PREVENTION OF BULLYING POLICY

2023-2024

Company Operations

ADO SERVICES C.I.C.

Incorporating ADO River Valley

Version 2.5 © 2023

Current Version Valid from 1st February 2023

Next Scheduled Review – February 2024

Reviewed by the ADO Management Committee March 2023

1 Prevention of Bullying Overview

It is the policy of ADO Services to address the behaviour and therefore the minimisation of bullying of children, young people and adults in our care at our school.

The proprietors of ADO River Valley are aware of their legal responsibility under *The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2019* to ensure that bullying is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up the implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy. Consequently, this policy will be revised annually in consultation with staff, directors, management committee, students and parents-carers of ADO River Valley, using version and change control practises, to ensure our approach to anti-bullying is maintained.

2. Prevention of Bullying Introduction

We aim to present all children, and young people (CYP) with a code of behaviour when in ADO River Valley. We promote the development of a sense of right and wrong by teaching them the appropriate and recognising when students choose more positive ways to act and by discouraging unwanted behaviour.

We believe that every child and young person (CYP) should be free to develop in all aspects of their life in education and as such we seek to promote an environment in which all students feel valued and accepted as unique individuals, in the family of the school community.

We aim to ensure that no student becomes a victim of any form of bullying. Consequently, the work that we carry out fosters an environment where bullying behaviour is known to be unacceptable. We will always take seriously any reports of bullying and respond appropriately.

Intrinsic to our belief, we follow values where every individual is unique and of inherent value. Our behaviour towards one another should reflect these values and as such help fulfil our overall aims and objectives.

All our Values, Aims and Objectives can be found in the ADO Library on our main website or follow the links in Section 12 of this document.

2. Bullying Scope

2.1 What Is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Bullying at school: Bullying - a definition - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a CYP is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between CYP, or perceived differences. As such all staff are clear about the Protected Characteristics, as prescribed in the *Equality Act 2010*, which covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority, but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the instigator(s) and the victim(s). This could involve instigators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance

to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

ADO staff work hard to ensure that a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying exists and that a shared agreement that it is wrong persists. Students can and should challenge such behaviour with the support of the staff in the school.

2.2 Types of Bullying

We understand that bullying may take many forms, but the following eight types outline the main areas:

- **Physical:** Pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching and any other forms of violence, threats ("give me your dinner money or you'll be sorry").
- **Verbal**: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, insulting remarks, making derogatory comments about a person's ethnicity or sexual orientation etc.
- **Emotional**: Exclusion, isolation, tormenting (hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation, spreading stories about someone excluding them from social groups etc.
- **Racist**: Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual:** Unwanted physical contact, verbal abuse, sexting
- **Sexist**: Physical or verbal abuse based on misconceptions about typical gender norms. Very often, sexist attitudes manifest themselves in homophobic bullying and any young person who is perceived as not expressing stereotypically masculine or feminine behaviour expected of their sex, might experience homophobic bullying.
- **Homophobic**: Physical or verbal abuse based on stereotyping sexual orientation (e.g. transphobic and bi-phobic), and whether the target is gay.
- **Cyber Bullying**: The misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages (text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) or actions that are threatening and or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

Within 'types of bullying' comes 'Child on Child' Abuse. This occurs when a young person is exploited, teased, or harmed by their peers who are a similar age.

Some examples of Child on Child Abuse are:

- Physical and sexual abuse
- Sexual harassment and violence
- Emotional harm
- Online bullying
- Gang activity

2.3 Cyber Bullying

With smart devices and social media being accessed by almost all students , this particular area is highlighted as a higher risk due to the coverage and opportunity to bully away from the educational setting. Behaviour that is classed as cyber bullying includes:

- Abusive comments, rumours, gossip and threats made over the internet or using digital communications this includes internet trolling.
- Sharing pictures, videos or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause humiliation or harm.
- Hacking into someone's e-mail, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send abusive or inappropriate content while posing as that person.
- Creating specific websites that negatively target an individual or group typically by posting content that intends to ostracise, humiliate and or threaten.
- Blackmail or pressuring someone to do something online they do not want to such as sending a sexually explicit image.

