



Introduction

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause elevated levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At PQA, we are committed to creating a strong culture and ethos that champions diversity and respect for difference, which places student's wellbeing at the heart of everything we do. We strive to provide a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our academies and **will not** be tolerated. All pupils should feel able to tell and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken. We are a **TELLING** place. This means that **anyone** who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a member of staff immediately.

What Is Bullying?

"Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008)

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

1. Indirect being unfriendly, isolating students (not letting them join in) spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding bags)
2. Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence
3. Verbal name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm
4. Cyber - All areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging mobile threats by text messaging & calls and misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

- Racial bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

PQA has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying that occur within the academy.

Bullying that takes place outside the academy and/or on private social media may not be within our control however, we will always listen, advise and support wherever possible.

Objectives of this Policy

- ❖ All staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- ❖ All staff should know what the policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- ❖ All staff and parents should know what the policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- ❖ At PQA we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- ❖ Bullying will not be tolerated

Implementation

Academies

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported whilst students are at the academy, the incident will be immediately reported to the Principal by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Principal
- The Principal will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

Students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Encourage interaction with students and staff
- Reassure the student for example: 'this is not your fault, you have done nothing wrong'
- Restore self-esteem and confidence – encourage to never feel afraid to speak up as they will always be heard.
- Praised for being brave to talk to someone

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by the Principal:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- Encouraging the efforts of the student, where appropriate in the aftermath of the incident, as they try to make that change. *It's easy to be punitive, accepting the child's wrong doing and showing the bully they can be accepted back into the community is important to everyone moving on.*
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the student

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Fixed-term exclusion
- Cancellation of Membership with immediate effect

Monitoring, evaluation and review

PQA will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout each academy.

Prevention

We will use some or all the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing and implementing a set of academy rules
- Using Drama, Film or Music to reinforce awareness
- Performing shows, scenes or creating films about bullying
- Performance pieces that have bullying within them, will also contain discussion on how it affects young people.

Signs and Symptoms

Many children and young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a student:

- ✚ is frightened of walking to or from the academy
- ✚ begs to be driven to the academy
- ✚ changes their usual routine
- ✚ is unwilling to go to the academy (phobic)
- ✚ 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
- ✚ uses excuses to miss attendance (headache, stomach ache etc)
- ✚ begins to suffer academically
- ✚ has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- ✚ asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- ✚ has Tuck Shop monies continually "lost"
- ✚ has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- ✚ becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- ✚ is bullying other children or siblings
- ✚ changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats)
- ✚ goes to bed earlier than usual
- ✚ is unable to sleep
- ✚ wets the bed
- ✚ is frightened to say what's wrong
- ✚ gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- ✚ is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- ✚ is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should always be investigated.