



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

**The OHC&AT Board of Trustees has agreed this Policy – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021.**

Jay Mercer  
Chair of OHCAT Board

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Peter Lauener  
Chair of OHC Board

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# Anti-Bullying Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is a 'family' of providers, comprising Orchard Hill College (OHC) and Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT), which works for mutual benefit. OHC&AT is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. The safety and welfare of our pupils and students is of the utmost importance. Bullying of any kind against pupils/students, staff, apprentices and families is wholly unacceptable. We will work to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance throughout the OHC&AT community, and we will positively support pupils/students, staff, apprentices or families who feel they are experiencing bullying to resolve the situation and remove the behaviour.

An effective anti-bullying strategy is a key part of safeguarding our pupils, students, apprentices, staff and families, and as such this policy should be read in conjunction with both the Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy and the local Safeguarding & Wellbeing Offers produced by each OHC&AT provision.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the whole OHC&AT community to promote an ethos of mutual respect, fairness and equality in everything we do, in order to create a positive atmosphere for all. Everyone should have an understanding of the issues around bullying and be aware of what to look out for, in order that any incidents of bullying can be proactively managed.

### **OHC&AT Trustees will:**

- Challenge and support OHC&AT in the regular review of this policy and its implementation
- Receive termly reports on incidences of bullying and subsequent actions taken, as part of regular safeguarding monitoring

### **The OHC&AT Executive Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of anti-bullying initiatives, including this policy, within OHC&AT provisions
- Regularly review this policy in order to ensure that it is effective and up to date

### **Principals will:**

- Ensure all staff are aware of this policy and related documentation
- Ensure that a suitable whole school/College approach to the prevention and tackling of bullying is in place within their provision, informed by regular consultation with pupils/students, apprentices, staff and families, supported by relevant training and guidance, and reflected in the school or College's Safeguarding & Wellbeing Offer

- Regularly review any logged incidents and take any necessary action to proactively manage the situation
- Cultivate strong working relationships between the school or College and parents/carers and ensure that effective lines of communication are maintained, in order to ensure that a joined-up approach is taken towards creating a positive environment at the school or College
- Report on incidences of bullying and subsequent actions taken as part of regular monitoring by OHC&AT ESLT and the Local Governing Body

**All staff and apprentices will:**

- Ensure they understand and abide by this policy and all relevant procedures
- Model positive behaviour at all times, in order to foster a culture of respect and openness
- Log any incidents of bullying and notify the Principal as appropriate
- Support pupils/students in reporting bullying

**Pupils/students and parents/carers will:**

- Have an understanding of what bullying is and what actions they can take if they are worried about bullying

## **ANTI-BULLYING**

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is a particular type of unacceptable behaviour. It is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can be short term or happen over long periods of time.

OHC&AT views bullying as anti-social behaviour which is never acceptable. **No person has the right to make another feel uncomfortable or unhappy.**

Bullying can be:

<i>Emotional</i>	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
<i>Physical</i>	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
<i>Racial</i>	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
<i>Sexual</i>	Unwanted physical contact, intimidation, coercion, sexually abusive comments or graffiti
<i>Homophobic</i>	Because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality
<i>Faith-based</i>	Because of or focusing on matters relating to religious ideology, belief or creed

*Direct or indirect* Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

*Cyber* All areas of internet, such as email and chat room misuse  
Mobile threats by text messaging and calls  
Misuse of associated technology e.g. camera and video facilities, iPad, games consoles  
Making and/or sharing images with the intent to threaten or harm – this includes the non-consensual making/sharing of sexually explicit imagery

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances
- Sexual orientation
- Gender

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, corridors, on the journey to and from school or college, on residential trips and in cyberspace. It can take place during school or college time, out of school while on residential visits, day visits, in group activities, and between families in the local community.

## **Bullying**

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of bully over victim. This can be achieved by:

- Size and/or strength
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying (using email, social networking sites, texts etc.)
- The level of cognition, confidence, or emotional maturity of pupils

Staff must remain vigilant about bullying and approach this in the same way as any other category of safeguarding; that is, do not wait to be told before you raise concerns or deal directly with the matter. Pupils/students may not be aware or be able to articulate that they are being bullied.