2.4 Consequences of Bullying

If left unaddressed, bullying which takes place in school can have a devastating effect on students. It can:

- Be a barrier to their learning

- Be detrimental to their mental health and in some cases could cause self-harm or suicide

- Affect an individual during childhood

- Have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood

- Affect the character and development of the person(s) doing the bullying, including those who know the bullying is going on but do nothing to challenge it.

3. Responsibilities

The responsibilities align with a hierarchical structure across ADO with several layers of escalation built into safeguarding, reporting, flag raising and whistleblowing. The overall responsibility for monitoring the compliance of the prevention of bullying within the ADO River Valley will be the Executive Head. The Head will have secondary overall responsibility and the team leaders will provide tertiary and first line support. All ADO staff supporting the team will be delegated to ensure the prevention of bullying is adhered to. In addition, we will:

- Ensure that all directors, management committee, members of staff, students and parents-carers have a clear understanding of what bullying is and why it needs to be prevented.
- Ensure that all stakeholders are aware of how they should respond if bullying occurs within the education service.
- We have an expectation that parent-carers will support the service in imposing sanctions if their CYP is responsible for bullying.
- All stakeholders will know that a zero tolerance approach to bullying will be the norm.
- If bullying occurs, all students should be able to tell a member of staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

4. Importance of Challenging Bullying Behaviour

The importance of challenging bullying behaviour is summarised below:

- The safety and wellbeing of students who are being bullied. Student's lives are made miserable; they may suffer injury, they may become unhappy about coming to the educational setting.
- Over time, they are likely to lose confidence and self-esteem which may have long term effects on character and personality.
- Persistently bullied students are more likely to be depressed as young adults and may move to self-harm or other damaging behaviours.
- The unhappiness of being bullied is likely to affect the student's ability to concentrate and their level of educational achievement will suffer. A sense of security is important in a learning community, for students to reach their learning potential and be happy in education.
- Unchallenged, bullying will have a wider, negative effect in the educational setting and undermine the confidence of students and their parent-carers in the service providers ability to provide an environment where CYP are safe and able to fulfil their potential.
- The instigator, victim and other students in the setting are at risk from harm from the behaviour.

5. Bullying Outside of the Setting

ADO Staff have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the setting and premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the *Education and Inspections Act 2006* say that disciplinary powers can be used to address students' conduct when they are not on the service providers premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of ADO staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the service provider to regulate students' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying or cyber bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the premises, such as on private or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a local centre.

Where bullying outside the premises is reported to ADO staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against the student. If the mis-behaviour could be criminal or possess a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Whilst ADO staff have the power to discipline students for bullying occurring outside the premises, they can only impose and implement disciplinary sanction on the premises or when the student is under the lawful control of staff, for instance in an offsite trip.

6. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Students may show signs or exhibit behaviour that they are being bullied and staff should be aware of these possible signs and that they should be investigated. Such changes may be indicators that a student is being bullied within the setting. If ADO staff in the setting notices any of these indicators they must follow the procedures outlined in this policy.

Specific signs may be as follows:

- Changes in a student's emotional state e.g. shyness, being unwilling to try new things or becoming angry towards others.
- Unwilling to partake in certain activities, particularly if other students are involved.
- Comments made by students to staff in confidence.
- Fear of walking to or from the premises
- Reluctance or refusal to go to the provision on the public bus
- Begging to be driven to the provision, when normally they would walk
- Changes to their usual routine
- Unwilling to go to the provision
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn or anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or running away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly at their key stage work
- Comes home with clothes torn or property damaged
- Has possessions that 'go missing'
- Asks for money or starts to steal money (to pay a bully)
- Has dinner money or other money that is continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes home hungry (money or lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Bullies other children or siblings
- Stops eating

- Afraid to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- Parent-Carer raising concerns for their CYP within the setting.

These indicators could suggest other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and be investigated

There are many reasons why students might be bullied for example:

- They are good at what they do
- They are intelligent, determined and creative
- They have a personal vulnerability
- They have few or no friends, or conversely, they are popular and well liked
- They have physical features that attract attention
- They have an illness or a disability
- They have different cultural or religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- They are carers, looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.

