Name: Anti-Bullying Policy Approved by: SLT: Date Approved: 04/03/2023.

All policies are available to stakeholders either on the website or upon request from the office.

PRINCIPLES The Anti-bullying Policy is committed to and guided by the principles of:

The values of the The Vocational Academy should encourage respect for people and property, honesty, tolerance, self-discipline and a clear awareness that any type of harassment is an unacceptable form of behaviour. Every person, whatever their background / circumstances, should have the support they need to:

• Be healthy

• Stay safe

• Enjoy and achieve

• Make a positive contribution

• Achieve economic wellbeing

All persons have a right to feel safe and be protected in The Vocational Academy from all types of harassment and bullying: derogatory name-calling; verbal intimidation; social exclusion; ridicule; humiliation; extortion; physical violence; sexual, homophobic, biphobia, transphobic, racial, and cultural harassment; cyberbullying and disability or SEN based bullying. This policy is seen to be intricately linked with the The Vocational Academy Pastoral, Person Protection, Sex and Relationship and E-Safety policies and to the Safeguarding policy. PURPOSE The aims of this Anti-bullying Policy are to:

1. To foster respect for others.

2. To provide a clear message to all persons that harassment and bullying, in any form, are completely unacceptable.

3. To provide persons with an effective means of tackling bullying by ensuring that a known support network exists (using Tutors, Anti-bullying Ambassadors, Heads of Sector and the Safeguarding Team). South Shore Academy Anti-Bullying Policy 2 | P a g e 4. To provide all staff and those adults who work with our students (e.g. supply teachers, trainee teachers, cleaners), with a clear framework to enable effective handling of person protection and safeguarding issues.

5. To provide sanctions which ensure the bully is clear that such behaviour is not to be tolerated.

6. To investigate the reasons for such behaviour and offer support for the reform of the bully.

POLICY Definition of Bullying Behaviour Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms, making it extremely difficult to define. The nature of bullying is changing and evolving as technology develops. All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional, and physical stress. Each person's response to being bullied is unique and the effects can lead to:

• Depression and anxiety

• Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, low self-esteem, lack of confidence and loneliness

• Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy

• Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery

· Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness

• Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating.

• Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares

• Declining grades, loss of interest in work, or not wanting to go to work.

• Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations

• Self-destructive behaviours such as harming themselves or talking about suicide. Definitions are different and individuals have different experiences; however, from the accounts that the Anti-Bullying Alliance have heard from personren and young people, they consider bullying to be:

• Repetitive, wilful, or persistent

• Intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or a group

• An imbalance of power, leaving the victim feeling defenceless Bullying can be:

• Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, biting and other forms of violence or threats. Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.

• Indirect – spreading rumours, excluding from groups, writing graffiti, posting photographs or images on line.

• Emotional – exclusion, ostracising, tormenting, threatening gestures, ridicule, and humiliation.

• Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

• Religious – offensive comments, references to religious belief, lifestyle or background.

• Sexual – unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, homophobic, biphobia, transphobic abuse.

• Intimidation – causing the victim to feel threatened, unsafe or at risk of further assaults or attacks (of any kind).

• Disability/educational need–which leads to any of the above.

• Cyber Bullying using technology such as mobile phones, email, social media sites to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate, or target another person.

Types of cyber-bullying include:

• Flaming, online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged. • Denigration: Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, Chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.

• Exclusion: Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.

• Outing: Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.
• Trickery: Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.

• Impersonation: Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.

• Harassment: Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.

• Cyber-stalking: Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.

• A single act of telling a joke about someone

• Arguments

• Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others

• Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation, or meanness

Reasons why persons might bully someone include:

• They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular or cool

• They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time

• They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group

• They are fearful of other persons differences

• They are jealous of another person

• They are unhappy

• They are copying what they have seen others do, or what has been done to them.

Guidelines & Procedures for The Vocational Academy Anti-Bullying is as follows:

 Students who are victims of, or witness to, bullying should promptly inform any member of staff, which might include the Tutor, Teacher, Head of Sector, Safeguarding team or any member of the staff. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached, or who suspects/observed the bullying. The pupil needs to be informed that it will be necessary to log the incident (via SIMS) which will alert the issue to the Head of sector and AP overseeing Behaviour & Welfare. A clear account of the incident will be recorded in writing either by the victim or the member of staff recording the victims verbal statement. The relevant Head of Sector will interview all concerned and will record the incident and all information will be recorded for future reference. A record of all bullying instances will be logged in a central log kept by the Head of Safeguarding. Parents/Carers/Employers will be kept informed by the Head of Sector. Subject teachers and form tutors will be asked to monitor the situation in their classroom. There will be a biannual audit and analysis of incident logs and interventions to continually improve practice. Strategies The No Blame Approach – Initially the problem will be tacked using the no blame approach with the aim of making the alleged bully understand that bullying behaviour is both unacceptable and hurtful. The victim and the bully are interviewed separately, although the victim may elect to have a friend to support them throughout. The victim is reassured and the aim of the procedure is explained to them. The bully is interviewed separately and is asked to consider how

