Mulberry Academy Shoreditch

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
1		Existing
2	March 2023	No updates, part of annual review
3	March 2024	Minor changes to policy (removal of Anti bullying ambassador on Page 5) and adding a sentence to the referral form on page 13 Minor update of the bullying incident form.
4	March 2025	Appendix 1 – update of cyber bullying and deepfakes term and reference
5	November 2026	No updates, part of annual review

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Purpose of the policy

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch considers everyone to be of equal value, regardless of their race, gender, class, disability, learning need, lifestyle, age, sexual orientation or religion.

This anti-bullying policy is designed to help and protect every member of the school community, so that all students and staff can learn and work together in a supportive, secure and safe environment.

The policy has been devised by students, parents[1], staff and governors to raise awareness of bullying and the need for the whole school community to work together to make the school a bullying-free environment.

2. Aims

The aims of the policy are:

- to prevent bullying;
- to raise awareness of bullying and its impact;
- to ensure that everyone at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch is aware of his/her rights and responsibilities with regard to bullying;
- to set out the academy's procedures for preventing and responding to bullying.

3. Definition

The Anti Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

> "the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power".

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- is meant to hurt either physically, emotionally or both – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it;
- happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident;
- involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

It can be:

- physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings;
- verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks;
- relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups;
- cyber[2], e.g. texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, instant messaging.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch further describes bullying as behaviour that leaves someone feeling:

- physically and/or mentally hurt or worried;
- unsafe and/or frightened;
- unable to do well and achieve;
- 'badly different', alone, unimportant and/or unvalued;
- unable to see a happy and exciting future for his/herself.

[1] Throughout this policy the term 'parent' is used to mean a student's parent or carer.

[2] See Appendix 1 for further detail

4. The school's anti-bullying commitment

Bullying can take many different forms, but all of them are wrong. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All bullying incidents known to staff will be treated seriously and sensitively, acted on quickly and dealt with consistently.

A person who is being bullied often feels helpless and unable to stop it happening. Bullying, even that which seems minor to an observer, can have serious and lasting consequences. Mulberry Academy Shoreditch actively encourages students, parents and staff to speak to someone as soon as they experience, witness or have a concern or suspicion about bullying. Talking about bullying, and bringing it out into the open, is the key to dealing with the problem.

The school recognises that bullying is often motivated by prejudice, for example racist, sexist and homophobic bullying and bullying related to perceptions about disability and/or special educational needs, home circumstances, culture or health conditions. The school champions and celebrates diversity and all staff are trained annually on equality and diversity issues.[3]

OUR ANTI-BULLYING CODE IS FOR *EVERYONE*

Everyone has the right to enjoy learning and teaching and to learn and work without fear, free from intimidation.

Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

Everyone has the right to learn and teach in an environment where everyone feels comfortable and safe.

Everyone, whether they are being bullied, friends of the bully or person being bullied, 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.

5. Procedures

5.1. **Preventing bullying**

The school:

- raises awareness of the nature and impact of bullying, and what to do about it, through the PSHE, form time and subject curriculum;
- uses school assemblies to promote the policy, with themes such as friendship, conflict, power and trust;
- creates opportunities in the classroom to discuss and understand racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice;
- trains staff to be vigilant and aware of the various forms that bullying may take;

[3] See the Academy's Equality Policy

- participates in national and local initiatives such as Anti-bullying Week;
- provides a variety of lunchtime activities that engage students collaboratively and meaningfully;
- displays anti-bullying posters around the school and maintains a central anti-bullying display board, including Helpline numbers and website addresses (e.g. Childline) for out-of-hours contact;
- provides a range of non-teaching specialists to support and monitor more vulnerable students, especially at transitions;
- seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive anti-bullying education;
- gathers information from students, staff and parents, including through a school anti-bullying survey led by the student voice
- plans action to address any findings that give cause for concern.

5.2. Identifying bullying

School teaching and support staff are alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly in accordance with this policy. All concerns about bullying are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

A clear message is reinforced through the preventative activities above:

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.

It is understood that students who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, concentration lapses, unusual absences or truanting from school.

Students who are aware of bullying ('bystanders') can be a powerful force in identifying the bullying to school staff and they are encouraged to do so in a safe way.

All students are encouraged to report bullying by:
- talking to a member of staff of their choice;
- talking to their parents or a friend and asking them to report it;
- contacting local and national support agencies for advice/support[4]

Staff who experience or witness bullying of staff (by students[5] or other staff) are encouraged to report it to a colleague of their choice. 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.

Parents are encouraged to report any concerns they may have relating to bullying to academy staff as soon as possible. Most concerns about bullying can be resolved through discussion between home and the academy. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure.

