Limehurst Academy Policy Document

Anti-Bullying incorporating Cyberbullying Policy

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Review date: June 2020

Headteacher’s signature:

Chair of Governors’ signature:

Reviewer - ML
ANTI BULLYING INCORPORATING CYBERBULLYING

Introduction

Bullying contradicts the aims of Limehurst Academy, and contravenes a student’s basic right to feel safe and able to learn in School. If we recognise that bullying exists, and develop an agreed policy with staff, students, parents and link Governors to deal with it, then we are more likely to deal with it effectively.

Definitions

Bullying is:

- A conscious desire to intimidate, frighten or hurt another person
- Words or actions which frighten or hurt
- Deliberately making someone feel uncomfortable
- Physical, verbal or emotional
- Sustained over a period of time
- Cyberbullying using any electronic and communications equipment, network or software

Statement of Intent

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated. No-one at Limehurst Academy should have to put up with being hurt or frightened by another person. Students, staff, parents and Governors must work together to challenge and eliminate bullying.

We will not tolerate any form of bullying which pertains to, or is influenced by:

- Colour or complexion, including hair colour
- Clothing or costumes, including National dress
- Disability, whether visible or not
- Home or environment or evidence of social class or wealth
- School or Academy rivalry in the community
- Sexual orientation
- Sexist remarks or activities which demean or frighten the victim
- Taking of medication, including inhalers, medical equipment worn for medical reasons

The School will:

- always respond to reported incidents of bullying, and take them seriously
  This recognises the victim’s need, having taken the brave step of disclosing information, to see some immediate action; this does not necessarily mean that the bullying will stop immediately, especially if it has built up over a long period, as changing the bully’s behaviour takes time.

- take reasonable measure to protect the victim
  This could include separating the bully and victim, or building up peer support for the victim. Staff will, however, avoid over-protection as the victim must learn to help himself/herself. Victims of bullying can be referred to the Student Support Team for additional support.
• **talk to the victim, bully, any witness and record details**
  It is essential that all bullying incidents are properly documented and retained on record for future reference; the mere act of recording written information adds gravity to the situation, encourages objectivity, and is reassuring to the victim. An annual anti-bullying survey is taken across the school population. Statistics are compared to previous years and used to inform future planning action against bullying.

• **take action to prevent further bullying**
  School sanctions, which may include exclusions, would be applied in the event of threats or actual violence. Anti-bullying assemblies are held every November in conjunction with anti-bullying week.

• **take action to change the bully’s attitude**
  In many cases, this will require one meeting, but could need a planned and possibly lengthy process of discussion, counselling, mentoring or specialist interventions by agencies from outside school.

• **reconcile the students involved, if appropriate**
  This will depend on the exact circumstances, but would typically require a structured meeting, chaired by a teacher, and with peer support for the victim.

• **provide the victim with self-help strategies to restore self-esteem**
  Depending on the nature and extent of the bullying, this would include a series of regular meetings with the Student Support Team or external agencies/professionals.

**Key Principles Observed by Staff in Bullying Incidents**

- **Calmness**: reacting emotionally only adds to the bully’s fun
- **Objectivity**: details must be recorded neutrally, without bias
- **Reassurance**: the victim must not feel guilt
- **Consistency**: being aggressive to the bully is bullying in itself
- **Openness**: explanations of actions to the bully and victim must be clear
- **Empathy**: the bully should be encouraged to see the victim’s point of view
- **Communication**: parents of both bully and victim will be informed
APPENDIX I

CYBERBULLYING

Virtual Bullying

Bullying does not just happen face-to-face. Bullying can be very upsetting when it is done through phone calls or unpleasant texts or emails as when it is in person.

We call this **Cyber Bullying**

Cyberbullying means sending unpleasant or abusive text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices. There are different sorts of cyberbullying.

**Text message bullying** involves sending texts that are threatening or which cause distress.

**Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages. E-mail bullies often use made up names or someone else’s name to put the blame on them.

