# Anti-Bullying Policy

**Context**

The legal and local framework for this policy is:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education Independent School Standards Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989

The DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' document July 2017 states that *"every childcare setting must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying"*.

**Aims and Values**

The staff and volunteers of Buzzers Academies believe that bullying of any form should not be tolerated.

We want to create an ethos in which attending our Clubs and Camps is a positive experience for all members of our community, with an ethos of good behaviour, where children treat one another and Buzzers Academies staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. This will be achieved through discussing differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, or appearance related differences. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.

Values of respect for staff and other children, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole Club/Camp environment and are reinforced by staff and older children who set a good example to the rest.

We want the children and adults at our Clubs and Camps to feel safe and know what to do if they feel they are being bullied or suspect that someone they know is being bullied. They are encouraged to report incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying, and should feel able to discuss the cause of their bullying without fear or further bullying or discrimination.

We will involve children and ensure that they understand Buzzers Academies approach and are clear about the part they can play in the prevention of bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

We will involve parents to ensure that they are clear that Buzzers Academies does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied.

We will deal with each incident of bullying as quickly and as effectively as possible, taking into consideration the needs of all parties and of our community. We will support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to and help to support children/young people displaying bullying behaviour to change their attitudes and understand why it needs to change. We will liaise with parents and other appropriate members of our community and ensure everyone connected to Buzzers Academies feel responsible for helping the prevention of bullying within our Clubs/Camps.

We will use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems, drawing on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations.

## What is bullying?

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim and often involves those children who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying or who lack the social communication skills to report such incidents. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online."
*(Preventing and tackling bulling document – DFE 2017)*

**One-off incidents of physically hurting someone, name calling or deliberately ignoring someone is not bullying,** but it is unacceptable behaviour. The perpetrator should be made aware of this and dealt with in accordance with Buzzers Academies' *Safeguarding Policy*.

## Definitions of bullying

**Physical:** physical act of hurting someone through pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, or other unwanted physical contact.

**Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.

**Emotional:** tormenting, threatening ridicule, humiliation, and exclusion from groups or activities.

**Relational:** damaging someone's relationships or social status.

**Cyber:** the use of the internet and related technologies to harm other people in deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner, for example via text messages, social media, or gaming, which include the use of images and videos.

**Racist:** racial taunts, graffiti, gesture.

**Extortion:** money, gifts, doing homework.

**Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, abusive comments.

## Safeguarding children and young people

Under the *Children Act 1989*, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is "***reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm***". Where this is the case, Buzzers Academies staff should report their concerns to Bromley Children's Social Care (or the Social Care team within the city/town/borough that Buzzers Academies are working in).

## Criminal law

Bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, although some types of harassing or threatening behaviour, or communications, could be a criminal offence, for example under the *Protection from Harassment Act 1997*, the *Malicious Communications Act 1988*, the *Communications Act 2003*, and the *Public Order Act 1986*. Buzzers Academies will work with the wider community including the police and children's services to agree a clearly understood approach to cases where bullying is particularly serious or persistent, or where a criminal offence may have been committed.

## Cyberbullying

Technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside of our Clubs/Camps. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. We will raise the children's awareness of what online bullying can look like and what they should do if they are victims of cyberbullying. We will also ensure that children feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred online. We will regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the Club/Camp rules, has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to a offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete, or retain the material as evidence.

**Bullying outside Club/Camp premises**

Buzzers Academies staff have the power to discipline children for misbehaving outside of the Club/Camp premises to such an extent as is reasonable. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the Club/Camp premises. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the Buzzers Academies member of staff can only discipline the child on the Club/Camp premises, or elsewhere when the child is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Where bullying outside of the Club/Camp is reported to Buzzers Academies staff, it should be investigated and acted on. We will ensure that pupils feel they can report bullying which may have occurred outside of the Club/Camp and reassure them that they will be listened to. The Buzzers Academies Managing Director should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator in the relevant local authority, of the action taken against a child in their care. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

**Signs and symptoms of bullying**

Look out for changes in behaviour, including:

- A child becoming unusually quiet.
- A child suddenly showing an unwillingness to come to the Club/Camp.
- A child not wanting to do certain sessions/activities.
- A child avoiding the playground (or other outside areas).
- A child that has sudden outbursts of anger.
- A child that becomes easily distressed.
- A child that is seen to be giving things to a certain child to gain their favour.
- A child who is always on their own during break times (they could be a victim of bullying).
- A group of children that suddenly disperses when a staff member of adult appears (they might be the perpetrators of bullying).
- A child who whispers things secretly to another child, yet when questioned, everything is denied or kept secret.