Staff should be able to identify pupils/students who may be vulnerable and who could fall victim to bullying as well as those who may demonstrate bullying behaviour. Staff should also be aware that pupils/students may sometimes not recognise that they are being bullied, or that their own behaviour may be seen by someone else as bullying.

## **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage a person's mental and physical health. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. People who are demonstrating bullying behaviour will be supported to develop positive strategies to engage with others, through understanding the underlying challenges the individual may be experiencing such as low self-esteem.

It is important that schools/colleges help the 'bully' by understanding why they are bullying someone. The bully is also a 'victim'.

## **Signs and symptoms**

A person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and consider investigating if a child or young person:

- changes their usual routine
- is frightened of walking to or from school/college
- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- begs to be driven to school/college
- is unwilling to go to school/college
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- persistently feels ill in the morning
- begins to do less well in school/college work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home excessively hungry (money/lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- displays bullying behaviour to other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or their mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- avoids eye contact
- becomes short tempered
- displays a change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours are not exhaustive and could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

OHC&AT provisions monitor the degree to which pupils and students feel safe through regular pupil/student questionnaires, parent/carers surveys and cascading leadership which is underpinned by excellent relationships with pupils/students and families.

## **Procedure**

Where bullying does occur, pupils/students and parents/carers are encouraged to report it. All reports will be followed up and the Principal undertakes to:

- operate a reporting and recording procedure
- deal with all reports speedily, fairly and positively
- take account of the evidence and all views
- provide anonymity for all involved parties whenever possible
- offer advice and support to the person/s being bullied
- offer advice and support to the person/s demonstrating bullying behaviour, in order to support them to change their behaviour by addressing the underlying causes
- ensure that all involved are kept informed
- implement appropriate strategies to address the situation, in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy
- if cyber bullying has occurred, inform the E-Safety co-ordinator

## **Prevention**

At OHCAT Academies pupils are encouraged to think about and understand bullying through such opportunities as class assemblies, PSHE lessons, school assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week, additional responsibilities and school policy writing. At Orchard Hill College students are encouraged to think about and understand bullying through such opportunities as Learner Voice Week, Student Council, the Wider World curriculum, e-safety sessions and involvement with the Student Ambassador scheme.

OHC&AT's ethos and working philosophy means that all staff actively encourage pupils and students to have respect for themselves, each other and their environment. Behaviour which, for example, 'shows how others are feeling', or 'cares for others' is consistently acknowledged and rewarded.

Every OHC&AT provision also has a 'Worries and Concerns' procedure, developed with pupils/students, to support pupils and students in raising any complaint or concern and ensuring that it is heard and acted upon. Worries and Concerns procedures are published on websites and regularly publicised to pupils/students and families.

Staff regularly discuss bullying, creating an atmosphere of openness and building confidence among pupils/students to discuss bullying.

Expectations around behaviour are regularly reinforced by staff, as is the OHC&AT ethos of mutual respect and tolerance.

Staff should remain alert to the dynamics within groups of friends together; groups can bring about the imbalance of power and should be dissipated if one or all of the members are bullying others.

Pupils/students are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate. Methods may include:

- Role playing scenarios in order to understand bullying and what to do if bullying is taking place
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters that bullies are dealt with quickly
- Discussions at Student Council meetings
- Pupils/students constructing an anti-bullying policy for their school/college
- Restorative, reparation, and empathy developing work with pupils/students, e.g. using comic strip conversations to develop understanding
- Writing a set of school/college or class rules
- Writing a personal pledge or promise against bullying
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- Engagement in national/external projects such as the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Award or the Anti-Bullying Alliance

If a pupil or student feels they are being bullied, there are several procedures they are encouraged to follow:

- Tell a teacher or another adult you feel you can trust
- Tell a parent/carer or another adult you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your PSHE or Tutor Time
- Ring Childline or Bullying UK and follow the advice given

### **Recording incidents of bullying**

Staff must be prepared to record and report every incidence of bullying.