**Picture/video-clip bullying** through mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people.

**Phone call bullying** through mobile phones might involve silent calls or abusive messages. The bullies often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else’s phone to avoid being identified.

**Chat room bullying** involves sending threatening or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.

**Bullying through instant messaging** (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying. Children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct conversations online through social media platforms.

**Bullying via websites** includes the use of unpleasant blogs (web logs) or personal websites. An increase in social networking sites for young people has provided new opportunities for cyberbullying.

What can you do as a parent?

- Don’t wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your child understands how to use these technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Make sure they know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied.
- Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyberbullying. If they do have a problem, contact the school, the mobile network or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.
- Parental control software can restrict to whom your child sends emails to and from whom he or she receives them: it can also block access to some chat rooms.
- Moderated chat rooms are supervised by trained adults. Your ISP will tell you whether they provide moderated chat services.
- Find out what your child is doing online and who your child’s online friends are.

It is important that parents and carers ensure that their children are engaged in safe and responsible online behaviour. Some suggestions for parents to stay involved are:
• Keep the computer in a public place in the house. Check on what your child is doing.
• Set reasonable rules and guidelines for the amount of time your child spends using a computer and make sure they are kept to
• Search for your child’s name online, look at his or her profiles and postings on teen community sites, review web pages or blogs.
• Tell your child that you may review his or her private communication activities if you have reason to believe you will find unsafe behaviour.
• Ensure your child does not give out personal information to strangers.
• Watch out for secretive behaviour as you approach the computer, such as rapidly switching screens, and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file.
• Try and make the internet a family activity and get involved.

STOP IT NOW: What can young people do?

If you are being bullied, remember bullying is not your fault. Cyberbullying can be stopped and it can usually be traced.

• Don’t ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line.
• Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don’t get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.

There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying. For example, www.kidscape.org and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips:

BE SAFE FOLLOW THE RULES - STOP THE CYBERBULLIES

Text/Video Messaging

• You can turn off incoming messages.
• If bullying carries on you can change your phone number. Ask your Mobile Service Provider how to do this.
• Don’t reply to abusive or upsetting text or video messages. Your Mobile Service Provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

Email

• Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails.
• Don’t accept emails and don’t open files from people you do not know.
• Ask an adult to contact the sender’s ISP by writing abuse@ and then the host e.g. abuse@hotmail.com.

Web

• If the bullying is on the school website, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying was face-to-face.
Chat Room and Instant Messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It’s a good idea to use a nickname. Do not give out photos of yourself either.
- Do not accept messages from people you do not know.
- Remember some people in chat rooms may pretend to be your age but they may be adults.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.
- Think carefully about what you write - don’t leave yourself open to bullying.

**ALWAYS TELL AN ADULT**

Why should we report bullying incidents?

Sometimes young people do not want to report bullying incidents because they are frightened that this will make the situation worse but not reporting a bullying incident allows the bully to continue with their bullying behaviour. This is not good for the bully, who needs help in order to change their behaviour, and it is not good for those who are the victims.

If you are being subjected to this sort of unpleasantness then this should be treated as bullying and be reported to your Form Tutor or Head of Year.

1. Respect other people – online and off.
2. Do not spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including phone numbers and passwords.
3. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them, but tell someone you trust.
4. ‘Do as you would be done by!’ Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You are responsible for your own behaviour.

Make sure you don’t distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

There will be consequences for bullying behaviour. The consequences will vary according to the severity of the incident but all incidents of bullying will be treated seriously.

Once you have reported the bullying incident in school:

- A member of staff will talk to you and will go through what has happened with you.
- The incident will be logged and your Form Teacher or Head of Year, if they are not already dealing with the incident, will be informed.
- An investigation will take place. Your Head of Year may talk separately to the bully/bullies and to any witnesses.
- If it seems appropriate, you and the bully may meet with your Form Tutor or Head of Year to discuss what has been happening and to decide what actions will be taken.
- Some incidents may involve the school Police Community Support Officer.