



**Bloxham Grove**  
ACADEMY

# Bloxham Grove Academy Anti-Bullying Policy

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# **Bloxham Grove Academy**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

At Bloxham Grove Academy we believe that every student has the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment in which to learn and achieve their potential. In addition, our wider academy community which includes staff, families and visitors have the right to experience an environment that is welcoming and kind. This policy outlines what bullying looks like and the strategies that we use for dealing with incidents. It is designed to provide advice, guidance and support to staff, families and students in all matters relating to bullying at our academy.

### **Definition of bullying**

The anti-bullying alliance defines bullying as the ***repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.***

Intimidation of others can be real or threatened and may manifest as infliction of physical, verbal, written, cyber, emotional harm or sexual. It can also present as attacks upon the property of others.

### **Types of bullying**

Where there is bullying, there is intention to hurt and those who are on the receiving end of the behaviours find it hard to respond and support themselves. There is always an imbalance of power in cases of bullying.

Here are some examples of what directed bullying behaviours might look like for groups or individuals (this list is by no means exhaustive):

#### **Physical**

This may look like hitting, kicking, spitting, pinching, slapping, biting or pushing. It could also be taking or defacing and damaging personal property or unwanted physical or sexual contact.

#### **Verbal**

This may be name calling, teasing, discriminatory, prejudiced based unkindness and language\*, gossiping, spreading rumours and falsehoods, threats to harm or discredit someone.

## **Written**

There could be handwritten notes, graffitied threats or obscenities, online messaging of an unkind nature, letters to discredit, threaten or embarrass.

## **Cyber**

Threats and unkindness via online messaging, social media and email, sending photos, video clips and imagery that are offensive and intended to cause harm, discredit or embarrass.

## **Emotional**

Exclusion from social groups, name calling, spreading rumours and making up stories. Directed pulling of faces or 'dirty looks', pressuring someone to take part in something they don't want to or taking unwanted photos of individuals without consent. Threats and/or being unkind about them or their friends/ family members.

## **Sexual**

Inappropriate or unwanted physical contact, verbal comments or cyber messages of a sexual nature.

*\*bullying or harassment that is homophobic, gender based, sexist, sexual or transphobic, racist or discriminating against religion, Special Educational Needs, disabilities, health conditions or a person's home circumstances, such as being looked after, or caring for a family member. This includes actions or language that discriminates against people for any of these reasons, or other reasons relating to a person's identity*

Bloxham Grove Academy does not accept any of the above forms of bullying and we will work with individuals to address any incidences.

## **Who might be at risk from bullying?**

Bullying can be directed towards anyone within our community. We believe that all members of our academy community: students, families, staff and academy visitors have the right to feel safe and secure within the academy environment.

## **Why might individuals bully others?**

There are different reasons why people bully, including:

- wanting to dominate others and improve their social status
- having low self-esteem and wanting to feel better about themselves
- having a lack of remorse or failing to recognise their behaviour as a problem
- feeling angry, frustrated or jealous
- struggling socially
- being the victim of bullying themselves

Some who bully may enjoy getting their own way. Others may like conflict and aggression. Some may be thoughtless rather than deliberately hurtful. Some may have difficulties with health, schoolwork and self-esteem. Some may be emotionally neglected, bullied, abused or be experiencing violence themselves.

Bullies are more likely to have lifelong issues such as depression or problems with aggression. Individuals can take on different roles in different circumstances. Those who are bullied in one situation may be the bully in another.

## **What are the signs of bullying?**

Some students may find it challenging to share concerns that they are being bullied. Bullying affects people in different ways, but some common signs of bullying include:

- being unusually secretive and quiet
- appearing oversensitive or weepy, or having angry 'outbursts'
- not sleeping properly
- having physical injuries like bruises, cuts or scratches
- becoming isolated, withdrawn, or losing interest in normal activities
- having physical aches and pains such as headaches or stomach aches
- receiving more messages than usual via social media

## Bloxham Academy Values

We share a set of six values which were created collaboratively to embody our vision for our community. We use these values to support our students with understanding our vision and boundaries but also they ensure that every student, regardless of their background or abilities, has the chance to feel valued, successful and recognised and an integral part of the school community.



## Strategies used at Bloxham Grove Academy

Bloxham Grove Academy uses Restorative Approaches; a term used to describe principles, behaviours and approaches which build and maintain healthy relationships and a sense of community. It is also used to resolve difficulties and repair harm where there has been conflict. A report published in 2011 by the Department for Education gave whole-school restorative approaches the highest rating of effectiveness at preventing bullying.