Racist, sexual or homophobic bullying, and bullying related to religious belief or creed, must be reported directly to the Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Incidents involving an immediate threat to the safety of a pupil/student e.g. physical violence or threats of imminent harm must also be reported directly to the Principal and the DSL, and consideration given to involving the Police.

All staff have a responsibility to report general incidences of suspected bullying via the school or College's safeguarding system; this would include incidents where staff have had to get involved and speak with pupils/students, and/or where parents/carers have raised concerns regarding bullying. Confirmed cases of bullying must be recorded and monitored by Principals and their Senior Leadership Teams.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents/carers of the pupils or students involved, in order to ensure that the incident is resolved positively and that vigilance against further bullying is maintained.

Incidents of bullying, as with other behavioural incidents, are reported to the Local Governing Body of each setting as part of termly monitoring. Bullying also forms part of the regular safeguarding monitoring undertaken by OHC&AT ESLT and the OHC&AT Board of Trustees.

## **Sanctions and strategies**

Where bullying is identified, OHC&AT staff will take a twofold approach to resolving the issue: addressing the behaviour which has already taken place, and deploying strategies to change the behaviour so that bullying does not recur.

Measures to address the behaviour that has already taken place will be in line with the OHC&AT Positive Behaviour Policy and proportionate to the behaviour. They will always include some form of restorative approach. Depending on the situation, sanctions such as removal of privileges or exclusion may be deployed as part of the overall approach. Any exclusions will be determined in line with the Exclusions Policy.

Where criminal behaviour is suspected or confirmed to have occurred as part of the bullying incident, the Police will be informed.

OHC&AT provisions may deploy a range of strategies to help the so-called bully or bullies understand and change their behaviour and make amends to those being bullied. Strategies may include:

- Restorative justice
- Counselling/mediation
- Peer support systems
- Input from the provision's behavioural support team

Any reports of bullying behaviour by OHC&AT pupils/students outside of school or College will be investigated by school or College staff. If appropriate, action may be taken as above.

## **Advice to parents/carers**

If you suspect your child is being bullied, please report your concerns to the class teacher or lecturer. The incident/s will be recorded by staff and monitored as detailed above.

In cases of serious bullying, parents/carers will be informed and will be invited to meet with staff to discuss the problem. Any bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and stopped quickly. Efforts will be made to help the bully or bullies change their behaviour.

Please do not attempt to resolve the problem yourself, either by speaking to the person you think is the bully or their parents/carers, or by encouraging your child to act in kind. These actions will only make the problem harder to resolve.

OHC&AT is committed to working with parents and carers in the best interests of our pupils and students. We are always happy to hear any concerns you may have about your child's school or college experience. Contact information for all OHC&AT provision is available on the College and Academy websites.



## FURTHER RESOURCES

Bullying UK (part of Family Lives)  
0808 800 2222  
<http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

Childline  
0800 1111  
<http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/bullying/pages/bullying.aspx>

Kidscape  
<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

LawStuff – an online legal resource for young people run by Coram Children’s Legal Centre, which includes information on abuse and bullying  
<https://lawstuff.org.uk/>

Anti-Bullying Alliance  
<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Childnet – online safety resource that includes advice and guidance for young people/ parents and school staff on cyberbullying  
<http://www.childnet.com/>

## POLICY REVIEW DETAILS

<i>Version:</i>	1.4
<i>Reviewer:</i>	Jackie Van-West, Laurie Cornwell
<i>Approval body:</i>	Family Board
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## RELATED POLICIES

Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy  
Dignity at Work Policy  
Equality & Diversity Policy  
E-Safety Policy  
Exclusions Policy  
Health & Safety Policy  
OHC&AT Academy/College Safeguarding & Wellbeing Offers  
Positive Behaviour Policy  
Relationships and Sex Education Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Staff Mental Wealth, Health & Wellbeing Policy  
Student Mental Wealth, Health & Wellbeing Policy  
Whistleblowing Policy