inside and outside of school, at any time of the day or night.

Bullying / hate crime can happen to anyone.

This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture or of an extremist nature
- Bullying related to SEND - in these examples, victims may not be aware they are being bullied.
- Bullying of young carers, children in care, or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Bullying related to appearance or physical / mental health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying).
- Sexist, sexual, and transphobic bullying.
- Bullying via technology “cyberbullying”.

6.2 Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

All staff at The Brook Academy should be alert to the signs of bullying / hate crime and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

We understand that children often bully other children if they have been exposed to significant trauma and, therefore, person who displays the harmful behaviours of bullying equally need support.

A victim of bullying / hate crime may indicate / display signs or behaviours. These may include:

- reluctance to attend school.
- truanting of specific lessons.
- damage to clothing or possessions.
- unexplained bruises or swellings.

- deterioration of schoolwork / attainment.
- being afraid to use the internet.
- becoming jittery about receiving text messages.
- unkempt uniform.
- bullying towards siblings.
- taking money without permission.

Symptoms may include:

- loss of appetite.
- headaches.
- stomach aches.
- stammering.
- sudden changes in behaviour.
- lack of confidence.
- signs of depression.
- nervousness / edginess or difficulty in concentration.
- lack of motivation to complete work.

These are examples, but this list is not exhaustive.

7 Preventing Bullying / Hate Crime

At The Brook Academy, we create an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect for others, upheld by all members of our community.

The Brook Academy:

- consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum, supported by corridor / classroom displays, assemblies, through the PSHE curriculum, and through Anti-Bullying Week.
- regularly evaluate the climate in the Academy through systems involving staff, parents, and student surveys.
- work with outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying / hate crime and promote acceptance and equality.
- challenge practice which does not uphold the values of acceptance, non-discrimination, and respect towards others.
- regularly update and change our approaches to consider developments in technology. This allows us to provide up-to-date advice and information to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviours.
- train all staff to identify all forms of bullying / hate crime, on recognising signs of bullying / hate crime and effectively intervening, and to follow school policy and procedures.
- gather and record concerns and intelligence about bullying / hate crime incidents and issues to effectively develop strategies to prevent bullying / hate crime from occurring.
- provide staffed quiet spaces for vulnerable students to use during unstructured times.
- use a variety of approaches to resolve issues between students, including restorative solutions.
- work with other agencies to prevent and tackle concerns.

- celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive academy ethos.

The Brook Academy recognises that there are particular times when, and places where, students may be more vulnerable to bullying / hate crime i.e. lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. The Brook Academy, therefore, have ensured that, during these particular times, there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying / hate crime incidents.

Students will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying / hate crime which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances, staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously, and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.

Parents who believe their children are the victim of bullying / hate crime should share their concerns with the Academy at the earliest opportunity. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated. Similarly, if parents believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with the Academy, so that the problem can be addressed, and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents.

8 Reporting Incidents of Bullying

Students, staff, and parents are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying / hate crime, whether carried out by another student or adult, to a member of school staff immediately. Whether victim, friends of the victim, bystanders, or parents, please report any known information to members of The Brook Academy staff.

Anonymous reporting will be facilitated where possible to ensure that students / staff feel confident when coming forward.

All students are encouraged to have at least two trusted adults with whom they feel they can report any forms of bullying / hate crime or abuse to.

The Brook Academy hope that, by reporting the problem in the first instance, it will become the first step in empowering the victim to overcome the bullying / hate crime through the defined stages that will then be put into action.

Any staff member who feels they are being bullied in the workplace – by staff member or student – can report their concern to their Line Manager or the Principal. If such managers are involved, staff members may contact the Chair of the Governing Body.

9 Responding to Incidents of Bullying

9.1 Investigating Incidents of Bullying

All reported incidents of bullying / hate crime will be documented, investigated, and recorded promptly. The investigation will be conducted professionally and discreetly to maintain the confidentiality and respect of all individuals involved. The findings will determine the necessary actions to address and rectify the situation, ensuring justice and support for the victim(s), along with guidance and support for growth for the person who displays the harmful behaviour.

When bullying of a student has been reported, statements and contributing evidence will be taken from all relevant parties and stored on file. The Safeguarding Team will consult other records of behaviour and cross-reference for patterns.

Once the incident has been substantiated, and understood as far as possible, it will then be recorded under the relevant categories within CPOMS and Bromcom.

In the first instance, incidents of poor behaviour that require action will be dealt with by the class teacher. Serious incidents that need immediate action will be dealt with by a member of the Pastoral Team or the Senior Leadership Team.

Plans will be established for means of support; sanctioning; mediation, and monitoring, as appropriate, including communication between the parents / carers of students involved.

Where reports of bullying / hate crime have been substantiated, consequences for individuals will take a holistic approach, including supporting all parties through therapeutic means, but utilising suspensions where necessary.

Any related information retrieved, measures taken, and sanctions imposed must be recorded on the original incident log. Information will be used to inform The Safeguarding Team of any trends in behaviour, or to indicate which measures are most successful in ensuring that further bullying is prevented.

9.2 Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with either SLT or member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the student.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

9.3 Students who have bullied will be supported by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the student became involved.
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.
- Informing parents / carers to help support and change the attitude of the student.
- Offer additional support to the child.

10 Monitoring and Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and updated in response to new research or changes within the school community. Regular feedback from students, parents, and staff will be sought to continuously improve our strategies.

10.1 Parent / Carer Complaints

If a parent is not satisfied with the way a bullying issue has been addressed, the member of staff dealing with the incident should be contacted to discuss the matter.

If the parent is still dissatisfied, then the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team should be involved.

Further information may be found in the Complaints Policy if a parent / carer feels the matter is still unresolved.