

# Anti-Bullying Policy



**Approved by:** Board of directors

**Last reviewed on:** January 2023

**Next review due by:** January 2024

## 1. Introduction

The Ranch Dorset CIC are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment. All students have a right to learn and work in a safe, secure, and positive environment. Bullying of any kind (including bullying of staff and children by visitors) is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We will take immediate action, where we believe an individual may be at risk, or it is alleged that an individual is suspected of being bullied or is bullying others. Our primary concern, always, is the welfare and safety of all members of our community including children and young people, staff and visitors.

### 1.1 Purpose

- ✦ To seek to create a culture in which bullying of any kind is not accepted by anyone.
- ✦ To enable all staff to understand what constitutes bullying.
- ✦ To make it clear to individuals, staff, and parents that bullying is completely unacceptable.
- ✦ To provide a clear framework for dealing with incidents of bullying, ensuring that bullies are dealt with swiftly and firmly.
- ✦ To develop a culture where individuals should be able to tell if they believe they are being bullied and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- ✦ For all staff to be vigilant in recognising if bullying is taking place, and deal with it thoroughly and with sensitivity. Our aim is to promote positive relationships amongst all and to develop a culture in which individuals are listened to and their concerns taken seriously.
- ✦ To create a proactive 'prevention culture' through the maintenance of conditions where bullying is less likely to flourish and is more easily detected.
- ✦ To promote an understanding of the impact of bullying within our academy.

### 1.2 Legal Framework

This Policy fulfils the requirements of:

Education Act 2002.

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

Health and Social Care Act 2008

Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse and Improper Treatment.

DfE guidance 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (July 2017).

Children Act 1989,

Human Rights Act 1998

Equality Act 2010.

We also follow current DfE guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' 'Working together to safeguard children' (2018)

HM Government advice 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (2015) and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership's policies, procedures, guidance and protocols.

## 2. Scope

The policy applies to all incidents of bullying between young people whether they occur within or outside the settings including cyber bullying.

If there are concerns about young people being bullied by visitors, carers, or contractors, these will be addressed through the Whistleblowing / Safeguarding Policies.

Where there are concerns around staff bullying, these will be investigated thoroughly and addressed by Iain Woodbridge and the Governing Board.

## 3. Definition

The government defines bullying as: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion and belief, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), or because a child is adopted or is in care. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. A feature of bullying in education and residential settings is that its existence is not always immediately known or suspected by those in authority.

The Ranch recognises the seriousness of both physical and emotional bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence; for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If our staff consider that an offence may have been committed, we will seek assistance from the police.

For further information on the definition of bullying, forms of bullying, roles within bullying and signs and symptoms of bullying, see Appendix 1.

#### 4. Reporting bullying

If a child/young person is being bullied they are encouraged to not retaliate but to tell someone they trust about it such as a friend, family member or trusted adult.

Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying either in person, or by phoning or email.

Staff should follow their local procedures as outlined in Appendix 2

#### 5. Responding to bullying

When bullying has been reported, staff will:

- ✦ refer to local procedures as outlined in Appendix 2
- ✦ record the bullying in writing
- ✦ offer support to those who are the target of bullying
- ✦ pro-actively respond to the bully, who may require support
- ✦ assess whether parents and carers need to be involved
- ✦ assess whether any other authorities (such as police or the local authority) need to be involved,
- ✦ particularly where actions take place outside of the site

#### 6. Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and monitored and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for young people and staff found using any such language.

#### 7. Training

The Safeguarding lead Iain Woodbridge is responsible for ensuring that all staff receive regular training on all aspects of the anti-bullying policy.

#### 8. Roles & Responsibilities

All staff have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in The Ranch's efforts to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the children involved and follow the local procedures as outlined in Appendix 2.

Parents and carers should look out for potential signs of bullying such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour. Parents and carers should tell their child not to retaliate and support and encourage them to report the bullying. Parents and

carers can report an incident of bullying to the academy either in person, or by phoning or emailing.

Students should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for potential signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying. If students witness bullying, they should support the victim, encourage them to report the bullying and, if possible, accompany them to tell a trusted adult.

The Directors have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that The Ranch upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all students. They must ensure bullying is logged, incidents are reviewed and acted upon. Bullying trends should be analysed and reported via governance.

## **5. Implementation**

Iain Woodbridge has the responsibility for implementing this policy and the associated procedures.