This approach is linked to our academy values and is embedded in everything that we do, encouraging our community to build respectful relationships, begin to identify feelings and to take accountability for actions. We believe that consistent use of these principles and behaviours leads to increased feelings of self esteem and wellbeing which in turn supports a reduction in the number of incidences of conflict and challenge. For further detail about how and why Bloxham Grove Academy uses restorative practice please see our Relationships & Behaviour Policy.

## **Examples of restorative approaches used daily at Bloxham Grove Academy**

- Adults warmly welcome students in from their morning taxis and give positive farewells at end of day
- Feelings check ins during readiness and reflection sessions and at intervals throughout the day enable students to have the space to discuss feelings, reflect upon positives, problems and possible resolutions
- Opportunities for short brain breaks and alternative spaces to work in during lesson time when students feel overwhelmed
- End of lesson self reflection which is support by a known adult
- Positive reinforcement by adults towards behaviour and decisions
- Recognition for modelling academy values via our use of values cards
- Positive role modelling of behaviour; calm tones, feelings check ins, honesty from adults when they have made mistakes
- “Family dining” set up at lunchtime with adults facilitating positive conversations and interaction
- Community roles and responsibilities such as peer mentoring, school council and gardening club
- Clear and consistent expectations around behaviours and addressing of unsafe behaviours
- Resources for games with adult supervision and interaction for free association times
- Providing alternative quiet spaces at lunchtimes

Additional ways Bloxham Grove creates a positive community environment for our students and staff:

- Considerations are made to classroom layout with clear distinction between learning and social reflection areas.
- Students have their own designated space and seating is planned based upon the needs of individual students
- Classrooms are designed with low arousal and are clear from clutter
- Flexible learning practices take different learning styles and interests into account
- Gaining student voice via questionnaires and using responses to develop the curriculum and our practice
- A tiered approach to provision with adapted and individualised timetables for students based on need

## Sharing our vision with our students

Awareness of bullying and our values led vision for our community is shared with our students through

- Assemblies; we hold twice weekly whole-school assemblies with specific focus on our academy values, sharing of good news, careers aspiration, inspirational persons and celebrations of achievements.
- Curriculum work in the classroom including Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)
- Daily Readiness and Reflection sessions
- Participation in Anti Bullying Week
- Restorative conversations and through “Mend it Meetings” (MIM)

## Restore Model

Despite the proactive strategies Bloxham Grove Academy employs to create a positive community there will be occasions when students engage in unsafe behaviours some of which may be deemed to be of a bullying nature. These behaviours are not accepted and will be addressed as soon as they are identified.

The Restore Model was created by Bloxham Grove Academy to ensure that there is consistency of approach when a student is behaving in an unsafe way and/or where harm has been caused.

The Restore Model has four distinct stages all of which are essential to support our students in understanding the impact of their actions and reintegrating them back into the community.

The four stages of the Restore Model:

### 1. Regulate

At this stage our priority is to support dysregulated students, helping them to remain safe until they return to their baseline regulation and are able to engage in reciprocative conversation

### 2. Reflect

This part of the Restore Model encourages students to think about what has happened, what harm may have been caused and to whom. It is a vital part of the process that some students may find challenging, it is important however that this stage is not missed as it encourages personal accountability. It may take

place as soon as the student is regulated or may need to happen at a later stage if the student is not immediately receptive.

### **3. Repair**

Another vital stage of the process is for the student to take part in the repair of harm. This may take the form of face to face meeting (Mend it Meeting) with harmed parties if all are willing, it might look like the physical repair of objects or environment or potentially if students do not all want to meet together it might take the form of a letter of apology or written agreement.

### **4. Reintegrate**

Once a student has taken part in reflection and repaired any harm caused, it is important that they are welcomed to rejoin their class community as soon as possible. Once repair has occurred it is important not to add to a student's feeling of shame or cause further trauma by isolating them and preventing their return. The reintegration process should be collaborative with all parties involved, communicating with one other to agree the outcome and return

## **Identifying Bullying**

Students often do not report bullying when it happens to them. It is therefore very important for all adults to be alert to some factors that might indicate that bullying has taken place or is current. These include:

- Sudden changes to patterns of absence
- Unexplained changes in a student's personality e.g. a normally outgoing student becomes sullen, withdrawn or aggressive
- Passive acceptance of inappropriate behaviour and/or language
- Possessions go missing or work is defaced
- A decrease in student progress and levels of achievement which are not easily explained
- A student who stops participating in favourite activities
- A student who takes a long time eating their lunch and/or shows an unwillingness to go to lunchtime in the hall
- Students who stay close to members of staff during free association when this has not been the case previously.