The school will as far as possible aim to resolve all bullying involving students, whether it takes place at the academy or outside, for example in the street or through the use of the

[4] See appendix 2

[5] See also 'Safe to learn' DCSF 2007.

internet at home. Any other relevant schools or agencies (e.g. youth clubs, transport providers) will be informed about the concerns and any actions taken.

Any student or member of staff who has been told about bullying must pass on the reported incident **immediately** to the relevant Head of Year (in the case of a student), or other senior staff as appropriate (in the case of a staff member).

Parents and carers should contact the relevant Head of Year, via reception, as soon as possible with any concerns about bullying.

5.3. Responding to bullying

If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it and they will refer it directly to the relevant Head of Year (HOY) or other member of SLT as appropriate.

Supporting the bullied individual(s) – *the HOY (or AHOY) will:*

- establish the facts – meet privately with the bullied individual(s) and listen to the problem. The bullied individual(s) should write down the details of the problem. This is kept as a written record of the bullying incident[6] and held in line with the academy's data protection policy / practice;
- reassure the bullied individual(s), that the matter will be dealt with promptly and sensitively;
- 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 the school would normally expect to inform parents, and there may be cases where parents **should** or **must** be informed)
- if appropriate, refer the bullied individual(s) for support to:
  - School Counsellor
  - School Mentor
  - School Police Officer
  - outside organisations
- explain the procedures to be followed 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. Form tutors will advise the appropriate subject teachers (Give a copy of the report if appropriate);
- 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.

Students who have bullied or who are alleged to have bullied *– the HOY (or AHOY) will:*

- establish the facts – the HOY (duty staff/senior line managers in the HOY's absence) should meet privately with the alleged bully and explain the allegation. The HOY will listen to the problem from the alleged bully's point of view.
- invite the student to write down the detail of the problem. This is kept as a written record of the bullying incident.
- explain and talk through the school policy and anti-bullying code of conduct with reference to the allegation;
- establish that the behaviour took place, establishing the wrong doing and need to change;

[6] See Appendix 3 for the bullying incident report form

- discuss whether or not it is appropriate for parents to be informed to help support the change in attitude/behaviour (In most cases parents **should** be informed);
- 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)
- if possible and appropriate, arrange for the bullied individual(s)/bully to be reconciled through a mediation process with an appropriate staff member;
- use specialist interventions and/or referrals to the School Police Officer or other agencies where appropriate;
- detail the sanctions to be imposed;
- arrange support to help the bully understand and change their behaviour.

In the case of cyber bullying, the academy reserves the right to search a student's phone, social media pages or email account if there are any grounds for concern.

All bullying incidents are considered to be at least a Serious Breach of the behaviour code. Sanctions will be appropriate to these levels but may vary from incident to incident.

If the student is involved in subsequent bullying, his/her parents are required to attend a meeting with the Head of Year and or member of the Senior Leadership Team. Parents will be asked to work with the academy in addressing their child's behaviour. The family may be referred to external support agencies where appropriate.

Serious or prolonged incidents of bullying could lead to a fixed-term or permanent exclusion from Mulberry Academy Shoreditch.

6. Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and all visitors to support our stand against bullying. We provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that the academy meets the statutory duties of Academies with regard to bullying. The Trust Board biennially reviews this Policy and its impact. They are supported with this by an annual anti-bullying report prepared by the SLT lead (pastoral).

The School's Executive Principal has a legal duty under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying amongst students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside academy, where it is reasonable to do so. Academies also have a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of students' (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004).

The Executive Principal and the Principal are responsible for maintaining an ethos in the school that upholds this policy. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and implemented by all staff and for making students, parents and staff aware of its commitments and expectations.

The SLT Lead (pastoral) is responsible for building the procedures of this policy consistently into day-to-day practice, for ensuring structures are in place that will act rapidly on any incidence of bullying, for monitoring and reporting on bullying and anti-bullying practice, and for developing curriculum and extra-curricular activity to support the aims of this policy.

All staff are responsible for acting on this policy consistently in their day-to-day professional responsibilities and for supporting students and their families to share the academy's aim to prevent bullying.

7. Promoting the policy

The policy is published on the school website and included in the annual staff handbook. The student and parent pledges in the home-school agreement prompt students/parents to tell staff of any experience or suspicion of bullying. Anti-bullying information is widely displayed on posters around the academy and there is a central anti-bullying display board.

The curriculum and extra-curricular provision engages students with anti-bullying practice and high-profile student events linked to national initiatives are held annually. Staff receive annual anti-bullying training linked to safeguarding and equality agendas.

8. Monitoring, evaluation and review

Bullying incidents are monitored to:

- enable the school to identify patterns of bullying behaviour, or places and times where students are more vulnerable
- improve the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures.
- be able to report to all stakeholders on the level of bullying and impact of the policy.