## **6. Support, Advice and Communication**

Information and training on supporting students who are being bullied can be obtained through Iain Woodbridge

## **7. Review**

The policy will be reviewed by the board of directors every 12 months. Local procedures will be reviewed by The Ranch in line with any updates.

## Appendix 1

Further information about bullying.

### **Definition of bullying**

- ✦ The government defines bullying as: “Behaviour by an individual or group, usually
  - ✦ repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”
- ✦ All episodes of bullying involve an imbalance in physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone),
- ✦ intellectual and/or social power (having access to the support of a group or the capacity to socially isolate).
- ✦ The perpetrator(s) of which has (or at least appears to have) more power than the target of the bullying.
- ✦ Bullying, by its nature, is not a conflict between equals; but occurs when the perpetrator(s) of bullying has
- ✦ control over the relationship making it difficult for the person being bullied to defend themselves.
- ✦ Fear of future victimisation is another important factor to be taken into consideration, when determining
- ✦ whether an interaction between individuals or groups meets the threshold necessary, to be considered
- ✦ bullying. Research also suggests that, in some cases, intent to harm may actually be secondary to achieving
- ✦ another goal, such as gaining social power or obtaining material goods.
- ✦ Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or
- ✦ persistent – if it fulfils all the other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered particularly in
- ✦ cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying; and when children with disabilities are involved.
- ✦ Bullying can take place between children, between children and staff, or between staff; face-to-face, indirectly
- ✦ or using a range of cyberbullying methods.

## **Forms of bullying**

- ✦ People are bullied for a variety of reasons – and no reason. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on the grounds of race, religion, gender (including transgender and gender reassignment), sexual orientation, or because a child is in residential care, ‘looked-after’, adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might also be associated with socio-economic background, academic performance, special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities, appearance or health conditions. It might be motivated by actual differences between individuals, or perceived differences.
  
- ✦ People may experience different forms of bullying at different times and different forms of bullying at the same time. There is no “hierarchy” of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. ✦  
Bullying can take many forms and may include name-calling; taunting; mocking; making offensive comments about individuals and/or their families; kicking; hitting; pushing; fighting; taking or deliberately destroying belongings or intimidation by looks or gestures (through threats of violence).
- ✦ It may involve inappropriate touching; producing offensive graffiti; invasion of privacy; gossiping; spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours; or always ignoring or leaving someone out of groups (either physically or online). It is also bullying when a child is pressured to do something (e.g. chores), lie for others or otherwise act against their will by others.
- ✦ Cyberbullying may occur when an individual is tormented, threatened harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another individual or group using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It may occur via text messages, social media or gaming and can include the use of images and video. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories, as people can forward on content at the click of a button.

However, irrespective of the behaviour, it is important to appreciate that bullying depends on how it affects the person, not on what is being done. Different people are sensitive to different things. For example, teasing, arguing, play fighting and name-calling are not always bullying – but they can be if they affect somebody badly.

Bullying can be direct or indirect:

- ✦ Direct forms include physical violence or threats; verbal assaults and taunts; the destruction of property; extortion and unwanted sexual interest or contact.
- ✦ Indirect forms of bullying include ignoring and withdrawal of friendships; excluding and isolating young people; malicious gossip; offensive and threatening texting; spreading rumours and abusive or offensive graffiti.

Bullying may also include being forced to become involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour.

Emotional (indirect bullying) including isolation of others by a refusal to co-operate with them and exclusion - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), deliberately excluding from social groups or an activity by refusal to sit next to/ talk to/ work/ co-operate with others and refusal to follow staff instructions to do the above, or malicious rumours, emails or text messages, and also exclusion from play/discussions etc. with those whom they believe to be their friends.

Physical harm or its threat including the abuse of personal property – jostling, serious fighting, pushing, kicking, hitting, taking or hiding belongings, punching or any use of violence; deliberately destroying or damaging work or possessions or removing personal property, use of weapons/threatening use of weapon (or any object which could be used as a weapon), intimidation through physical gestures and actions.

