



a revolutionary response to school

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Rationale**

According to the Anti-Bullying Alliance, bullying is defined as, 'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.'

At Atelier 21, we believe that bullying of any kind is unacceptable. We recognise that bullying is harmful and can cause fear, distress, and hinder academic and personal achievement. In extreme cases, bullying can lead to serious mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, and even loss of life. The impact of bullying extends beyond the victim; it negatively affects witnesses and can damage relationships within the school community, impacting individual wellbeing, social groups, class dynamics, and the overall school culture.

The Education Act 2002, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and the Equality Act 2010 outline the school's legal responsibility to prevent and address bullying. Preventing all forms of bullying is a critical component of safeguarding children. Any bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Atelier 21 upholds a comprehensive behaviour management policy and adheres to anti-discrimination laws. All staff members are committed to actively preventing discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within our school environment.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to the proprietor, staff and pupils.

### **Aims**

- to safeguard all pupils and staff
- to encourage co-operation, care for others, tolerance, respect and harmony
- to ensure that all pupils can learn in a safe, caring, friendly and supportive environment.
- to ensure that pupils understand the harm that bullying, in person or online, can do
- to ensure that pupils understand that bullying in any form is unacceptable in school or in their daily lives
- to ensure that pupils know they will be listened to

- to ensure that all pupils understand their responsibility to report any incidents of bullying
- to ensure that any incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively
- to ensure that pupils understand the protected characteristics and their responsibilities in this area:

Bullying can be:

### **Emotional Bullying**

Emotional bullying involves behaviours that cause psychological harm to the victim. This can include being deliberately unfriendly, excluding someone from a group or activity, tormenting behaviours such as hiding possessions, making threats, or engaging in coercive acts like hazing or initiation ceremonies. The aim is often to undermine the victim's self-esteem and sense of belonging.

### **Physical Bullying**

Physical bullying includes any form of aggressive physical contact intended to harm or intimidate another person. This can involve actions like pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or any other use or threat of violence. Physical bullying can cause both immediate harm and long-term fear and anxiety in the victim.

### **Racist Bullying**

Racist bullying is any form of bullying based on a person's race, ethnicity, or nationality. This can include racial taunts, offensive graffiti, discriminatory gestures, or violence. It perpetuates intolerance and discrimination and can have severe emotional and psychological impacts on the targeted individual.

### **Religious Bullying**

Religious bullying involves targeting someone based on their religion or beliefs. It can include derogatory comments, exclusion, mocking religious practices, or actions like anti-Semitic or Islamophobic behaviour. Religious bullying not only affects the victim's self-esteem but also disrespects their personal beliefs and values.

### **Gender-Based Bullying**

Gender-based bullying involves harassment or bullying behaviours related to a person's gender, gender identity, or non-conformity to traditional gender roles and stereotypes. It can affect anyone who does not fit into rigid gender expectations and may include derogatory comments, exclusion, or physical harassment.

### **Sexual Bullying**

Sexual bullying includes any unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, or behaviours intended to demean someone based on their sexuality. This can range from sharing inappropriate images to making sexually explicit remarks, sexual harassment, or violence. It infringes on personal boundaries and can lead to serious emotional and psychological harm.

### **Homophobic, Biphobic, or Transphobic Bullying**

This form of bullying targets individuals based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or non-binary. It includes derogatory comments, exclusion, and any form of harassment that undermines someone's identity or makes them feel unsafe.

### **Bullying Related to Special Needs and Disability**

This type of bullying targets individuals because of their special educational needs or disabilities. It can include name-calling, exclusion, physical aggression, or mocking the person's abilities. Students with SEND are particularly vulnerable, and such bullying can significantly impact their educational experience and well-being.

### **Verbal Bullying**

Verbal bullying involves the use of words to hurt, demean, or intimidate someone. This can include name-calling, using homophobic, racist, or religious slurs, sarcasm, spreading rumours, or persistent teasing. Verbal bullying can be just as harmful as physical bullying and often has a lasting impact on the victim's self-esteem.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying involves the misuse of digital technology to harm, threaten, or intimidate someone. This includes sending threatening messages, spreading harmful content on social media, uploading inappropriate images or videos, sharing nudes or semi-nudes without consent, and the unauthorized capture of images or video footage. Cyberbullying can be particularly pervasive as it extends beyond the school environment and into the victim's private life, making it difficult to escape.

