

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust

Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Trust Vision

'all pupils achieve the highest standard of educational outcomes regardless of circumstances or background'.

The Trust has been established through a shared belief that lives can be transformed by what goes on in schools. We believe that the process of teaching and learning shapes futures. To this end our vision is to give every child learning experiences that excite them and give them the power to begin to shape their own lives.

2. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Trust is clear about the benefits of treating every pupil as a unique individual. The Rights Respecting Schools Award puts children's rights at the heart of all drb Ignite Trust schools. This approach sits alongside our vision and values. We have a deep respect for the dignity and agency of the child and believe this supports resilience and helps to develop personality, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender. All Trust schools are involved in the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Programme.

What does it mean to be a rights respecting school?

There are three stages to the Rights Respecting Schools Award. Its transformative and rigorous approach means the journey to the highest stage can take up to four years. Together, pupils and the school community learn about children's rights, putting them into practice every day. The award is not just about what children do but also, importantly, what adults do. In Rights Respecting Schools, children's rights are promoted and realised, adults and children work towards this goal together. The award recognises a school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child into practice within the school community and beyond.

What is the impact of being a rights respecting school?

- everyone in the school community has a clear framework of reference.
- children become advocates for their own learning: "Learning is not what's done to us anymore – we are responsible for leading it – it's our right".
- improved behaviours for learning.
- less passive and more active learners.
- improved results.

3. Statement of Intent

The Trust is committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all pupils so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All incidents of bullying are taken seriously. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. At the Trust, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time. It would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. However, when bullying occurs, incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with this policy. This policy should be read alongside the Trust Behaviour Policy.

To support this, the Trust aims to ensure:

- It meets the legal requirement to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- It works closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)*.
- Trustees, staff, pupils and parents share an understanding of bullying and its potential impact.
- Trustees and staff know the Trust policy on bullying and consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- Pupils and parents know what the Trust policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole Trust initiatives and proactive teaching strategies are used to reduce the opportunities for bullying.
- A positive, caring ethos is created across all learning environments where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

4. What is bullying?

The Trust has adopted the following definition of bullying:

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards another person. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves. Bullying results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., threatening gestures like ridicule and humiliation).
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of another person.
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other form of aggression or violence.
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture or religion.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive, sexist comments.
- **Homophobic** - because of/ or focusing on the issue of sexuality.

- **Online/cyber** - setting up hate websites, sending offensive text messages, emails and/or abusing the victims via their mobile phones. The Trust has a separate policy for Cyber Bullying.
- **Any unfavourable or negative comments**, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

Bullying is not:

Bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or the occasional trick or joke played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP) and over time. Pupils sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns. All pupils must learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Signs of bullying:

A pupil may indicate, by different signs or behaviours, that they are being bullied. All staff should be aware of possible signs and investigate further if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school.
- changes their usual routine/route to school.
- begins truanting.
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- starts stammering.
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- feels ill in the morning.
- begins to under-perform in school work.
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- has possessions go "missing".
- asks for money or starts stealing money.
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen).
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason.
- is bullying other pupils or siblings.
- stops eating.
- is frightened to say what is wrong.
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs could indicate a range of problems, but bullying should always be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

Supporting pupils:

In Trust schools all pupils have the right to feel safe. No one has the right to make them feel unhappy. If bullying is suspected, it is important for the pupil to remember that it is not their fault and there are people who can help.

Bullying of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

drb Ignite Multi Academy Trust is an inclusive Trust. As such it is fully committed to providing a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are. Within Trust schools there are pupils who have a range of diverse and complex needs. Everyone in the Trust is aware that these pupils can be especially vulnerable to bullying and adults are always particularly vigilant.

High attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

5. Procedure for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

At Trust schools, all staff respond calmly and consistently to allegations and incidents of bullying. Every concern will be taken seriously and dealt with impartially and promptly. Staff will protect, listen to and support pupils whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure will be used as guidance for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

- 1.** Following a disclosure of bullying, the child is made to feel safe.
- 2.** The school conducts an investigation into the disclosure, taking all sides into account, and informs the parents of both sides as appropriate.
- 3.** The appropriate members of staff are made aware of the incident.
- 4.** Supportive work is conducted with individual pupils, and each case will be closely monitored.
- 5.** The appropriate interventions will be put in place.
- 6.** Support from external agencies will be sought, if this is deemed appropriate (such as Early Help or counselling).
- 7.** The incident is recorded.

6. Consequences

The Trust will respond to incidents of bullying with a restorative approach. The Trust acknowledges the following as appropriate consequences for bullying behaviours:

- Apology to the victim(s) verbally or in writing.
- Loss of privileges.
- Removal from playtime for a defined period.
- Parents invited into school to discuss concerns.
- Removal from classroom for a short period.
- Report to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- Withdrawal from participation in a visit, club or event for a defined period.
- Fixed term suspension.
- Permanent exclusion.

7. Trust strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole Trust initiatives and proactive teaching strategies are used throughout the Trust to develop positive learning environments with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

These include:

- Pupil Safeguarding Boards in all Trust schools.
- Regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying and the effectiveness of the Trust's anti-bullying strategies.
- Encouraging *pupil voice*.
- Use of the Trust Pupil Guarantee.
- Marking national anti-bullying week as a high-profile event annually.
- Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies.
- PHSE curriculum from Reception to Year 6.
- Use of restorative support networks where a small group of pupils volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulty.
- Playground improvements and initiatives.
- Training of pupils to deliver peer-to-peer support.
- Use of praise and rewards to encourage good behaviour.
- Use of modelling of appropriate behaviours towards one another.
- Anti-bullying training for staff.

8. Monitoring and evaluation of the Policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. It may be supplemented by additional, individual school procedures. Following review, any amendments will be made to the policy, and everyone informed.


9. Sources of further information, support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying. Parents who feel their child may be being bullied should talk to the class teacher in the first instance. If they remain concerned, they should contact the Headteacher as soon as possible.

For further information and support, please visit the school website.

10. Monitoring and Review

This Policy is reviewed annually by the Director of School Improvement and Headteachers. Should there be any changes/further national guidance issued relevant to this Policy, it will be updated accordingly prior to the review date shown above and referred to the next Trust Board meeting. Individual school Behaviour Procedures will also be regularly reviewed.

Monitoring and review:	Director of School Improvement, Headteachers
Links:	Behaviour Policy Cyberbullying Policy Trust Pupil Guarantee
Staff responsible:	CEO Executive Director of School Improvement Headteachers Teachers
Committees responsible:	Achievement, Support and Scrutiny
Next review:	December 2024
Sign off by Chair of Trustees:	 <div style="text-align: right;">Date: December 2023</div>

11. Change Management

Issue No:	Change date:	Change description:
1.0	November 2017	Initial release
2.0	November 2018	Rebranded, updated and signed off for release.
3.0	November 2019	Reviewed
4.0	September 2021	Reviewed in line with KCSiE 2021
5.0	December 2021	Reviewed
6.0	December 2023	Reviewed