

# United Against Bullying School Case Study: Study of bullying incident

## How Iford Academy dealt with a bullying incident

### Context of our anti-bullying work

Year 7 class, all new to the school.

Student A had bullied Student B at their previous school, resulting eventually in Student A being excluded. Students B & C are both neurodiverse. Student C was siding with A, seeking friendship, and A & C were now exhibiting bullying behaviours towards B (insulting words directly to and indirectly about B; physical assaults of slapping, kicking and pushing; seeking to exclude B from groups in lessons and social time).

### What we hoped to achieve

- To support the inclusive ethos which the teaching staff were imbuing in the class, in accordance with the school's Equality & Diversity and Antibullying Policies.
- To see positive change made and maintained by A & C, to see equity in their peer relationships, and to reflect and model positive behaviours independently.
- To build resilience in C, and to enable him to reflect and not react.
- (Stretch) To build friendships between these three students.

### The action we took

- Class CPD work on positive friendships and antibullying, for A, B, C and other students. CPD also joint with Y9 class of neurodiverse students.
- Youth Mentor intervention programme with A, reflecting on his underlying attitude & behaviours at last school at this. Then reflect on his self-image and desired image. What attitudes & behaviours will achieve his long-term goals. What change is needed from current attitude & behaviours to desired ones, via goal setting. Reflecting on real life scenarios experienced by A & C. Identify specific small goals A could achieve and embed.
- Pastoral Staff & Behaviour for Learning Lead had specific individual interventions with A, B & C.
- Mentor & Teacher worked collaboratively with A & C and their parents.
- Teacher gave A, B & C responsibilities to show they could make and hold change for selves and the benefit of others.
- Whole Class activities in learning and social time to test, reflect on and embed change, and add learning experiences as required.

## Impact and outcomes of the work

- A – learned that past experiences do not set patterns for current and future
- B – that he can be resilient and make changes to accept his impact on others
- C – that friendship does not mean total acceptance of the friend's values, and C's own personal responsibility & choice is vital
- For the Class – A & B work together in learning, with A helping B in tasks and key goals
- The whole class had a full day trip to London without issue between them; in fact, a positive day for all when faced with situations of individual and group pressure.
- For KS3 – an example of individual and group change which has now lasted 7 months.

## What we have learned

- To focus on what underlies the observed behaviours, rather than simply the behaviours.
- To be persistent when students struggle to identify own strengths and goals
- That blame is natural and common, but strength lies in understanding others.
- That change may be hard, but can also be creative & fun.
- That we should not be surprised when young people step up beyond expectation.
- That looking outward to others is a higher goal than looking for reward for ourselves.