### **Social bullying, also known as relational bullying**

This involves harming someone's reputation or relationships within a peer group. It is often subtle and can be harder to recognize than physical or verbal bullying, but its impact can be just as damaging. This form of bullying includes behaviours such as spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups or activities, manipulating friendships, making others look foolish, and other actions intended to humiliate or isolate the victim. Social bullying is often carried out in person but can also occur online, making it a form of cyberbullying.

The goal of social bullying is typically to control or damage the social standing of the targeted individual, often to assert dominance or gain popularity. It exploits the power dynamics within peer groups and can be particularly distressing because it attacks a person's sense of belonging and self-worth. Understanding and addressing social bullying is crucial to creating a supportive and inclusive environment, as it aligns with the values of respect, empathy, and community that schools like Atelier 21 strive to promote.

### **Banter and Respectful Interaction:**

At Atelier 21, we acknowledge that what some may perceive as 'banter' can occur within social interactions among friends and may involve light-hearted teasing or joking. However, it is crucial to distinguish between harmless interactions and those that may be harmful or constitute bullying.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviour that makes others feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or disrespected, regardless of the intention behind it. Banter is not acceptable when it:

1. Would be upsetting if the same comments or actions were directed at you or someone else.
2. Is hurtful, demeaning, or targets an individual's personal characteristics or vulnerabilities.
3. Involves individuals who are not friends or do not share a mutual understanding that the interaction is friendly.
4. Continues after someone has asked for it to stop.
5. Causes discomfort or distress to the target, particularly if the target is not laughing or is showing signs of being upset.
6. Focuses on sensitive areas such as insecurities, protected characteristics (e.g., race, gender, disability, or sexuality), or any aspect that could be perceived as discriminatory.

Atelier 21 is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where all students feel safe and respected. All members of our community are expected to engage in interactions that uphold our values of kindness, respect, and consideration for others' feelings. Any behaviour that does not meet these standards will be addressed in accordance with our anti-bullying policy and safeguarding procedures.

In alignment with the KCSIE guidance, Anti-Bullying Alliance information, and Atelier 21 school values, pupils will be educated on the various roles that individuals may play in bullying situations. These roles include the ringleader, who initiates the bullying; the assistant, who actively participates; the reinforcer, who encourages the behaviour; the

target, who is the victim of the bullying; the defender, who stands up against the bullying; and the bystander, who witnesses the bullying without intervening. Emphasis will be placed on understanding how inaction or indirect involvement, such as being a bystander, can contribute to the perpetuation of bullying. Students will learn the importance of empathy, taking responsibility, and the value of actively supporting peers in creating a positive, inclusive environment that aligns with our school's commitment to respect, kindness, and community support.

All stakeholders should realise that bullying can be the early stage of more complex and dangerous abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be notified about incidents of bullying and all incidents will be recorded on CPOMS. This will be evaluated by the Executive Head on a termly basis so that issues or concerns are identified or eradicated. If pupils engage in persistent bullying and they do not respond to the school's strategies to improve their behaviour, they may be subject to short term or permanent exclusion. The Executive Head will report cases of bullying to the proprietor.

Bullying takes place because:

- the perpetrator lacks confidence.
- their actions make them feel powerful or allow them to do as they please
- they are insecure or want to fit in with a group
- they fear other's differences.
- they are jealous.
- they are unhappy.
- they are copying something they have seen or something that has been done to them.

Staff must be vigilant and deal with bullying promptly. All staff must read the anti-bullying policy and are trained to deal with bullying during safeguarding training, and yearly peer on peer bullying courses. Staff must understand the impact of bullying. All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each child's response to bullying is unique, however, some signs that might indicate a bullying issue are:

- depression and anxiety
- increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness
- loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- unexplained injuries
- lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics or jewellery
- frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- changes in eating habits, skipping meals or binge eating, coming home hungry because they have not eaten lunch
- difficulty sleeping or nightmares.
- declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork or not wanting to go to school.
- sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations

- self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, self-harming or suicidal thoughts.

