

## Blackpool FC Community Trust

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# Anti-Bullying Policy

## August 2023

### Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents and carers about this policy when their children are referred to the BFC School.

The policy is referred to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Trustees on an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Trustees in August 2022.

Signature

Head of School

Date:

Signature

Chair of Trustees

Date:

## **Policy Statement**

All cases of bullying are serious, whether physical or emotional/psychological. The aim of the policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

All members of the community, including Trustees, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the school policy on bullying. Therefore the aim of the policy is to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it.

Bullying is an antisocial behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

### **This policy aims to:**

- Define bullying for the school community.
- Communicate key issues to students, staff and parents.
- Provide a framework to address all bullying incidents effectively.

This policy is available on the school website, the shared staff area on the school network and on request from the Head of School in hard copy.

It should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Cyberbullying Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- SEN Policy
- PSHE Scheme of Work

## INTRODUCTION

At BFC School we are agreed that every individual has the right to learn free from the fear of bullying in all its various forms. We aim to create an inclusive environment where all students feel safe and are able to fulfil their potential and where the rights of every individual are upheld. Our objective is to ensure that all young people are supported to achieve the objectives of Every Child Matters so that they can grow into respectful, confident and socially and emotionally healthy adults.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

### Definition of bullying

***“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.*”**

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 can be:

<b>Emotional</b>	Isolating an individual. Shunning peers and excluding them from games, lunchroom chatter, spreading lies and rumours in order to ostracize someone. Anything that causes another person emotional pain is considered emotional bullying.
<b>Physical</b>	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
<b>Racist</b>	Bullying someone because of their skin colour, background, culture or their religious beliefs.
<b>SEN/Disability</b>	To discriminate against an individual because they have a disability or learning difficulty, a disabled brother, sister, parent or friend.
<b>Sexual</b>	Inappropriate physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
<b>Homophobic/ transphobic</b>	Focusing on the issue of sexuality. Use of words like 'gay', 'lesbian' as insults against a person. Physically assaulting someone or leaving someone out because of their real or assumed sexuality.
<b>Verbal</b>	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
<b>Cyber</b>	The misuse of Information and Communication Technology: internet, email, chat room, mobile threats via text messaging, calls, photo images, mms, sms, social networking and general misuse of associated technology

#### **In the School:**

- Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure. They should feel free from any threat of bullying and know where to go and to whom to speak if bullying occurs.
- All complaints of bullying will be treated seriously and will be acted upon in accordance with practice agreed by the Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy.
- We will act promptly when bullying occurs and records will be kept of all incidents.
- We will develop students' awareness of issues relating to bullying through the curriculum.

- All members of the school will be informed of what to do and who to go to should they observe incidents of bullying or have it reported to them.
- Staff will ensure they provide good role models for students in their everyday work.
- This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually with appropriate changes made in consultation with the whole school.
- This policy is supported by our Home School Agreement (featured in the Behaviour for Learning Policy), which includes the right of everyone to feel safe and to which all new students and their parents/carers sign up to.

**In line with “Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools” document the aims of our school anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:**

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil.
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support.

## **WARNING SIGNS OF BULLYING**

### **Individual signs:**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. It is the responsibility of all to be aware of these possible signs and investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus.
- Becomes withdrawn and anxious.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Demonstrates a drop in academic performance in school.
- Demonstrates a decrease in interest/enthusiasm for attending school.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Asks for additional money or starts stealing money.
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.

- Develops nervous tics.
- Starts to bite their nails.
- Requests to be accompanied to and from school and between lessons.
- Wishes to change routines, such as the journey to school.

### **Possible signs of bullying within the whole school:**

- Graffiti insulting individuals or groups of students.
- Frequent name calling.
- Poor attendance.
- Students appearing afraid.
- Students not willing to approach adults to discuss problems.
- Social exclusion of certain students.
- Some students being by themselves at break times.
- Certain graffiti on school books.
- Work being torn or destroyed.
- Loss of school equipment by certain students.
- Sudden underachievement.
- Students appearing upset.

### **RESPONDING TO BULLYING:**

Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

### **Proactive Strategies:**

- A clear lead from Leadership Team with effective and repeated communication between staff, parents/carers and students.
- Modelling positive behaviour for students by all adults.
- Listen carefully to and support students, parents and staff.
- Monitor student behaviour carefully in and around school.
- Curriculum approaches, promoting understanding of bullying issues through Art, English, PSHE and pastoral group work.
- Draw upon the expertise and experience of outside agencies and other schools.
- Student/parent voice.
- Calendared events such as Anti Bullying Week in November.
- Posters and displays around the school.

## **HOW WE WILL APPLY THE POLICY:**

Our Anti-Bullying Policy will be supported through the curriculum encouraging students to work with and to support each other in learning activities. Students are allocated a key tutor when they join the school to whom they can discuss any issues they may have.

Students can also speak with any other adult who they feel comfortable approaching including the headteacher. If we are approached, we will listen to all students and be sensitive to a student's need for privacy and respect.

### **Five key points:**

1. Never ignore suspected bullying.
2. Don't make premature assumptions.
3. Listen carefully to all accounts – several students saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth.
4. Adopt a problem-solving approach which moves students on from justifying themselves.
5. Follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed.

### **Procedures:**

1. Staff to fill in Bullying Incident Report Form (Appendix 1) which is kept in the Head of School's office.
2. The Head of School will discuss the incident with the school Team and the appropriate action will be agreed.
3. All incidents of bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated.
4. In cases of cyber bullying, internet access will be withdrawn pending investigation.
5. Parents/carers will be informed in all incidents and for serious incidents they will be asked to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
6. Incidents of homophobic and racism are recorded and reported in accordance with commissioning LA guidance and procedures.
7. Where necessary and if appropriate, the police will be contacted.
8. Strategies will be put in place to achieve a positive outcome for both target and perpetrator.

## **CYBER-BULLYING:**

Please refer to school E-Safety Policy and Social Media Policy.

### **Advice for Adults in school:**

- Preserve evidence.
- Stop or remove the material by contacting the service provider:
- Contact the appropriate member of staff for that student.
- Identify the person exhibiting bullying behaviour and report them to SLT or Head of School. SLT will then speak to the person who is exhibiting the bullying behaviour.
- Use technology available to block.
- Contact parents.
- In extreme cases contact the police.

### **Advice for Students:**

- Don't reply to abusive messages that may encourage the person exhibiting bullying behaviour.
- Keep a record of events/messages or pictures. They will be used to trace the bully.
- Think before you send pictures of someone via email, mobile phone or on social networks. They can spread further than your circle of friends.
- If you receive a rude image or text about someone else do not forward it.
- You have a right not to be harassed and bullied on line, make sure you tell someone.
- Treat your password like your toothbrush; don't let anyone else use it.

## **INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS:**

### **If you are being bullied:**

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop.
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away.

### **After you have been bullied:**

- Tell a teacher or another adult in your school.
- Tell your family.
- If you are scared to tell an adult by yourself, ask a friend to come with you.



- Keep speaking up until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying.
- Be involved with supportive friends.
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

**When you are talking to an adult about bullying, be clear about:**

- What has happened to you.
- How often it has happened.
- Who was involved.
- Who saw what was happening.
- Where it happened.
- What you have done about it already.

**INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES:**

Bullying behaviour includes:

- Name calling and nasty teasing.
- Threats and extortion.
- Physical violence.
- Damage to belongings.
- Leaving students out of social activities deliberately and frequently.
- Spreading malicious rumours.
- Using email, social networks and mobile phones to bully others.

**Parents and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying:**

- Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.
- Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Common symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. It can be helpful to ask questions about progress and friends at

school, how break times and lunch times are spent, and whether your child is facing problems or difficulties at school. Don't dismiss negative signs. Contact school immediately if you are worried.

**If your child has been bullied:**

- Calmly talk to your child about it.
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do.
- Explain that any further incidents should be reported to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see the headteacher.
- Explain to the member of SLT the problems your child is experiencing.

**Talking to teachers about bullying:**

- Try and stay calm, bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or school.
- Stay in touch with school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

**If your child is bullying other children:**

Many children may be involved in bullying other students at some time or another. Often parents are not aware. Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family they admire.
- They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends.
- Their friends encourage them to exhibit bullying behaviour.
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

**To stop your child bullying others:**

- Talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how to join in with other children without bullying.

- Make an appointment to see a member of SLT. Explain the problems your child is experiencing.
- Discuss with the member of SLT how you and the school can stop them bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are cooperative or kind to other people.

### **ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED:**

If bullying is suspected we will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected person exhibiting bullying behaviour and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken. Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the persons exhibiting bullying behaviour.

### **We support the victims in the following ways:**

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
- Informing the victims' parents/carers.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- By arranging for them to be escorted to and from the school premises.
- By taking one or more of the nine disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

### **We also discipline, yet try to help the person exhibiting bullying behaviour in the following ways:**

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- Informing the parents/carers of the person exhibiting bullying behaviour.
- By continuing to work with the person exhibiting bullying behaviour in order to remove them of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- By taking one or more of the nine disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

### **Disciplinary steps:**

In order to deal with the bullying issue, every case will be dealt with in a bespoke/tailored way. Both parties will be spoken to and be allowed to give their version of events and then a solution will be sought. The solutions can take a variety of forms and will generally follow a least to most intrusive approach, adopting the pathway deemed necessary at the time. This plan can be amended and altered accordingly if there are further developments. The intervention or sanctions that could be employed are:

1. The bully will be warned officially to stop offending.
2. Parents/carers of the bully will be informed and it will be recorded on their electronic record.
3. They may be supervised on the school premises at break and/or lunchtimes.
4. We may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the school premises.
5. They may be placed in isolation with a member of SLT for a period of time or be subject to staggered start/finish times outside of core school hours. At this stage a meeting may be called with parents/carer and student with a member of the Trust's SLT to express concerns and outline future sanctions should it continue. This is a supportive measure designed to highlight to the student the severity of the situation and the final consequence should it continue.
6. If the bullying behaviour continues then they will be suspended for a fixed period (one or two days).
7. If the bullying behaviour still continues they will be recommended for suspension for a longer (major) fixed period (normally up to five days).
8. If the sanctions above are not successful then it will be necessary to recommend to the School Trustees Disciplinary Panel that permanent exclusion is the choice remaining.
9. Where necessary the school will enlist the support of the Educational Psychologist or other suitable agencies to work with an individual who has demonstrated repeated examples of bullying.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Monitoring will contain information about incidents of bullying and how they were resolved in the short and longer term. The policy will be reviewed annually, taking into account audits from the previous year. Students' views will also be included in the working party. A regular audit of training needs will be carried out for Trustees and staff.

### **Prevention – a whole school approach:**

By raising awareness in the School:-

- Writing a set of school rules.
- Signing a behaviour contract.
- Across the curriculum as a whole.
- Social skills input – promoting a positive social environment.
- Team building exercises.
- Celebrate achievements and success.

- Promoting inclusiveness.

## **How we will deal with incidents of bullying:**

### **Stage 1: Information:**

- Students, parents, member of staff or other stakeholders may report an issue.
- Where necessary the member of staff involved should also complete the relevant paperwork.
- All completed forms go to the headteacher.

### **Stage 2: Investigation and Action:**

- All pupils involved should be interviewed by an appropriate member of staff.
- If appropriate, parents/carers may be contacted and information shared.
- Mediation process to resolve the issue(s), if required and beneficial to all parties concerned.
- The incident will be logged in the school Bullying Incident Record.

### **Stage 3: Enhanced response:**

- If the issue continues, parents/carers of all parties could be invited in for a meeting with relevant member of staff e.g. Head of School, Senior Leader.
- The school decides upon the next course of action e.g. Positive reengagement plan, moving group, twilights etc.

### **Stage 4: Escalated response:**

- Fixed term suspension.
- Outside agency involvement e.g. Police, Support agencies.
- Alternative timetable/placement.

### **Outcome:**

To establish a learning environment where all members of our community feel safe and respected

## **HELP ORGANISATIONS:**

**Parentline Plus**                      **0808 800 2222**

**Bullying Online**                      [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

**Childline**                                **0800 1111**

**Anti Bullying Alliance**              <http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk>  
**NSPCC**                                    [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## APPENDIX 1

### **BFC School - Bullying Protocols**

1. Any bullying issue that takes place, even as a single issue, should be reported/logged as bullying.
2. Where the bullying is considered as a serious and/or persistent concern then it should be logged separately in the same file. However, these types of issues will be characterised by having parents involved/informed and a 'Respect' agreement being signed. Any racist and/or homophobic bullying will fall into this category.
3. Any issues falling under points 1 and 2 need to be recorded and kept in a separate file (as well as in the students own file) that should be available at all times.

### **Recording incidents under points 1 and 2**

A form needs to be completed after each incident and stored in the School Bullying file. A copy of this form is attached.

This information should also be entered onto the School Bullying Incidents spreadsheet. An example of this is also att

## BFC School Bullying Incident Report Form

Student Name		Gender	M	F	YG	9	10	11
Tutor					SEND	Y	N	
Today's Date		Date of Incident						

### The incident involved *(please tick the main category)*

Emotional- Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/ or personal nature. Demanding money, material goods or favours by means of threat or force.	
Physical- Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence because of some perceived physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference.	
Racist- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.	
Sexual- Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.	
Verbal- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abuse and threats. Ridiculing an individual.	
Cyber- All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.	

### Time of day the incident occurred

Transported to/from school		Tutor time	
Walking to/from school		Lessons	
Break time		Lunch time	

### Location where the incident occurred

Classroom		Stairwell	
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Toilets		Corridor	
Outside school		Taxi/Bus	
Offsite vocational placement		Work experience placement	

Were parents contacted regarding the incident?	Y	N
Was a Respect agreement signed?	Y	N
Did the incident involve any racist and/or homophobic comments?	Y	N

**\*\* If you have answered YES to 2 out of the 3 questions above, then you should complete Box B&C on the following page.**

**\*\* If you have not answered YES to 2 out of the 3 questions above, then you should only complete Box C and follow up date on the next page.**

**Box A** – Please record the bullying incident as described by the student reporting the bullying  
**Box B** - Notes from parent/carer conversation (explain their feelings about what has happened and their response to the action being proposed below)

**Box C** - Actions to be taken to resolve the matter (these must be specific identifying who will do what and by when. Where possible evidence should be kept of the actions taken – e.g. hard copy of emails etc.

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Member of staff dealing with incident		Date	
Member of staff dealing with student follow-up		Date of follow-up	

**Data Analysis**

**Each half term the data should be analysed by SLT and a report sent to the Head of School.**

The report will include a copy of the tracking spreadsheet. A new spreadsheet doesn't need to be started after each half term. However, a new spreadsheet will need to be started at the beginning of each new academic year.

The data will be analysed in the following way;

- *% per year group*
- *Total number*
- *% of M/F*
- *% of SEN*
- *Frequency of the type of incident*
- *Frequency of the location*
- *Number of persistent/serious concerns*
- *% of issues resolved*
- *Number of racist incidents*
- *Number of homophobic incidents*

### **How do we know the bullying issue has been resolved?**

It is important to conduct a follow up with the student. This should be no longer than 3-4 weeks after the concern was raised. Good practice would suggest that more frequent checks should be made even if it is a simple conversation, the result of which should still be recorded in the file. Arguably this is the most important part of the process.

After an incident is raised with staff and it has been investigated, and an action plan set in place to resolve the matter, then the tutor should make a note to follow up with the student in 2-3 weeks time.

This follow up is carried out by the student completing the attached questionnaire. If the matter remains unresolved then it should be further investigated and support given to the student.

You may now consider that if the incident is unresolved then it has now become a more persistent/serious issue.

## **BULLYING QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please answer the following questions as clearly and thoughtfully as you can. If you are not sure about what the question is asking, please ask a member of staff who will help you complete the questionnaire. You do not need to put your name on this questionnaire unless you want to.

1) What type of bullying did you suffer? (for example, name-calling, physical etc)

2) Who did you report the bullying to? (inside and/or outside of school)

3) Do you feel that the staff took your concerns seriously?

Why?

4) Do you feel that appropriate action was taken to try and sort out the situation?

If not, what do you feel should have happened?

5) Has the bullying stopped?

If not, what is happening?

6) Do you feel happier at school now?

7) Would you report other bullying incidents should they happen again in the future?

Why?