



# Larwood Academy Trust

**Chair of Trustees:** Daniel Login | BA (Hons) |

LARWOOD DRIVE, STEVENAGE, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG1 5BZ

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**Larwood School**

**Executive Headteacher:** Mr Pierre van der Merwe | BA, NPQH |

**Brandles School**

**Headteacher:** Mr Paul Smith | BA (Hons), AVCM |

## Version Control

V1.1	January 2024	New Layout, Change of Antibullying coordinator for Larwood. Updated websites at the end of the policy.

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**Larwood School**

**Brandles School**

**Executive Headteacher:** Mr Pierre van der Merwe | BA, NPQH |

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**Dan Login**

Chair of Trustees

**Pierre van der Merwe**

Executive Headteacher

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy Number: 39

Review Committee: ELT

Type of Policy: Non- Statutory

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Approved: January 2024

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### **BACKGROUND**

It is compulsory that every school has an anti-bullying policy. Various guidance from the DFE has been published which supports such an action and this includes; The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Equality Act 2010, The Education Act 2011, 'Don't Suffer in Silence', and 'Bullying-A Charter for Action', and 2017 guidance on preventing and tackling bullying. It should also be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

The 2017 DFE guidance defines bullying as:

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.

The document also highlights the increasing need to be vigilant regarding the area of cyber-bullying, amongst all groups of children and

### **THE AIMS OF THIS POLICY**

- All staff at Larwood Academy Trust ( Larwood and Brandles Schools) have a role to play in ensuring that our pupils feel safe and that we prevent all forms of bullying.
- We do not accept bullying and it will not be tolerated in our Trust.
- We aim to work together (CEO, Headteachers, Senior Leaders, Staff, Pupils, Parents and Trustees) to equip our pupils with the ability to recognise such damaging behaviour and do something about when it occurs.
- We also aim to work with all parties so that a consistent approach is used to try and stop such behaviour taking place in the first instance.

### **THE DFE DOCUMENT 'PREVENTING AND TACKLING BULLYING 2017 STATES THAT SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS:**

- **INVOLVE PARENTS** to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home;

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- **INVOLVE PUPILS.** All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders;
- **REGULARLY EVALUATE** and update their approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers;
- **IMPLEMENT CONSEQUENCES FOLLOWING AN EVENT.** The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable;
- **OPENLY DISCUSS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PEOPLE THAT COULD MOTIVATE BULLYING**, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Schools can also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable;
- **USE SPECIFIC ORGANISATIONS OR RESOURCES FOR HELP WITH PARTICULAR PROBLEMS.**  
Schools can draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and / or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying;
- **PROVIDE EFFECTIVE STAFF TRAINING.** Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. Schools can invest in specialised skills to help their staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or disability (SEND) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) pupils;
- **WORK WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY** such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. Successful schools also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school;
- **MAKE IT EASY FOR PUPILS TO REPORT BULLYING** so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying;
- **CREATE AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT.** Schools should create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination; and
- **CELEBRATE SUCCESS.** Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.

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**CONSIDERING ALL OF THE ABOVE, AT LARWOOD ACADEMY TRUST, WE IMPLEMENT OUR ANTI-BULLYING POLICY IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:**

- All staff have access to this policy and are able to contribute to it via discussion and by Speaking to Senior Leaders in their respective schools.
- The Headteachers are charged in ensuring that staff are aware of the protocols relating to bullying such as how to report an incident, and what to do if such an incident does happen and how Larwood/Brandles School actively works with all parties to try and stop such issues happening in the first place. The Headteacher is responsible for appointing an Anti-Bullying Lead who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

**The Anti-Bullying Coordinator for our schools are: Mr J Scales, Assistant Headteacher at Larwood and Miss Natalie Wilsher, Deputy Headteacher at Brandles who are supported by other key staff at each school.**

The responsibilities are:

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, **trustees**, parents/carers and relevant local agencies
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour
- Class teachers and Learning and Support Assistants (LASA's/TA's) are responsible for ensuring that their pupils know what bullying is and how to report it with confidence. They are also responsible for recording such incidents, taking appropriate actions and relaying their actions with parents relating to bullying
- All staff acting as role models to ensure that this policy becomes practice in a day to day manner

**What does bullying look like?**

Bullying can include:

- physical assault
- taking or damaging belongings
- name calling, taunting and mocking
- making offensive comments
- cyber bullying - inappropriate text messaging and e mailing; sending offensive or degrading images; impersonating and hacking into accounts online using internet enabled devices

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## **LARWOOD ACADEMY TRUST – ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

- producing offensive graffiti
- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- excluding people from groups. Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the ‘bystanders’ or ‘accessories’.

### **Prejudice Related Bullying**

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy ,Roma, Travellers
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex /gender
- sexual orientation

These are called ‘protected characteristics’.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to the local authority for monitoring purposes.

### **Other vulnerable groups include**

- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

### **Prejudice Related Language**

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers.

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In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not acceptable, as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

### **Where does bullying take place?**

Bullying is not confined to the school premises and may persist outside school, in the local community, on the journey to and from school and may continue into Further Education. For pupils at our schools, it may also take place during a taxi journey to, and from school.

The school acknowledges its responsibilities to support families if bullying occurs off the premises.

### **Cyberbullying**

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims.

Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school.

Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying.

Cyberbullying can include:-

- Hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice/hate messages
- Impersonating someone online
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation
- Stalking

NB-Staff will be vigilant to this during times when Covid 19 means a greater number of pupils are learning remotely.

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our e-safety policy) and encourage good online behaviour.

Bullying can take place between:

- Young people

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- Young people and staff
- Between staff/ adults
- Individuals or groups

### **Homophobic bullying and using homophobic language**

Homophobic language is terms of abuse used towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people or those thought to be LGB. It is also used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or have gay friends, family members or their parents/carers are gay.

Dismissing it as banter is not acceptable as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexuality they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of homophobic language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any homophobic intent. Persistent use of homophobic language or homophobic bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

### **Transphobic Bullying**

Transphobic bullying often occurs as a result of others' prejudice being directed at a child or young person because:

- They are transgender
- They are perceived to be transgender
- They do not fit with traditional gender norms (eg. boys with long hair or wearing make-up, girls playing team sports)
- They have transgender friends or family members
- They are perceived as being different

Our approach to all forms of bullying:

- We will challenge the use of any unkind behaviour in our school and teach children to celebrate our differences. Persistent use of transphobic language or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying
- Where bullying is witnessed by a member of staff, immediate action should be taken. This may be in the form of speaking to the individual child and offering guidance as well as supporting the victim. Careful explanation is needed so that all parties know such behaviour is wrong and will not be tolerated.
- Where behaviour outlined above is repeated after such action, further action and sanctions will be taken. This may include school based meetings with parents and child, loss of free time and other privileges.
- Regular training to ensure that all staff are equipped to deal with such behaviours
- The use of curriculum time to tackle this issue such as dedicated Personal, Social, Health Education lessons and whole school assemblies, restorative justice interventions, supporting anti-bullying events and by using appropriate resources

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- There will be a continuous process of policy review so that policy reflects practice and vice versa.
- Trustees are charged with reviewing the schools approach to bullying and supporting all staff in the drive to stop bullying and act upon such behaviour swiftly and effectively. They also monitor incidents, verbal and physical bullying and RPI's via the Behaviour and Safeguarding (BAS) Committee and will challenge the school regarding policy and practice.

### **MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW**

Parts of this policy will be monitored and discussed on a weekly basis. This may be informally amongst staff, formally during reflections or via the Leadership meeting on a Friday. Regular review of data relating to bullying is undertaken by the Leadership team and is then shared with the governing body. Trustees are duty bound to review such data and challenge the school regarding trends, actions and policy related matters.