*This list is by no means exhaustive. It should be noted that the presence of the above behaviours does not indicate that bullying is definitely taking place. Staff should use professional curiosity and investigate further before making judgement.*

## **How incidents of bullying are approached**

If academy staff identify that bullying is occurring they have a duty of care to address it, concerns will be reported to the Relationship and Therapeutic Lead.

We encourage families to speak with us if they are concerned that their child or another young person has been caught up in bullying. Please contact the academy where we will work with you to aid those involved.

The Relationship and Therapeutic lead will ensure that the Restore Model is used:

### **Reflection:**

All parties will be given space and the individual opportunity to talk about their experiences and feelings. Time and focus will be given to reflect upon the impact of actions. Parents and carers will be made aware and collective discussions will take place about next steps.

### **Repair:**

Once individuals have reflected upon the impact of their actions, identified that harm has been caused and been encouraged to take accountability. Staff will support those that have bullied others to repair the harm. There are a number of different forms that reparation can take: verbal and written apologies, written contracts and agreements and face to face restorative conversations known as Mend it Meetings (MiMs). There will be follow up conversations with all parties at the end of this process to make sure that they are satisfied that concerns have been addressed

### **Reintegrate:**

It is important that after the repair, the final step in the process is to encourage individuals to make positive contributions back in both their class and academy communities. It may be appropriate at this stage for some students to be offered supportive intervention to assist them in this endeavour.

## **Working in partnership with other professionals**

There may be occasions when the academy requests the support of partner agencies to help students where bullying has taken place. Bloxham Grove Academy works in connection with the Community Wardens, Safer Schools Officer, SEN Transport and social care to promote safety in the academy, the wider community and in the home

## **Guidance for Students**

If you are being bullied, here are some things that you can do:

- Report it as soon as possible - tell someone you trust about what you are experiencing. This may be a family member, a trusted adult or friend. Telling someone who can help is a form of standing up for yourself.
- Keep a record of what is happening, when and how often
- If the bullying is online, take screenshot evidence and report it to the Social Media provider
- Do not retaliate – walk away from any situations if possible. If the bullying is online, do not respond
- Spend your time with people that make you feel good. Stay with a group, there is safety in numbers.
- Do not blame yourself – it is not your fault. No matter what, you do not deserve to be bullied and it is wrong.
- Consider your use of social media carefully – make sure you are only interacting with friends that you can trust
- Avoid getting others involved – it is important to be clear about what has happened.

If you think that someone else is being bullied:

- Talk to them – check that they are OK and let them know that you care.
- Take action – report your concerns. Watching and doing nothing is not ok.
- Do not support the bully, through word or deed (or by being a bystander), in his/her actions

## **Guidance for Families**

- Be observant of unusual behaviour, e.g. if your child suddenly shows a reluctance to attend school
- Listen and reassure your child – the bullying is not their fault. Try to establish the facts.
- Find out what your child wants to happen next. Help to identify the choices open to them; the potential next steps to take; and the skills they may have to help solve the problems.
- Encourage your child to report any bullying to someone they trust at the academy
- Inform the academy as soon as you suspect bullying so that it can be addressed. Contacting the Relationship & Therapeutic Lead is the best option. Email address : [f.morris@bloxhamgroveacademy.co.uk](mailto:f.morris@bloxhamgroveacademy.co.uk)

- Encourage your child to get involved in activities that build their confidence and esteem.
- Advise your child not to fight back but to stand up for him/herself by informing someone who will help.
- Assist the academy in implementing strategies / measures to deal with the bullying.
- Avoid contacting other students or parents; this may make the situation worse.
- Avoid posting about the situation on Social Media; this is likely to make the situation more difficult for all parties. If the bullying is occurring via Social Media, report it to the provider.
- If you are unhappy with the way in which the academy is dealing with the situation, escalate your concerns to the Headteacher:  
[head@bloxhamgroveacademy.co.uk](mailto:head@bloxhamgroveacademy.co.uk)

### **Helpful Links:**

There are a number of charities and organisations that have useful advice to help support those affected by bullying:

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/contact.html>

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/factors-that-impact-mental-health/school-based-risk-factors/bullying-and-cyberbullying>

