

The Lotus Academy Trust



Supporting children to find opportunities in every difficulty

The Damara School



Specialist SEMH Independent School

Antibullying Policy

Approved by: Trust Board

Initial Ratification: 31 August 2019

Review: Oct 20; Oct 21; Oct 22; Sept 23; Sept 24; Sept 25

Next review due by: September 2026

The Damara School believes that all pupils should learn, and teachers should teach in a happy, supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied; and that all adults and pupils should recognise that bullying is an antisocial behaviour which affects everyone and will not be tolerated. To this end, our Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the School's approach, roles and responsibilities with regard to all pupil, staff, visitors and Trustees -bullying matters.

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. We have included staff, visitors and Trustees in this policy. These measures must be communicated to all pupils, school staff, Trustees and parents.

The law

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
- hate crimes

Anti-discrimination law

We will also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school.

The aims of our anti-bullying policy are to:

- prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behavior
- react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way
- safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying (victim) and to trigger sources of support for the pupil
- apply disciplinary sanctions to the pupil causing the bullying and ensure that he/she learn from the experience (perpetrator), using counselling or multi-agency support, if necessary

Definition of bullying

It is important for all staff and pupils to be aware of what the school means by bullying behaviour. Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. This definition applies to both staff, visitors, Trustees, parents and pupils. Bullying is recognised as a form of peer-on-peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. We recognise that some forms of bullying, particularly sexual harassment and sexual violence, are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

While there may be no legal definition of "Bullying", it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- deliberately hurtful either physically or emotionally
- repeated
- difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation (prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying)

Bullying can take many forms but the five main types are:

- physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal: name-calling, insulting, racist remarks;
- indirect: spreading nasty stories, excluding somebody from social groups;
- virtual (cyber-bullying): threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones
- prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying

Some forms of bullying are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she may belong.

Groups may include the protected characteristics as set out in Chapter 1 of part 2 of the Equality Act 2010:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Forms of bullying include:

- Racial harassment and racist bullying
- Sexual bullying
- The use of homophobic language
- Physical assault
- Teasing
- Making threats
- Name calling
- Cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Bullying outside school

The Head of School has the legal power to make sure pupils and staff behave appropriately outside of school premises. This includes bullying that happens anywhere off the school premises, for example in taxis on the way home.

Preventative Measures

Clearly the best way to deal with bullying is to prevent it occurring. The School will actively seek to prevent bullying by:

- Encouraging considerate behaviour and rewarding such behaviour with praise and rewards
- Actively engaging pupils in meaningful activities inside and outside the classroom to avoid boredom
- Staff providing role models of considerate and non-bullying behaviour
- Providing a physical environment which is secure, safe and easily supervised
- Providing space for children to avoid overcrowding. Providing a range of environments during breaks
- Raising the awareness of pupils and staff to bullying
- Ensure all staff receive current training in the prevention of bullying including cyber-bullying
- Provide training (face to face and/or through termly newsletter) for parents to enable them to monitor and 'spot' cases of cyber bullying at home
- Making clear to pupils the consequences of being labelled a 'bully'
- Assemblies with themes of friendship, co-operation and building self-esteem, to encourage these ideals
- Activities which emphasise co-operation and mutual respect

The appropriate action may vary greatly and will range from counselling from the teacher or staff mentor to a formal exclusion, informing the police and/or LA, depending on the severity of the bullying. In all cases of bullying, parents / carers will be involved and counselling will be given to those pupils involved (victim and perpetrator). The most severe action may be taken against those pupils involved in bullying. The victims and perpetrators of bullying will receive help and guidance from the staff at the School.