7. Prevention of Bullying

Bullying may be prevented through fostering an attitude of mutual acceptance and by promoting mutual respect and acceptance through:

- The way we promote and model relationships during everyday life at the setting.
- The use of different seating arrangements in different subjects, remaining sensitive to the needs of students in different subjects.
- Specific teaching on relevant areas e.g. friendship, acceptance, differences etc.
- Providing opportunities to foster relationships, and to minimise opportunities for bullying e.g. activities at break times where students can be constructively occupied.
- Designated areas where students can gather safely under some level of adult supervision.
- Supervised lunchtime sessions where students learn to communicate openly and honestly with one another e.g. involvement in lunchtime clubs.
- Using a 'buddy system' for new students.

Problems can be identified by:

- Encouraging students to review the ADO anti-bullying policy annually and so raise awareness.
- Identify areas within the premises where bullying could more readily occur, and arrange for such areas to be supervised more regularly.

ADO Staff are encouraged to:

- Promote a climate where speaking ill of each other is discouraged.
- Deal firmly and swiftly where they overhear pupils speaking ill of each other.
- Capitalise on such occasions to reinforce publicly our positive school values and ensure pupils understand that the school does not accept bullying.

The ADO Education team will ensure that:

- We will promote a climate of safe reporting and establish safe channels of communication for all students e.g. through a trusted friend, parent, senior student, or direct to a member of staff.
- We will develop parent-staff communications by providing information of this policy to parents, ensuring all new parents and students understand our anti-bullying policy.
- We will provide training for staff, so that they are equipped to ask the 'right questions.'

8. Dealing With Bullying Incidents

If ADO Staff identify or are informed of bullying the following course of action will be required:

- Escalate to a senior member of the team or team leader and to the appropriate persons e.g. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).
- Inform colleagues if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant, e.g. unsupervised toilets.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour by following guidelines as set out in the **Behaviour Modification Policy**.

If you are a member of staff involved in a bullying incident you must in all cases complete an **Incident Form** which should be escalated to your Line Manager. In all cases the correct **Escalation Procedure** should be followed. In serious cases the Headteacher should be in the escalation loop. For CYP, the Incident Form must be reviewed and communicated with the Parent-Carer. In serious cases of bullying the **Safeguarding Policy** escalation procedure must be followed.

If you a member of ADO Staff is involved in the bullying an escalation to the Head is required immediately, accompanied by an Incident Form. The incident should be taken seriously and the member of staff will need to be removed from the scene awaiting instruction from The Head. In all these cases it is important to remain calm

Staff can ensure they follow these guidelines:

- Remain calm; you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control of the situation.
- Act as quickly as possible.
- Think hard about whether your action needs to be private or public; who are the students involved?
- Reassure the victim(s), don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- Offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s).
- Make it plain to the bully that you disapprove.
- Encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view.
- Punish the bully if you have to but be very careful how you do this. Reacting aggressively or punitively gives the message that it is all right to bully if you have the power.
- Explain clearly the punishment and why it is being given.
- Make sure the incident does not live on through reminders from you.
- Try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence of the incident, if you uncover the trigger factor.
- Consider the reasons why the instigator was bullying, is there a safeguarding risk to this individual also?
- If you are unsure, consult the team leader

It is important not to be:

- Be overprotective and refuse to allow the victim to help him or herself.
- Assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour, with the bully. We are a school which promotes positive and healthy behaviours, and working with the individual to amend their behaviours into being more positive is our preferred approach.
- Keep the whole incident a secret because you have dealt with it.
- Try to hide the incident from the stakeholders of the victim or of the bully.

When a student shows signs of being a victim of bullying, but there is no clear evidence of bullying taking place, the following procedure is recommended. It can be referred to as the 'no blame' approach.

The 'victim' needs to be made to feel that the complaints or concerns are being heard. Establish clearly how the student is feeling and why. Get them permission to share these 'feelings' with others in the group. Get the student to understand that we are not seeking to blame anyone, but we are looking for everyone, including the 'victim', to take responsibility for their own future actions.

