

Labyrinth Education

Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure

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Distribution: All staff and stakeholders

Owner: Senior Leadership Team

Policy Lead: Head of Education

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement

Labyrinth Education opposes all forms of unlawful discrimination and is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, fairness, and inclusion in the application of our policies. We ensure our policies promote equal access and opportunity for all individuals, particularly considering protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Definitions
4. Roles and Responsibilities
5. Policy
6. Cyber-bullying
7. Intervention Procedure
8. Prevention
9. Training Requirements
10. Monitoring Compliance
11. Linked Documents

1. Introduction

This document outlines Labyrinth Education's commitment to tackling incidents of bullying and minimising their impact within our specialist SEND education settings. We recognise that bullying can have a devastating effect on learners' emotional wellbeing and academic development. Given the vulnerabilities associated with SEND, including difficulties in communication, social interaction, and sensory processing, Labyrinth Education staff must be vigilant and proactive in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all learners and all staff across Labyrinth Education settings.

3. Definitions

3.1 Advocacy Advocacy is supporting individuals to express their views, secure their rights, represent their interests, and access the services they need.

3.2 Behaviours of Concern Behaviours of such intensity, frequency, or duration that the physical safety of the learner or others is at risk or access to ordinary activities is seriously limited.

3.3 Bullying Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another physically or emotionally. Bullying can include physical assault, teasing, making threats, name-calling, cyber-bullying, or any actions motivated by prejudice.

3.4 Perpetrator/Alleged Perpetrator An individual who has (or is alleged to have) engaged in harmful behaviour towards others.

3.5 Victim An individual who has suffered harm as a result of the actions of others.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Proprietors and Board of Governors Responsible for ensuring compliance with all national standards reflected in organisational policies.

4.2 Executive Director of Education Responsible for implementing and updating this policy, ensuring alignment with legislation and best practice.

4.3 Designated Safeguard Lead Provides strategic oversight of safeguarding and educational practice, including reviewing incidents of bullying.

4.4 Headteacher Responsible for operational application of the policy within their setting and supporting staff in training and understanding procedures.

4.5 All Staff Responsible for attending training, promoting a positive culture, safeguarding learners' welfare, and responding promptly to concerns.

5. Policy

- Staff must be aware that certain SEND-related behaviours (e.g., sensory behaviours, communication difficulties) may distress others even without malicious intent.
- All perceived incidents must be addressed immediately, with accessible communication to support understanding.
- Positive, respectful relationships should be modelled at all times.
- Learners should be taught how to say "no," ask for help, and advocate for themselves.
- Any indicators of bullying must trigger immediate staff intervention and safeguarding protocols.

6. Cyber-bullying

Labyrinth Education recognises the risks associated with online activity. All learners must be taught online safety, and all use of technology must be appropriately supervised. Staff must remain vigilant for signs of cyber-bullying and respond immediately according to safeguarding procedures.

7. Intervention Procedure

7.1 Immediate Steps

- Act immediately if bullying is suspected or reported.
- Prioritise safety and well-being of those involved.
- Record incidents accurately and promptly.
- Inform the Headteacher and safeguarding lead.

7.2 Supporting Victims

- Provide reassurance and emotional support.

- Promote accessibility to trusted adults.
- Ensure ongoing observation and risk assessment updates.

7.3 Supporting (Alleged) Perpetrators

- Educate on the impact of their actions using accessible communication.
- Implement supportive interventions tailored to cognitive understanding.
- Adjust learner groupings or routines if necessary.

7.4 Involving Stakeholders

- Involve parents/carers, social workers, and health professionals when necessary.
- Implement safeguarding procedures if bullying amounts to a safeguarding concern.

8. Prevention

- Promote understanding of differences through curriculum activities.
- Foster a respectful and inclusive environment.
- Provide safe spaces for learners to express concerns.
- Celebrate diversity and learner achievements.
- Continuously evaluate and improve anti-bullying strategies.

9. Training Requirements

- All staff must receive regular training on recognising, preventing, and responding to bullying.
- Training will include SEND-specific safeguarding, contextual safeguarding, and understanding online risks.

10. Monitoring Compliance

- All incidents will be recorded and analysed.
- Monitoring will involve safeguarding teams and senior leadership to identify patterns and improve practice.

11. Linked Documents

- Labyrinth Education Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Labyrinth Education Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Labyrinth Education Curriculum Policy

Legislation and Guidance:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)