they would feel if they were bullied. The reasons for their behaviour will be discussed. The bully is asked to give a reassurance that the bullying will cease and told that the situation will be monitored and formally reviewed on a specified date. The Restorative Practice approach will be used if it is appropriate to bring both pupils together. The aim of this approach is to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships. It encourages acceptance of responsibility and sets clear boundaries. It is not always possible to discover all the details of a particular incident, but certain strategies can be used, including: Restorative Practice, circle time, or obtaining an apology, advice and support from other agencies – counsellor, educational psychologist, police liaison (where necessary). The Vocational Academy will keep parents/carers of the both the bully and the victim informed of developments and seek their support in monitoring the situation. It is not the The Vocational Academy policy to discuss with any parents/carers/employers any action taken unless it is specifically about their person. Sanctions for Persistent Bullying In cases of persistent bullying, or when the bully fails to comply with the agreed procedures, one or more of the following sanctions may be used:

• Formally recording the instances for the pupil / student record.

• Involving the parents of both bully and victim and informing them of the consequences.

• Isolating the bully in Internal Fixed Term Exclusion to ensure reflection, intervention time and safety for the victim.

• Withdrawing the bully from lessons after a discussion with the subject teacher, Head of Department and Head of Sector.

• In the event of persistent bullying, liaising with the Director and Head of Sector about more serious sanctions, e.g. involvement of external agencies or permanent exclusion. In particularly serious cases that lead to exclusion, governors will examine the evidence that a wide range of strategies had been tried and failed to affect a positive change in the bullying behaviour.

• The Vocational Academy have the legal power to make sure pupils behave and do not bully outside of The Vocational Academy premises, for example on public transport or in nearby public communal areas. During The Vocational Academy hours, including while pupils are taking part in The Vocational Academy, after The Vocational Academy clubs and cyber bullying The Vocational Academy has direct responsibility to ensure persons feel safe and secure.

• Where appropriate the Head of Sector may inform the police. Prevention A range of strategies are used to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying:

• The consistent promotion of The Vocational Academy code of behaviour which requires all students to respect the rights of others.

• Involvement in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week

• Training for all members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategies.

• The supervision by The Vocational Academy staff of recreational areas at lunch times and breaks.

• Anti-Bullying Ambassador buddies for each cohort.

• The celebration of all students backgrounds and cultures through assemblies.

• The training of a cross section of students as anti-bullying ambassadors.

• During assemblies and PHSE learning sessions discuss and explore bullying issues with the students.

• Raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching persons to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, and internet).

• All websites accessed in The Vocational Academy are screened. This software screens the language used in all documents, emails and websites. Rude or offensive emails, websites, documents are sent to the Head of Sector. Action will be taken and recorded.

· Effective recording systems.

• Work with multi-agency teams including police and persons services as appropriate.

• Contact the parents of both the person being bullied and the bully.

• Challenge sexual content within verbal abuse especially challenging the word gay and other homophobic language. All members of staff are asked to watch for early signs of distress in students, some of which may be attributable to bullying. It is likely that this will apply especially to students recently received into the The Vocational Academy community. Areas of the The Vocational Academy will be adequately staffed during recreation, lunchtime and after The Vocational Academy. Staff on duty should be vigilant and should observe the nature of student behaviour. Special checks should be made on toilets and other isolated areas. Students who arrive at The Vocational Academy before 8:30 a.m. must go to the dining room, where there is adult supervision. Training and Teaching Staff will be given in-service training to highlight the signs and symptoms of bullying; awareness of procedures for dealing with individual cases; the relationship between bullying and person protection issues and advice on making use of the curriculum to build preventative approaches to bullying. Bullying will be addressed in tutorial lessons, drama workshops and assemblies. Assemblies will be led by either the students, the pastoral team or ALT. Anti-bullying ambassadors are trained in how to deal with concerns about bullying. An Anti-bullying noticeboard will be used to advertise helplines and raise awareness. Conclusion As a The Vocational Academy, we accept the responsibility of recognising and dealing with cases of bullying. We will act in a supportive and sympathetic manner when dealing with reports of bullying. We will look to increasing the self-confidence of our pupils / students as a long-term measure of protection against bullying. Safeguarding Officer is Jane Simpson.

Useful websites www.bullying.co.uk www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk www.personline.org.uk www.kidscape.org.uk www.each.education www.youngminds.org.uk www.youngstonewall.org.uk www.nspcc.org.uk www.stoptextbully.com www.beyondbullying.com www.personnet-int.org www.cyberbullying.org