Talk to other members of the group either individually or corporately about how the 'victim' is feeling and ask questions such as:

- "Were they aware of this?"
- "Why does he/she/they feel like this?"
- "What can be done to help them?"

Make them aware of the power of their words. Explain the 'hearing' process whereby what we say gets filtered by the hearers' feelings and emotions - often to mean something we never intended to say. Consider such questions as:

- "Are there things they have said that could have been misinterpreted?"
- "How can they communicate differently?"

Avoid use of terms 'bullied', 'victim', 'bully' etc in these discussions. Ideally, work towards getting the 'victim' to agree to sit with the 'bullies', so that open sharing of one another's feelings can be expressed, forgiveness verbalised, and new intentions verbalised - in front of a third-party witness (e.g. Another ADO Staff member).

Alternatively, the 'victim' may prefer to be helped by being supported by older students and also by trusted members of their own year group, where possible. It may be possible for the older students to achieve the same result, as an ADO staff member, through a more informal approach, speaking on behalf of the 'victim'.

9 Monitoring The Policy

Monitoring the policy is the responsibility of all the stakeholders. The source of information of a bullying incident can come from a number of sources, so it is important to follow Safeguarding procedures.

All students have an important role to play. Students are encouraged to challenge possible bullying themselves. They should be able to talk to a member of staff at any time in confidence.

10. Review

All ADO policies and procedures follow ITIL guidelines to ensure version control, change control and release management of any documents. As a matter of policy, documents can be updated at any time to reflect changes to ADO procedures, legal changes, OFSTED directives or any other reason to ensure the policies and procedures are accurate and correct. This involves consultation with stakeholders and approval from the directors. All policies and procedures are reviewed at the very least on an annual basis. Regular communication through newsletters, social media, text systems and through our website within the ADO Library is part of our Release Management.

11 Charter

To ensure 'buy-in' from all our stakeholders a charter of key points is published that ensures:

1.   We admit that bullying can go on within our school.

2.   We are aware of what is meant by 'bullying'.

3.   We all have the ability to bully because no one is perfect.

4.   Bullying behaviour is damaging and can have serious consequences for the person being bullied, but in a different way, for the person or persons who bully.

5.   Bullying behaviour can go on anywhere and at any time, but there are key times and key places that staff as well as students should be aware of.

6.   As students, we must take responsibility for our own behaviour.

7.   This means exercising self-control and showing each other respect.

8.   If we witness bullying, we must report it following our agreed policy for challenging bullying behaviour.

9.   I agree with the policy and know that I must take responsibility to see that that our policy works.

12 References

Internal ADO References include:

Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Modification Policy

Incident Form

Escalation Procedure

ADO Values

ADO Aims and Objectives

All these documents can be found in the ADO Library at:

Policies and Procedures (adorivervalley.co.uk)

Useful External References include:

The Education Act 2002

Department for Education (2017). Preventing and tackling bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies. Retrieved from
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

The Equality Act 2010. Retrieved from
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

The Education and Inspections Act 2006. Retrieved from
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Retrieved from
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made

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14. Contact

This document was produced by the ADO Operations Consultancy Team using the guidance provided by Garrie-John Barnes. This version supersedes any previous versions and will be reviewed annually.

All correspondence with regard to this policy, or any other operational policy and procedure should be directed to the ADO Business Operations and Support Executive by e-mailing gmp@adoservices.co.uk or calling 0208 855 6778, requesting to speak to Gary McHolland-Pilcher or in writing, ADO Services CIC, Head Office, 126 Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 3DP.

15 Table of Changes (See Next Page)

Annex A: Table of changes from February 2023. This table explains where we made changes.

Summary	About the Guidance
Varied throughout document	The terms management team/ proprietor has been adjusted to The Senior Leadership Team/ Management Committee.
Page 1 – Section 2 Prevention of Bullying Introduction	Update to first paragraph and emphasis on positive actions
Page 2 – Bullying	Full update on definitions of bullying
Page 9	Assume that the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour, with the bully. We are a school which promotes positive and healthy behaviours, and working with the individual to amend their behaviours into being more positive is our preferred approach.