Safeguarding context

This Anti-Bullying Policy forms part of our whole-school safeguarding approach and should be read alongside our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, and Online Safety Policy. All staff must understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying and child-on-child abuse, are safeguarding issues. We adopt a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of bullying and harmful behaviour.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust Board

- Creating the right ethos for the School that ensures it is an inclusive environment
- Ensure regular review of anti-bullying policy and practice including analysis of data published under its single equality scheme
- Ensure the School is promoting equality for its whole community

The Head of School

- To determine, publicise and ensure implementation of the School's measures on behaviour support and anti-bullying
- To consider what adjustments may be needed to policy and practice in this area
- Ensure the whole School is promoting equality and inclusion
- To ensure the anti-bullying behaviour policy is kept up to date
- To deliver and organise any necessary training for staff to ensure they understand and implement the anti-bullying policy
- Keep up to date on bullying related data from the monthly tracking analysis and plan appropriate interventions either at an individual or whole School level

- Promote anti-bullying week and anti-bullying work in general. Ensure the curriculum covers anti-bullying
- Work with families so that they are aware of the school's policy/practice and specific circumstances if they arise
- To act as a port of call to advise staff on any bullying related matter
- To liaise with external agencies as necessary in partnership to support anti-bullying strategies
- To ensure bullying is factored into any analysis of pupil behaviour

The Administrator

- Ensure that behavioural recording systems record any instances of bullying

All School staff

- To be constantly monitoring the pupils for bullying-related behavior and follow the correct procedure where evidence points towards bullying taking place
- To be constantly modelling high standards of behaviour and to have high expectations for all the pupils

Pupil Voice

There are a number of ways that pupils can communicate to express their feelings and thoughts. These include within Tutor time and briefings, surveys, annual reviews, Education Health Care Plans, everyday communication with School staff and small group consultation. School staff should be constantly vigilant for signs that a pupil may be subject to bullying behaviour expressed either through a pupil voice or from signs such as distress, change in mood, injury, change in behavioural norms. Claims or expressions of bullying made by pupils will be taken seriously.

Reporting Process

All bullying incidents must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL. The DSL will assess whether the incident meets safeguarding thresholds and determine the appropriate response, which may include referral to external agencies. All incidents, discussions, decisions and the rationale for decisions must be recorded in detail on CPOMS

In the event that there is a victim of bullying behaviour involving the pupils, the class teacher should assess for any levels of distress and as appropriate take positive action to ensure the child/young person feels safe in the short term.

In the event that there is a victim of bullying behaviour involving the staff, the Head of School should assess for any levels of distress and as appropriate take positive action to ensure the child/young person feels safe in the short term. In the case of the Head of School, it should be the Chair of Trustees.

Working with Families

Close work with the families is an essential part of work at the school. Bullying is one of the most potentially sensitive areas of home/School life. For individual matters relating to bullying, advice should be sought from the Assistant Headteacher on how to proceed. Efforts should be made to conduct conversations sensitively, bringing family members into School where necessary. Informing and working with families whose child was the victim of bullying should follow standard reporting procedure for involvement in an incident, ensuring a record is kept of any phone call. Pupils who are receiving additional behaviour support because they are perpetrating bullying behavior should be subject to joint working with their parents and multi-agencies, if necessary to ensure all parties understand the approach being taken.

Parents/Carers have a responsibility to let the School know if their child/young person is being bullied and work with the School to resolve any issues arising from an incident the child/young person is anxious about. If as a parent/carers you are concerned about your child/young person being bullied you should:

- Contact the School immediately and ask to speak to the Assistant Headteacher. If unavailable please ask to speak to the Head of School. If neither are available please leave a message asking for a call back.
- Contact the School if the bullying is taking place on home to School transport. You should also contact the designated person for home to School transport so they can also carry out an investigation.

Monitoring and Review

Senior Leaders and Trustees will conduct a termly audit to corroborate and triangulate different types of evidence to build an accurate picture of behaviour management including incidents of bullying within the school. Evidence will be captured through a range of tools: the school's ethos and aims, staff, pupil and parent voice as well as data captured on the school's recording systems. This policy will be reviewed annually and ratified by the Trust Board.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Complaints procedure
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Equalities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Managing Violence in Schools Policy
- eSafety and online safety Policy