

Anti-Bullying and Prejudice Policy

Vibrance is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. Bullying contradicts the values and principles we work and live by. All employees, students, and visitors to Vibrance have a right to work and learn in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute in whatever way they can to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

Aims and Objectives of This Policy

Vibrance actively promotes positive interpersonal relationships between students and employees.

- Students have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear
- Vibrance will not tolerate bullying behaviour
- Any student or employee who experiences bullying in any form will be listened to
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

Definition of Bullying

Behaviour by an individual or group is usually repeated over time and intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. This can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice.

Bullying is an act of aggression that causes embarrassment, pain, or discomfort to someone. It can take several forms: physical, verbal, gestures, extortion, and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. Individuals or groups of students may perpetrate it.

Forms of Bullying

Physical bullying

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property. Physical bullying causes both short-term and long-term damage.

Verbal bullying

Verbal bullying includes name-calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse. While verbal bullying can start harmless, it can escalate to levels affecting the individual target. Keep reading in this section for techniques to deal with verbal bullying.

Relational Aggression / Social bullying

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as covert bullying, is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and cause humiliation. Social bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- hostile facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking unkindly
- encouraging others to exclude someone socially

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- damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can be overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies, including hardware such as computers and smartphones and software such as social media, instant messaging, texts, websites and other online platforms.

Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying consists of repeated, harmful, and humiliating actions that target a person sexually. Examples include sexual name-calling, crude comments, vulgar gestures, uninvited touching, sexual propositioning, and pornographic materials. A bully might make a crude comment about a peer's appearance, attractiveness, sexual development, or sexual activity.

Prejudicial Bullying

Prejudicial bullying is based on prejudices tweens and teens have toward people of different races, religions, or sexual orientations. This type of bullying can encompass all the other types of bullying. When prejudicial bullying occurs, students are targeting others who are different from them and singling them out.

Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Staff Handbook, which contains policies on equality and diversity, complaints and grievances, and expected standards of behaviour for Vibrance employees. The Student Wellbeing Policy outlines the expectations of our students.

Implementation of This Policy

All Vibrance students are given a copy of our student wellbeing leaflet, which outlines the standards of behaviour and conduct expected of students. The leaflet's contents will be explained clearly to new students during the induction meeting. Feedback is routinely sought from students, professionals, and parents/carers on all aspects of our provision, and policies are reviewed regularly.

Responsibilities of Employees

Vibrance employees will:

- Foster in our students' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our students.
- Discuss bullying with all students so that they learn about the damage it causes to both the bullied and the bully and the importance of reporting bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to students who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.

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- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Head of Vibrance.
- Follow up on any complaint by a parent/carer about bullying and report back promptly.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, following agreed procedures.

Responsibilities of Students

We expect our students to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the student being bullied unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report any witnesses or suspected instances of bullying to a member of staff to dispel any climate of secrecy and help prevent further cases.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should not suffer in silence but dare to speak out to put an end to their suffering and that of other potential targets.

Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

We ask parents/carers to support students and Vibrance by:

- Watching out for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their child might be evidence of bullying.
- They should advise their child to report any bullying to a member of the Vibrance staff and explain the implications for themselves and other students if they allow the bullying to continue unchecked.
- Advising their child not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their child and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken.
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying.
- Informing Vibrance of suspected bullying, even if their child is not involved.
- Cooperating with Vibrance, if their child is accused of bullying, they should try to ascertain the truth and point out the implication of bullying, both for bullied students and the bullies themselves.

Responsibilities of All

Everyone should work together to combat and eradicate bullying.

Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

1. When a bullying incident is reported or observed, an allocated member of staff will take responsibility for investigating it fully. This will include speaking to the students involved and any witnesses.
2. A written record of the incident will be kept, including the dates and times of the incident, details of the occurrence, and the outcome of the investigation, including actions to be taken.
3. Actions which may be taken include:
 - a. Contacting parents/carers of students concerned about the bullying incident.
 - b. Feedback to those concerned.

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- c. Sanctions are being applied, following wellbeing policy
- d. Contacting relevant professionals.

Protected Characteristics / Discriminatory Bullying

Types of discrimination

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person/gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Vibrance does not accept bullying based on discriminatory bullying at Vibrance, and we will follow the anti-bullying, behaviour and exclusion policy if such events occur.

The provisions approach to bullying, prejudice and racism

Verbal, physical and cyberbullying will not be tolerated at Vibrance.

At Vibrance, we think that if a student is being bullied or picked on when another student or group of students say horrible things to them. It is also bullying when a student is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, and no one talks to them. Texting or messaging unkind or inappropriate comments is also classed as bullying. It is also bullying when a student is teased repeatedly in a horrible way.

However, if two students of equal power or strength have an occasional fight or quarrel, this is not bullying.

Everyone is responsible for preventing it, and the staff and governors have established the following guidelines as part of the Wellbeing Policy.

Vibrance will react firmly and promptly when bullying is identified. A range of sanctions are available to the staff depending on the seriousness of the situation. Some of these include:

- Referral to Headteacher
- Discussion with parents and student
- Withdrawal of activities
- Follow the well-being pathway

The provision will:

- Support students who are being bullied.
- Help bullies to change their behaviour.
- Take bullying seriously and find out the facts of any incident
- Meet those concerned individually
- Use peer group pressure to discourage bullying actively
- Break up bully groups where necessary

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- Involve parents at an early stage
- Help students develop positive strategies to combat bullying
- Be equally concerned about bullying to and from education.
- Record bullying in a consistent way.
- Discuss with and involve students in agreed class and education rules and behaviour.
- Request help from outside agencies, e.g., the behaviour support team and the educational psychologist.
- Involve the Police, where necessary, under the guidance of the Headteacher.
- Promote Anti-bullying through activities.

Continuous Professional Development of Staff

Vibrance will provide staff training on anti-bullying as part of employee's personal development plans.