All staff must be aware of their roles and responsibilities and how everyone can play a part in preventing bullying, including online, when they find themselves a bystander. They must be aware of the procedures for reporting and tackling bullying. They must commit to creating a school culture where bullying has no place or opportunity to thrive. The proprietor will ensure strategies to prevent bullying are in place, these will include:

- the consistent promotion of the school's behaviour management policy
- consultation with students on drawing up a pupil code of conduct – known as School Agreements, and strategies to promote positive behaviour and prevent bullying
- initiatives such as anti-bullying week
- peer mentors
- training for all staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy
- rigorous supervision of pupils
- identification of pupils who may be at risk of bullying or being bullied
- information for parents about the steps to take if they suspect their child is being bullied
- clear mobile phone policy (Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils in place)
- the celebration of the protected characteristics and differences between people
- students acting as anti-bullying ambassadors.
- filtering of all online communication (Impero), teaching pupils how to use digital technologies safely
- PSHE curriculum
- effective recording systems – CPOMs with BULLYING as a tag.
- work with multi-agency teams where appropriate.
- contact with parents.
- challenging inappropriate language or comments

Staff and pupils should recognise that not all hurtful incidents constitute bullying. Situations such as being accidentally bumped, not being invited to social events, disagreements, isolated hurtful remarks, or temporary fallouts with friends do not necessarily amount to bullying. However, it is crucial for staff to investigate these incidents thoroughly to determine whether they have a bullying nature, as bullying involves a repetitive pattern, intent to harm, and a power imbalance.

When addressing incidents, staff should be sensitive to the developmental stage, individual needs, and abilities of the pupils involved, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It is important to acknowledge that younger children may not always demonstrate empathy, and pupils with SEND might struggle to understand the impact of their actions on others. Additionally, students with SEND may be more vulnerable to being targeted by bullying, so tailored support,

increased supervision, or special arrangements may be necessary to ensure their safety and inclusion.

Atelier 21 is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where every pupil feels valued and respected. Our approach emphasises understanding, empathy, and the importance of positive relationships, in line with our school's values of kindness, respect, and community. Staff are encouraged to guide pupils in developing these values while maintaining a vigilant and proactive stance against all forms of bullying.

### **Bullying in the workplace**

Where the victim and perpetrator are adults, bullying constitutes criminal behaviour, stalking or harassment. If there is an incident where an adult is bullying a child a report will be made to the DSL, and it will be treated as a safeguarding incident. These incidents are taken very seriously. The Headteacher will deal with this, and formal action will be taken where necessary. Incidents may be escalated to the proprietor, and this could result in disciplinary action or the involvement of the police and children's services.

### **Cyberbullying**

At Atelier 21, we recognise that cyberbullying is a serious form of bullying that involves the use of digital technology, including social media, messaging platforms, emails, gaming, and any other online space. Cyberbullying can occur at any time and can reach a person even when they are alone. It can involve a range of harmful behaviours such as threats, harassment, spreading false information, and exclusion, all of which can have a significant negative impact on a student's mental health and wellbeing.

Definition:

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to:

1. Harassment: Repeatedly sending hurtful, offensive, or threatening messages via digital platforms.
2. Exclusion: Intentionally excluding someone from online groups or activities.
3. Doxing: Sharing personal or private information about someone without their consent.
4. Spreading False Information or Rumours: Posting or sharing false, damaging, or humiliating information about someone.
5. Impersonation: Pretending to be someone else online to cause harm or embarrassment.
6. Image-Based Abuse: Sharing or threatening to share inappropriate images or videos, including sending nudes or semi-nudes without consent.
7. Trolling: Deliberately provoking others online to elicit angry or upset responses.

School's Approach:

1. **Zero Tolerance:** Atelier 21 maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards cyberbullying. All reports of cyberbullying will be taken seriously and investigated promptly by the DSL/Executive Head.
2. **Education and Awareness:** Students, staff, and parents will receive education on safe and responsible online behaviour, including the potential impacts of cyberbullying and how to prevent it.
3. **Reporting and Support:** Students are encouraged to report any incidents of cyberbullying to a trusted adult or directly to school staff. The school will provide support to those affected, ensuring their safety and wellbeing are prioritised.
4. **Response and Consequences:** The school will respond to incidents of cyberbullying in accordance with our behaviour management and safeguarding policies. Consequences may include loss of privileges, parental involvement, restorative practices, or in severe cases, referral to external agencies or law enforcement.
5. **Parental Involvement:** Parents will be informed of incidents involving their children and will be involved in discussions on how to address and resolve the situation effectively.
6. **Preventative Measures:** The school will employ preventative measures such as monitoring the use of school devices, enforcing internet safety rules, and working with students to develop digital resilience.