Cyber – not occurring face to face but rather through electronic means including, but not limited to, social networking sites, internet and intranet sites, email, instant messaging, by mobile phone including through text messages and phone calls, photographs both real and manipulated and so on. . It can be particularly insidious because of the potential to follow individuals wherever they are.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- ✦ Race - Bullying directed at individuals of a certain race, culture, ethnicity, language, faith, community, national origin or national status. The distinctive feature of racist bullying is that the victim is attacked not as an individual but as the representative of a family, community or group.
- ✦ Culture or class – focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences or similar.
- ✦ Gender - sexist behaviour from name calling to physical sexual assault. It is the use of sexual
- ✦ language or negative stereotyping based on gender.
- ✦ Gender identity - transphobic behaviours related to an individual's gender identity
- ✦ Sexual orientation- Homophobic/biphobia - This is bullying, which is directed towards people who are openly gay, bisexual, are perceived as gay, or show characteristics. Heterosexual young people subject to homophobic bullying are less reluctant to report it as this may enforce the stereotypical way that they are already viewed by others, so sensitivity and positive support is required for victims.
- ✦ Religion or belief – Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom.
- ✦ Special Educational Needs and Disability – remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs such as Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- ✦ Related to another vulnerability – such as young carers or looked after children



## **Roles within bullying**

- ✦ Bullying is a complex behaviour - situations often involve a tangled web of misunderstandings, anxieties, insecurities and needs. However, different roles have been identified:
- ✦ The ringleader, the person who through their (social) power can direct bullying activity.
- ✦ Assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ringleader).
- ✦ Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing.
- ✦ Outsiders/bystanders who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour.
- ✦ Defenders, who try to intervene to stop the bullying or comfort children who experience bullying.

It should be noted that the same individual can adopt different roles at different times, or indeed at the same time (a bullied child might be bullying another child at the same time, or a seeming 'reinforcer' might become a 'defender' when the ringleader is not around).

## **Signs and symptoms of bullying**

A victim may indicate verbally, by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied.

- ✦ Adults should be aware of these possible signs, and they should investigate if a student:
- ✦ becomes frightened of walking or moving from one place to another
- ✦ does not want to use usual transport/ public bus or other mode of transport
- ✦ asks to be driven separately/ with certain adults changes their usual routines without obvious reason
- ✦ is unwilling to go to school, college or home begins to hide, truant, or avoid school/ going home
- ✦ becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- ✦ starts stammering or struggles to communicate in usual ways
- ✦ attempts or threatens self-harm, suicide or runs away
- ✦ cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- ✦ feels ill in the morning without specific symptoms
- ✦ begins to perform poorly in school or usual tasks
- ✦ comes home with clothes torn or property damaged
- ✦ has money or possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- ✦ asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- ✦ has unexplained marks, cuts or bruises
- ✦ frequently hungry at home or school (unable to eat due to anxiety)
- ✦ becomes unusually aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

- ✦ is bullying other children or siblings
- ✦ stops eating is frightened to say or communicate what is wrong
- ✦ gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- ✦ is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone (possible cyber bullying)
- ✦ is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received (possible cyber bullying)

Whilst some of our more vulnerable students exhibit some of these signs when they come to us for support, we should be vigilant about new signs/ behaviours developing, which could indicate bullying.

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

## **Appendix 2: Local Procedures:**

### **1) How to report**

Report to a staff member– such as a key worker, support worker or the Safeguard Lead Iain Woodbridge

Report bullying by: Emailing ( [theranchweymouth@gmail.com](mailto:theranchweymouth@gmail.com)) Phoning [07794851978]

Report to your parent, guardian, social worker or SEN co-ordinator

Call ChildLine to speak with someone in confidence on 0800 1111

### **2) How staff report suspected bullying**

Any bullying incidents or potential bullying incidents should be reported. The DSL should be informed by either email [woody.theranchweymouth@gmail.com](mailto:woody.theranchweymouth@gmail.com) or conversation.

### **3) Prejudice-based incidents**

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group.

It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted.

All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored.

All parties will be offered a debrief and attempts made for mediation. Individual support will be available for both parties.

Depending on the level of the incident a referral may be made to the safeguarding team and/or Police.

### **4. Site initiatives to prevent and tackle bullying**

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

The PSHE ASDAN programme of study includes opportunities for students to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent bullying. Key worker time provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise and to target specific interventions.

The whole site participates in outside events including Anti-bullying week and LGBTQ+ History Month and other relevant events.

The Ranch values of equality and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible

- ✦ Stereotypes are challenged by staff and students across the site
- ✦ Student-led programmes, offer support to all
- ✦ Working with parents and carers, and in partnership with community organisations, to tackle bullying where appropriate
- ✦ All incidents are discussed and actioned