#### **Reporting and responding to bullying.**

Our school has clear and well publicised systems to report bullying for the whole school community (including staff, parents/carers, children and young people) this includes those who are the victims of bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders)

- Children are encouraged to speak to an adult they trust in school or at home.
- All staff are aware of the need to take all concerns seriously and to ensure that nurturing relationships encourage information sharing, especially during dedicated circle time on Monday morning across the school.

#### **Specific Procedures:**

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated involving all parties (as noted in previous sections). Staff are aware of and follow the same procedures:

- Staff members complete an incident log on Behaviour Watch (BW)
  - Interviewing all parties
  - Informing parents
  - Implementing appropriate disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. These are graded according to the seriousness of the incident and send out a message that bullying is unacceptable
  - Being clear that responses may also vary according to the type of bullying and may involve other agencies where appropriate
  - Following up - We will keep in touch with the person who reported the situation, which may be parents/carers or other adults. We have a clear complaints procedure for parents who are not satisfied with the schools actions. This is available online or from the school office

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- We will use a range of responses and support appropriate to the situation. These may include solution-focused approaches, restorative approach, individual work with victim, perpetrator and bystanders or referral to outside agencies if appropriate.
- Liaising with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises i.e. in the case of cyberbullying or hate crime.

### **Recording bullying and evaluating the policy**

Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident and this will be monitored closely.

Information stored in school will be used to ensure individuals incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy. This information will be discussed by staff regularly during reflection sessions, or at SLT meetings. Behaviour Support Plans need to be updated and risk assessment put in place for the aggressor and victim/s

The policy will be reviewed and updated every two years.

### **Strategies for preventing bullying**

As part of our on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils, we at Larwood Academy Trust have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour

#### **1. Curriculum/Whole-School Strategies**

- Involvement in SEAL
- Involvement in the Healthy Schools Programme, where appropriate
- Anti-Bullying Week annually in November.
- PSHE/Citizenship lessons and cross curriculum.
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and internet safety
- Student Voice
- School Council
- Peer mentoring schemes and Playground Buddying
- Modelling of positive relationships
- Notes/ postcards home from class teacher regarding good behaviour
- Working with the local PCSOs and other agencies where helpful

#### **2. Reactive programmes for vulnerable groups or groups involved in bullying.**

- Counselling and/or mediation schemes from trained staff and outside agencies
- Small group work
- Restorative Justice

#### **3. Support for parents/carers**

- Parent information distributed by parent mail, newsletters and the school website etc.

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- Information available on parents' evenings
- Information sessions i.e. e-safety

### **The Prevent Duty**

From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

A Prevent Duty plan is in place to protect our children from the risk of radicalisation. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. School staff should use their judgement in identifying children who may be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

By promoting the fundamental British Values, we aim to build pupils' resilience to radicalisation and enable them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent Duty is not intended to stop pupils debating controversial issues. On the contrary, we aim to provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

### **Useful organisations**

*Please click on the links and it will take you to the websites*

**Anti-Bullying Alliance** – [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Brings together more than 65 organisations with the aim of reducing bullying and creating safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

**Access Learning Disability Advice and Support | Mencap** - [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Mencap is a learning disability charity that provides information and support to children and adults with a learning disability, and to their families and carers.

**The Stonewall uprising: 50 years of LGBT history** - [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

Stonewall Equality Limited, trading as Stonewall, is a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights charity in the United Kingdom. It is the largest LGBT rights organisation in Europe

**EACH Educational Action Challenging Homophobia | EACH** – [www.each.education](http://www.each.education)

Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) is a charity and training agency helping people and organisations affected by homophobia.

**Schools OUT UK (consortium.lgbt)** - [www.consortium.lgbt](http://www.consortium.lgbt)

Schools Out is a charity for safe spaces for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) communities in the education sector.

**Childnet — Online safety for young people** - [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

Childnet International -is The UK's safer internet center.

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