Remember; the children that are the perpetrators of bullying are often victims of bullying themselves; this may be from home, school, or social groups.

**Procedure for the reporting of bullying**

**Parents and Carers -**

Parents and carers should approach a senior member of Buzzers Academies staff in the first instance if they have concerns regarding potential bullying at one of our Clubs/Camps. This could be in person, by phone or by email. The Buzzers Academies member of staff will carry out a full investigation following the guidelines of this policy, with written (confidential) notes kept at the Club/Camp and/or company head office. If parents or carers wish to take the matter further, they should make an appointment to speak with the Buzzers Academies Managing Director – matt.walker@buzzers.org.uk

**Children -**

Any child that feels they are being bullied or knows of a child who is being bullied, should tell any Buzzers Academies member of staff at the Club/Camp as soon as possible. A full investigation will be carried out following the guidelines of this policy, with written (confidential) notes kept at Buzzers Academies head office.

All reported incidents from parents, children or staff will be recorded on our 'Incident Report Forms'. These forms will be kept on file at the Buzzers Academies head office for the legally required period of time.

**Guidelines for dealing with reported incidents of bullying**

Buzzers Academies has a responsibility to support the children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The victim will be supported in building confidence. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from the Buzzers Academies member of staff, a meeting with the company Managing Director, engaging with parents and possible referrals to outside agencies.

Children reporting bullying will be listened to, as bullying can affect their social, mental and emotional health. Buzzers Academies will ensure they make provision for a child's short-term needs, setting out the actions they are taking to minimise negative impact on the child. Buzzers Academies will also consider the possibility of long-lasting difficulties and will support the child's mental health and wellbeing. Children who are subject to severe bullying whilst attending a Buzzers Academies Club/Camp are more likely to incur additional bullying outside of our provision, either on their way to and from the Club/Camp, or through cyberbullying.

We will respond sensitively where an absence arises as a result of bullying during one of our Clubs/Camps. Buzzers Academies will put measures in to place that tackle the bullying so that bullied children feel safe to attend and reattend our Clubs/Camps.

Disciplinary sanctions will be implemented to reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.

**Children suspected of bullying will be dealt with as follows:**

1. The alleged bully/bullies will be approached by a Buzzers Academies member of staff and given the chance to explain their actions. This should not put the alleged victims in danger of retribution. The incident and outcome of the discussion will be noted, and a copy kept at the company head office.

2. If bullying is substantiated, then consequences of the incident will be explored i.e. how the victim feels and reasons for a child wanting to bully. Children who are proven to have bullied will have sanctions imposed in accordance with Buzzers Academies booking 'Terms & Conditions' policy and 'Safeguarding' policy.

3. The disciplinary measures to children who bully will show clearly that their behaviour is wrong and unactable.

4. Disciplinary measure will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs (SEN) of vulnerable children.

5. Ways to change behaviour will be discussed with all parents/carers and children involved, with supporting strategies and targets put in place for future Club/Camp attendance days.

6. The bully will be helped to make amends to the victim.

7. Parents of the bully will be informed, and a record of the incident kept on the child's file (Our Booking System) and on the company file (confidentially).

8. The motivations behind the bullying behaviour will be considered in case it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator, providing support for the bully if appropriate.

9. Behaviour of the bully will be monitored and if there is improvement, it will be recognised and acknowledged.

**Ways to prevent bullying**

**The role of the 'Lead' coach -**

The 'Lead' coach at our Clubs/Camps will ensure that all children understand what bullying is, know that it is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour. This will help to create an inclusive environment and safe environment where children can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination. This will be done through our Club/Camp 'rules', which are explained to children at the start of each Club term/Camp day. The 'Lead' coach will ensure that all Buzzers Academies staff, including volunteers, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. Also, that they are aware of current guidance and understand the principles and purpose of this policy, including their legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems and where to seek support.

The 'Lead' coach sets the company's climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming Club/Camp, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

**Support for staff who are bullied**

Buzzers Academies makes it clear that bullying of staff, whether by children, parents, or colleagues, is unacceptable. Sanctions will be imposed if staff are the victims of bullying and will be supported emotionally. Staff will be given guidance on how to protect themselves from cyberbullying and how to tackle it should it occur.

**Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored regularly by Buzzers Academies' *Operations Manager* and *Office Administrator,* who then report to the company Managing Director about the effectiveness of the policy.

**This policy was reviewed and/or updated on 20/10/2026**