### **Strategies to combat bullying**

Pupils can discuss and implement school policies. Through discussion they are helped to understand that rules exist to protect the school community. Pupils will draw up a agreements which will inform their behaviour in and outside school.

The wider curriculum including personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE), social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC), history, English and science lessons will provide pupils with an understanding of and respect for the differences between people and avoid prejudice-based language.

School meetings, drama, literature, participation in anti-bullying activities and acting as peer mentors will deepen pupils' understanding.

### **Reporting, Recording, and Responding to Bullying Incidents**

At Atelier 21, we take all incidents of bullying seriously and respond promptly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students. Our approach emphasises restorative practices, accountability, and the active involvement of our leadership team, particularly the Assistant Head - Values, to reinforce our commitment to tackling bullying.

#### **Stage 1: Initial Response**

1. **Immediate Action by Staff:**



If this is the first incident involving the alleged perpetrator, the incident will be addressed immediately by the staff member who was approached or who observed the incident. The staff member will inform the Assistant Head - Values who will lead the investigation with the support of the member of staff.

2. Recording the Incident:

The Assistant Head - Values will document what occurred. The incident will be recorded on CPOMS, including the nature of the incident and the actions taken.

3. Investigation and Restorative Approach:

The Assistant Head - Values will investigate the incident and resolve it in line with the school's behaviour policy using a restorative approach. The perpetrator will be helped to understand the impact of their actions on the victim.

4. Parental Involvement:

The Assistant Head - Values will communicate with the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator(s) to discuss the incident and the steps taken.

5. Monitoring:

Class teachers will be asked to monitor specific areas to ensure that the bullying does not continue.

## **Stage 2: Escalation and Serious Incidents**

1. Escalation Criteria:

If the bullying is serious, repeated, involves discriminatory behaviours (such as racist, homophobic, or sexual harassment), or if the school believes that victims or perpetrators are at risk, the matter will be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Executive Head.

2. Further Investigation:

The DSL/Executive Head will interview the victim, perpetrator, and any witnesses. The outcomes of these interviews will be thoroughly documented.

3. Safeguarding Considerations:

In incidents of a sexual nature, both the victim and the perpetrator will be considered at risk. If there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the school will notify the police or children's services.

4. External Agency Involvement:

If a safeguarding incident has occurred, the DSL/Executive Head will contact the local authority safeguarding team and the police if necessary. External agencies will then handle the investigation.

5. Parental Notification:

Parents of both the victim and the perpetrator(s) will be informed of the situation and any actions taken by the school.

6. Confiscation of Devices:

If bullying involves digital devices, such as mobile phones or laptops, these may be confiscated if believed to be linked to the bullying. School staff will not view any images on these devices; instead, they will be handed over to the police or local authority safeguarding team.

7. Consequences:

Serious incidents may result in disciplinary actions, including temporary or permanent exclusion, and could involve external agencies or legal prosecution.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

- Incident Review:

All bullying incidents will remain on the SLT agenda for a term and a half to ensure interventions and support have been effective. All cases will be reviewed each half term by SLT, to identify patterns of behaviour or areas where further action is needed. This will help the school to continuously improve its practice in preventing and responding to bullying.

- Policy Review:

The anti-bullying policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any changes in guidance or legislation to ensure it remains effective and compliant with current standards.

- Reporting to Authorities:

Racist incidents will be reported to the local authority in line with statutory requirements.

### **Mental health and Wellbeing**

At Atelier 21, we recognise the importance of supporting the mental health and wellbeing of both the victim and the perpetrator throughout and after the bullying intervention process. We are committed to providing a compassionate and supportive environment that addresses the emotional needs of all students involved. For the victim, this includes access to counselling, peer support, and regular check-ins to ensure they feel safe and supported. For the perpetrator, we offer restorative interventions, guidance, and mental

health support to help them understand the impact of their actions and develop healthier behaviours. Our approach aims to promote healing, resilience, and positive relationships, ensuring that all students can thrive within a respectful and caring school community.

**To be read in conjunction with:**

- [DfE - Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies \(July 2017\)](#)
- [DfE - Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff \(2014\)](#)
- [Positive Relationship Policy](#)
- E-Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE) Policy
- Bring Our Own Device Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- DfE - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024
- Equality Act 2010

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