The Assistant Heads monitor the bullying incident records at least once every term. The records are analysed to look for possible patterns to inform practice.

The procedures in this policy, and the impact of the policy, are monitored through a range of activities:

- analysis of the anti-bullying incident sheets across the school, including the profile of the students involved;
- a student evaluation led by the student voice
- Head of Year evaluation with the pastoral teams;
- a strand of the parent survey
- a strand of the staff survey
- review of the aspects of the curriculum linked to anti-bullying
- evaluation of each Anti-bullying event

An annual anti-bullying report is produced by the SLT (Pastoral Lead), drawing together available information from the above monitoring activities. The report includes recommendation for action over the following year. The report is presented to the Trust Board.

The Trust Board formally reviews the Anti-bullying policy every two years, informed by the annual reports.

Appendix 1: Cyber bullying and Deepfakes

Cyber bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside of school. Cyber bullying is bullying which takes place using electronic technology including mobile phones, email and websites. 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 unpleasant or hurtful photographs by mobile phone, emails, social networking or posting them on websites;
- posting threatening, abusive, cruel or humiliating material on blogs, personal websites, social networking sites;
- posting threatening, abusive, cruel or humiliating remarks on on-line message boards or in chat rooms e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Ratemyteacher, Instagram, Snapchat, BBM and WhatsApp and any other sites used for communication;
- deleting someone's name from, or ignoring their messages, on social networking sites.

Deepfakes

Deepfakes use artificial intelligence to manipulate videos, images, or audio to create false or misleading content. These digital forgeries can be used to spread misinformation, create embarrassing or harmful content, and facilitate cyberbullying.

The school strictly prohibits the creation, distribution, or use of deepfake content to harass, intimidate, or deceive others. Any student found engaging in such activities will be considered to be at least a Serious Breach of the behaviour code. Sanctions will be appropriate to these levels but may vary from incident to incident.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch educates its students both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying. Through PSHE, ICT lessons, assemblies and wider curriculum areas, staff educate their students in how to keep themselves and others safe in this rapidly changing environment.

From: 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. It 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. 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 activity.
- Try to understand the technology and communication networks your child uses.
- Ask your child to show you any nasty messages he or she receives.
- Tell your child never to respond to an abusive text message - what the cyber bully most wants is a reply.
- Talk to staff at your child's school if other students at the school are involved.

Could my child be a cyber bully?

No one wants to think of their child bullying other children. 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 or 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 internet messaging that undermines or ridicules them. Make sure your child is aware that these activities are unacceptable and that schools will deal harshly with the students involved.

Further information

Further information on cyber- bullying is available from:

- www.cybermentors.org.uk
- yp.direct.gov.uk/cyberbullying

Parents are also encouraged to refer to the academy's e-safety policy for more information concerning online safety.

Appendix 2: Information and support for young people and parents

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=13ddde97-f2f2-41b8-a201-1aed40bc2998&version=-1
Tower Hamlet Anti-Bullying Helpline Support and Advice
Monday-Friday 3.30pm-6.00pm 0800 1216 753
A confidential local service for children, young people, parents and carers.

http://www.childline.org.uk
24 hour helpline for children and young people with concerns about bullying 0800 11 11
Online support for children and young people with concerns about bullying
Website with information about bullying including a new short video to build the confidence of children who have been bullied

http://www.familylives.org.uk/
24 hour helpline for parents and carers who have concerns about bullying 0808 800 2222. 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: **Bullying Incident Report**

Bullying Incident Report

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- is meant to hurt either physically, emotionally or both – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do I;
- happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident;
- involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

It can be:

- physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings;
- verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks;
- relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups;
- cyber, e.g. texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, instant messaging.

Mulberry Academy Shoreditch further describes bullying as behaviour that leaves someone feeling:

- physically and/or mentally hurt or worried;
- unsafe and/or frightened;
- unable to do well and achieve;
- 'badly different', alone, unimportant and/or unvalued;
- unable to see a happy and exciting future for his/herself.

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Please read the above carefully before you write your statement and answer these questions:

Is the incident you are reporting a bullying incident?	Yes [ ]	No [ ]
Do you agree that bullying is unacceptable?	Yes [ ]	No [ ]
Do you want to be someone who supports bullying?	Yes [ ]	No [ ]

If this is a bullying incident, please turn over and write your statement.

If it is not, please ask for a different statement sheet.

Name:	Tutor group:	Date:

Name(s) of person/people being bullied (include yourself if you are the victim):

Name(s) of alleged bully(ies):

Name (s) of witnesses (if any):

What happened?

Has it happened before?

Date the incident took place:

Student signature:

Incident reported to:

Action taken:

Staff signature:

Follow up: