Trinity Multi Academy Trust

Policy: Anti-Bullying Policy

Date or review: November 2016
                                (updated Feb 2018)

Date of next review: November 2019

Lead professional: Vice Principal – Student
                                Support (or equivalent)

Status: Non-Statutory

1.   Introduction

1.1.   The educational aims of Trinity Multi Academy Trust are to enable all students to fulfil their potential through a broad and balanced range of experiences and to nurture their full personal, moral and spiritual growth through a distinctive ethos led by Christian values.

1.2.   We try to ensure that all young people in our care:
* Achieve their full potential.
* Become responsible members of society.
* Develop a wide range of interests.
* Enjoy their education.
* Grow spiritually.
* Respect diversity and difference.

1.3.   We achieve this by:
* Establishing high standards in all aspects of academy life for our students through the expertise of teachers, a variety of teaching methods sensitive to the needs of the individual, and through a curriculum which, in meeting National Curriculum requirements, still maintains our distinctive Christian base.
* Providing effective pastoral support and education based on the skills and experience of all our teachers with our core values of Empathy, Respect, Responsibility and Honesty at the centre.
* Encouraging everyone to accept responsibility for their own behaviour, be empathetic to others, respect one another and be honest at all times.
* The signing of the 'Trinity Treaty', an anti-bullying pledge developed by our students; for our students.
* Training student leaders as anti-bullying mentors who are available to act as peer mentors when/if the need arises.
* Ensuring that all students and particularly those who may be vulnerable to exclusion are supported to develop friendship groups.
* Affording opportunities for new experiences and challenges in areas including sport, music, drama and foreign travel.

2.   Aims

2.1.   The aims of this policy and our anti-bullying strategies are:
* To prevent occurrences of bullying at Trinity MAT academies.
* To ensure that all stakeholders understand what bullying is and how it is dealt with.
* To maintain the ethos of the academy and its mission statement.
* To create a positive and safe learning environment for all.
* To develop individual's self-esteem and respect for others.
* To have a zero tolerance of incidents of bullying.
* To deal with bullying by tailoring a personalised package of student support for mediation and intervention; to include, what/how appropriate sanctions are applied.
* To ensure incidents of bullying are reported by specific categories and appropriate education is put in place in response to these.

3.   Objectives

3.1.   Our objectives, through implementing this policy throughout life at the trust's academies are:
* To identify bullying and accept that it is a problem which can occur in any setting where people are brought together.
* To be clear to all what is meant by the term 'bullying'.
* To establish clear procedures for the course of action to be taken in respect to bullying incidents.

- To create safe conditions for children which are built upon mutual respect, co-operation and equal opportunities.
- To establish that an important part of being valued for children is being listened to, believed and appropriate considered action taking place.
- To have clear procedures, known and understood by all, including a system by which discrepancies can be dealt with and reviewed.

4. Definition of bullying

"Bullying is 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 through cyberspace."
Definition taken from the Anti-Bullying Alliance

4.1. **Emotional** - Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/or personal nature. Demanding money, material goods or favours by means of threat or force.

4.2. **Physical** - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence because of some perceived physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural or racial difference.

4.3. **Verbal** - Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abuse and threats. Ridiculing an individual.

4.4. **Cyber** - All areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology. Appendix 2 provides further information on cyber bullying.

4.5. There are many forms bullying takes, as described in 4.1 - 4.4. Examples of bullying against targeted groups include:
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti or gestures.
- Sexual orientation – offensive behaviour because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse.
- Sexist – offensive name calling, misogynistic behaviour.
- Disablist – offensive name calling, laughing, not supporting or excluding.
- Religion – derogatory remarks about a person's religious belief.

4.6. Bullying can take place inside or outside of academy life. For clarity, this policy extends to any bullying that happens off academy premises, as well as within the academy day.

4.7. In addition to our procedures for dealing with bullying, the academy will seek police advice where they believe a hate crime has been, or could be committed.

5. The frequency of bullying

5.1. Bullying can take place several times a week or day. It can go on for months and even years. There is recognition that bullying occurs often beyond the realm of an academy, but has manifestations in an academy. We have an expectation of parents that they should be supportive in the process of eliminating any form of bullying.

6. The severity of bullying

6.1. Bullying ranges from horseplay to vicious assault. It is recognised that bullying can be extremely subtle and therefore difficult to deal with.

7. The motivation

7.1. The bully gets pleasure from other people's pain, fear and humiliation. The bully learns that aggressive behaviour allows him/her to dominate and get his/her own way. Sadly, the bully may also learn that creating fear in the victim is a rewarding experience.

7.2. The bully often focuses on younger, smaller or timid children. The bully increasingly relies on threat and force.

8. Direct and indirect bullying

8.1. It is important to distinguish the difference, i.e. between those who are bullies and victims, and the larger group of students who are onlookers. Sometimes the bullies operate in secret places, but often they feel quite confident that no one will stop them and they bully others in public. The onlookers are then part of the bullying.

9. Peer on peer abuse

9.1. Bullying will not be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up' and staff are aware that there is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying or sexual experimentation. This is a matter for professional judgement.

9.2. If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:
- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned.
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children.
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

9.3. If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused. Appendix 3 details each academy's approach to peer on peer abuse.

10. Recording bullying

10.1. It is widely recognised that there is a vast range of types of bullying and varying degrees of severity. It is often difficult to detect more subtle types of bullying which may not be obvious or overt. However, as in all matters relating to standards and expectations, what follows rests on the professional judgement of all colleagues to exercise that judgement as and where it is felt appropriate and necessary.

10.2. Staff should liaise with key individuals starting with the student's tutor, College Manager and Assistant Principal (Student Support). The teacher, tutor and College Manager will work together to investigate the incident. The College Manager will be the key liaison with students, parents and staff; ensuring all parties are aware of the progress/outcome of the investigation and when appropriate the sanction and intervention applied to the student(s) involved.

10.3. The Assistant Principal (Student Support) will have oversight of bullying issues through the weekly briefing session with the College team, the student's SIMS record and the external counselling services used by the academy.

10.4. Incidents of bullying will be reported to SLG on a termly basis and broken down into the following categories:
- Emotional
- Physical
- Verbal
- Cyber

- Sexual orientation – including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying
- Racial
- Sexist
- Disablist
- Religious

11. Curriculum, education and support

11.1. Our Anti-Bullying policy is communicated to staff and students in a range of different methods through day-to-day school life. These methods include:
- Education and support in issues regarding bullying, methods of dealing with bullying, prejudice and discrimination.
- Stereo-typing will be discussed in the PSHE Programme.
- The Vertical Tutoring system (or equivalent tutoring system) will ensure positive role models and mentors are in place to send out a positive supportive message to students.
- Themed assemblies, with follow up work in tutor groups. These may be led by students, as well as staff.
- Focussed weeks and programmes of work within the tutor system to focus on national campaigns e.g. black History month, E-Safety week, anti-bullying week. In addition, to follow up high profile or relevant news stories about bullying or harassment issues, these will be discussed in tutor periods.
- A Year 7 residential and college based trips will be bonding exercises to enable students to learn to work co-operatively in teams.
- PSHE inputs will cover relationships and friendships; teaching students how to manage their relationships with others constructively as well as in lower school drama lessons.
- PSHE and Vertical Tutoring (or equivalent) sessions will include co-operative group work to enable students to explore issues by considering different points of view and to become integrated into the peer/tutor group.
- Staff will encourage student co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work in teaching methodology. Sport and games teachers are particularly effective at promoting teamwork. Students will be allocated to groups selected by the teacher, when appropriate, and these will be changed at regular intervals to allow students more contact with a wider circle of students in their year group.
- Potential victims of bullying should be drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them. This should be done in a discreet and sensitive manner through Vertical Tutoring (or equivalent).
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events such as drama productions, Vertical Tutoring (or equivalent) events, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, concerts, charity and social events and also by involvement in extra-curricular activities.

12. Pastoral support

12.1. Students have access to a range of support to help them recognise, deal with and report bullying issues:
- The tutor, Welfare Officer and College Manager will provide a one-to-one opportunity for students to talk through relationship difficulties.
- The Academy Council at each school (or equivalent) will provide an opportunity for students to suggest improvements to aspects of academy life.
- Student Leaders are trained as Anti-Bullying Mentors and are available to act as personal mentors on request. These students are allocated to Year 7 students on their first day at an academy and are available to support students on request.
- Vertical Tutoring (or equivalent) sessions and drama, if appropriate, are used to explore issues of concern.
- A school counsellor is available to students via the College Manager, the Student Wellbeing Team and the Education Welfare Officer.

Empathy, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

13.   Expectations and guidance

13.1. Staff
- Watch out for early signs of distress in students, e.g.
  - Deterioration of work.
  - Spurious illness.
  - Isolation or the desire to remain with adults.
  - Erratic attendance and punctuality.
  - Internal truancy.
- This behaviour may be a warning of other problems but it may be indicative of bullying.
- Listen carefully and record all incidents as per policy.
- Offer the victim and the bully support and help by putting our academy procedures into operation. If the victim discloses anything you deem to be a welfare or safeguarding issue then disclose this information immediately to a member of the Child Protection team (see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for more detail).

13.2. Students
- Each academy's expectations are included in the student planner, in the Code of Conduct and Charter of Rights.
- In general:
  - As a member of an academy within Trinity Multi Academy Trust, we expect you not to put up with any forms of bullying behaviour.
  - Adults and students will work together to stop bullying.
  - When someone is being bullied or in distress, inform an adult immediately, of any form of bullying behaviour.
  - Do not be afraid to report any incidents. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bullying.
  - Do not put up with bullies in your group of friends.
  - Only accept people who do not bully others. Bullies will soon stop if they are left out, or are by themselves.
  - Informing is not 'telling tales'.

13.3. Parents
- Watch for the early signs highlighted above in your child, if you have concerns contact their academy.
- Parents should know:
  - Each academy's expectation of the parent's responsibility.
  - Parents may have to come into an academy to discuss issues.
  - That each academy takes the issue seriously and will always deal with any parent or student's concerns.

Appendix 1 – Procedures when dealing with bullying

Staff guidance

This guidance provides general advice. Each incident will be dealt with dependant on the severity, the students involved and any relevant circumstances. It also provides an outline of the steps that could be taken when there are instances of bullying.

If bullying is reported, or if a member of staff notices a bullying incident:

For serious incidents of bullying, staff will inform the College Manager and/or the Assistant Principal. Normally, the procedure outlined below will be adopted by all staff in serious incidents.

For incidents, where it is deemed less serious, these will be reported to the student's Vertical Tutor (or equivalent), who should investigate the incident and inform the College Manager verbally of the outcome. Should the investigation find the incident is more serious, this will be treated as such.

1. **Interview the victim, alleged bully and any witnesses separately**

- Try to ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students interviewed, for example by texting.
- If a student is injured, take the student immediately to the Medical Welfare Officer in the medical room for a medical opinion of the extent of the injuries. (The academy Medical Welfare Officer will record any injuries in the medical record book).
- Use a room that allows you to interview in privacy. A witness is recommended for serious incidents.
- Avoid making premature assumptions. It is very important not to be judgemental at this stage.
- Be non-confrontational.
- Ask the alleged bully and the alleged victim to write down details. This may need prompting with questions from you to obtain the full picture.
- Ask additional witnesses/bystanders for information; preferably written.
- Reiterate to witnesses that there are no innocent bystanders - they are all responsible if anyone is being bullied.
- Listen carefully to all accounts - several students saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth, particularly if they have had an opportunity to discuss the incident in advance.
- Do not attach blame until your investigation is complete.
- Adopt a problem-solving approach, which moves a bully on from justifying themselves. Ask the alleged bully to suggest ways in which the situation can be improved.
- If the bullied student might have provoked the bullying incident, help them to understand how.
- Tell all students interviewed that they must not discuss the interview with other students.

2. **Record details of the bullying**

- Write a very brief summary of the incident. A separate interview sheet is needed for each student involved.
- Place these interview sheets in the individual files of each student involved.
- Write a more detailed single account and attach written statements of alleged victim, alleged bully and witnesses. Full names of all involved should be included in this account and send this to the Principal.
- The College Manager should keep a record of all incidents of bullying for the students in their college on SIMS.
- Inform the parents of all parties that an investigation is being carried out and that they will be kept informed at every stage of the process.
- Record the telephone call on SIMS.

3. **Take appropriate action to deal with the bully**

- If you are satisfied that bullying did take place, help the student to understand the consequences of their actions and warn them that there must be no further intimidation. Inform them of the type of sanction to be used if the bullying is repeated.
- If possible, try for reconciliation and genuine apology from the student.
- Realise that some students do not appreciate the distress they are causing and are willing to change their behaviour. Do not however, force a face-to-face meeting. This **must** be the decision of the students.
- Try to reach agreement on reasonable long-term behaviour.
- Prepare the student to face their peer group - discuss what they will say to others.
- Inform parents about bullying incidents and what action is being taken and record it on SIMS.
- If initial attempts to stop the bullying fail, apply an appropriate level of sanction commensurate with the seriousness of the bullying. (Sanctions can be found in an Appendix of the Discipline Policy).
- Tutor and College Manager will informally monitor students over the next half term.
- If bullying is racist, inform the Principal immediately.
- Support the bully.

4. Support the victim - follow up checks

- The College Manager should informally check in a considered and sensitive manner whether the bullying has stopped.
- The tutor should check informally on a weekly basis for a month after the complaint of bullying.
- The Assistant Principal should check formally the week after the bullying and again during the same half term.
- If necessary, break up the group dynamics by asking staff to assign places in classes and in the form room.
- Most bullying groups have a leader, with other students in the group being frightened of being bullied themselves.
- Encourage the victim to be assertive.
- Ignore the comments; pretend not to hear.
- Walk away quickly; use body language to look determined, strong and positive.
- Shout "No, go away" as loudly as possible.
- Encourage the victim to tell a trusted adult in the academy if bullying is repeated.
- Encourage the victim to broaden their friendship groups by joining an after school club or activity.
- Ask another student to befriend and support the victim (College Manager's will advise on potential students to approach). This may involve the formal setting up of a 'circle of friends'.
- Discuss bullying in assemblies, in drama, in the form or PSHE, and ask the class to suggest possible solutions.
- If bullying is about a particular issue (disability for example), mount an education programme during tutorial time; not focused on a particular child.
- If bullying occurs on the bus, ask a sixth former or bus prefect to take care of the victim.
- If bullying is by students from another school, the Head of Year should telephone the relevant Head of Year/Deputy of the other school and ask for a return call on the result of their investigation.
- Give constructive advice if the victim seems to have been bullied because they are being a nuisance or intruding.
- Use peer mediation to resolve conflict if appropriate, using trained students only.
- Provide a peer mentor.
- Use events such as Anti-Bullying Week to highlight the issues of bullying.

5. Sanctions

Sanctions to deal with bullying behaviour will be dependent on the level, seriousness and persistence of the bullying.

For minor/single incidents

An apology and assurance that the bullying will stop **or** a detention **or** a piece of extra written work **or** meeting with parent **or** a temporary exclusion from certain areas of an academy's premises.

In more serious cases, internal exclusion, off-site inclusion, fixed term exclusion or permanent exclusion may be sanctioned.

Appendix 2 – Cyber bullying

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying and gives the Principal (and their staff) the power, 'to such an extent that is reasonable', to regulate the conduct of students when they are offsite. The EIA also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

Additionally, Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017 states:

"The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying 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 forward on content at a click. The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.1 If a staff member finds 1 Section 62 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 defines prohibited images of children. Section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Immigrations Act 2008 defines extreme pornographic images. 9 material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline."

and further supports the powers within school to regulate cyber-bullying.

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, some cyber-bullying activities (for example, menacing and threatening communications) could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. There have been some instances of such prosecutions in the UK. The Malicious Communications Act of 1988 makes it an offence for:

1.   Any person who sends to another person:

     (a)   A letter, electronic communication or article of any description which conveys:
          (i)   A message which is indecent or grossly offensive.
          (ii)   A threat.
          (iii)   Information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

     (b)   Any article or electronic communication which is, in whole or part, of an indecent or grossly offensive nature, is guilty of an offence if his purpose, or one of his purposes, in sending it is that it should, so far as falling within paragraph (a) or (b) above, cause distress or anxiety to the recipient or to any other person to whom he intends that it or its contents or nature should be communicated.

All Trinity MAT academies further try to regulate incidents of cyber-bullying through their e-Safety Policy for students, Acceptable Use of ICT Policy for staff and behaviour policy which limits students use of mobile phones within the academy day.

Appendix 3 – Peer on peer abuse

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 (KCSIE 2018) references the capability children and young people can have to abuse their peers. This can manifest itself in many ways and is taken seriously by the academy. This behaviour should not be treated as 'normal' between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

Peer abuse

Peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:
- Bullying (including cyber, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying).
- Gender based violence.
- Sexual assaults and sexting.

This abuse can:
- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences.
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.
- Significant disruption in their own lives.
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse.
- Educational under-achievement.
- Involved in crime.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical.

Recognising peer abuse

An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed and consider:
- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved.
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability.
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident.
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation.
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery.
- The effect on the victim.
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret.
- The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred.
- Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration.

Protection and action to be taken

It is not enough to respond to incidents as they arise: each academy proactively strives to create an environment that actively discourages abuse and challenges the attitudes which underlie it. Through the trust's Code of Conduct for staff we set expectations of adult behaviour on children who may view them as role models. Education around potential incidents is supported by each academy's Curriculum programme, including Curriculum for Life.

All staff have a duty to raise any concerns where they consider a young person has abused another child or young person. They should raise a cause for concern through their academy's usual procedures. Once the Student Wellbeing team are in receipt of this they will deal with this allegation

through the academy and LCSB procedures, which will include using their own professional judgements about each specific case.

The Student Wellbeing team will seek advice and guidance from the MAST team (and or Safeguarding Police team) and attend any strategy discussions. It is important to co-ordinate action to address these issues: no agency should initiate action that has implications for another agency without appropriate consultation unless this is unavoidable in order to protect the safety of a child.

In order to give priority to them, issues relating to the safety of victims and potential victims must be discussed first and completely separately from any issues relating to the needs of the alleged perpetrator. This will usually require separate meetings.

Risks

Professionals should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people and the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (e.g. mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator may have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm and in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

The victim

Each academy will consider what action is necessary to ensure the immediate safety of the identified victim(s) and what further enquiries are necessary to assess any further risk. Other support strategies are detailed in Appendix 1.

Where a young person has abused a sibling, planning must include consideration of the support needs of the parents. If victim and perpetrator are members of the same family/household, before making any arrangement to return the perpetrator to the family/household it is critical to ensure that the victim's views have been heard and that s/he feels safe.

A child protection conference may conclude that the victim is not in need of a child protection plan, but may be a child in need of support to address her/his needs arising from the abuse, e.g. referral to CAMHS or another victim support agency.

The alleged perpetrator

Any decision on action in respect of the alleged perpetrator must be based on the risk they pose to other children and what can be done to minimise this risk. Generally an academy will follow its Behaviour for Learning policy in dealing with peer abuse, in severe and extreme cases this could result in the perpetrator being permanently excluded.

Given that perpetrators of abuse are likely to have suffered abuse in their own lives each academy will consider any action in light of safeguarding concerns and our equality policy when dealing with SEN/D students.

Issues

Particular difficulties arise in responding to a child or young person who abuses another child because:
• There is no clear dividing line between abusive behaviour and normal childhood behaviour.

- Many adults who abuse children repeatedly established this pattern of behaviour in childhood or adolescence, but a single incident of abuse does not indicate that a young person is likely to abuse again.
- Some young people who abuse have themselves been abused, but this cannot be assumed in any particular case.

The guiding principles for dealing with these situations are:
- The needs of the victim and the needs of the alleged perpetrator must be considered separately.
- In addition to safeguarding the identified victim, agencies must consider whether the alleged perpetrator seems to pose a risk to any other children.
- Children and young people who abuse others are responsible for their abusive behaviour, and safeguarding action must include addressing their behaviour and its causes.
- The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children.
- There should be a co-ordinated approach by child welfare, youth offending, education and health agencies. No agency should start a course of action that has implications for any other agency without appropriate consultation.