

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 At Indie Education, we are committed to providing a warm, caring, and safe environment for all our learners so that they can learn and work in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our college. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect, and learners who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving, in the same way that the behaviour strategy modifies negative and self-destructive behaviours.
- 1.2 We recognise that bullying can occur from time to time. When it does, it is essential that everyone feels empowered to speak up, knowing that any incidents will be addressed promptly and effectively in line with our anti-bullying policy. We are a *TELLING* college —this means that anyone who is aware of bullying is expected to report it to a staff member or trusted colleague.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, ensuring a safe and secure environment for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the college have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the college policy. This will happen in the following ways:
- 2.2 The college will meet the legal requirement for all colleges to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- 2.3 The college will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2), and The Children Act 2004.

3. BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY

- 3.1 Regardless of individual need, all disruptive behaviours can be termed as self-destructive behaviours, and a college's mission should be to turn those behaviours into self-reflective behaviours, enabling young people to develop positive relationships with future peers, employers, and environments. Thus, our behaviour strategy can be presented in its simplest form as:
- 3.2 All trustees, teaching and non-teaching colleagues, learners, and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- 3.3 All trustees, teaching and non-teaching colleagues will know what the college policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- 3.4 All learners and parents/guardians will know what the college policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- 3.5 Learners and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is

reported.

- 3.6 Whole college initiatives (colleague training, celebration assemblies, etc.) and proactive teaching strategies during sessions will be used throughout the college to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- 3.7 A positive, caring ethos will be created within the college environment where everyone can work, learn, and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

4. WHAT IS BULLYING?

4.1 Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening, or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose). Bullying is unacceptable and results in worry, fear, pain, and distress to the victims.

4.2 Bullying can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- 4.2.1 Physical bullying: Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, or any use of violence.
- 4.2.2 Verbal bullying: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, or making threats.
- 4.2.3 Emotional bullying: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, or deliberately isolating someone from a group.
- 4.2.4 Cyberbullying: Bullying that takes place online or via electronic devices, such as social media, messaging apps, emails, or gaming platforms. This includes sending threatening or abusive messages, sharing embarrassing images or videos, or impersonating someone online.
- 4.2.5 Prejudice-based bullying: Bullying motivated by prejudice against particular groups, including those related to:
 - (a) Race or ethnicity
 - (b) Religion or belief
 - (c) Gender or gender identity
 - (d) Sexual orientation (homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic bullying)
 - (e) Disability or special educational needs
 - (f) Any other protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- 4.2.6 Sexual bullying: Unwanted physical contact, sexual comments, gestures, or sharing of inappropriate material.
- 4.2.7 Prejudice and discriminatory bullying: Taunts, gestures, graffiti, or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic or perceived difference.
- 4.2.8 Indirect bullying: Spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups, or manipulating friendships.

4.3 All forms of bullying, including those based on protected characteristics, are taken seriously at Indie Education and will be addressed promptly and robustly.

5. WHERE DOES BULLYING HAPPEN?

- 5.1 Bullying can happen anywhere – in the session room, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from college or online. In such cases, site leaders are empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the college’s policy.
- 5.2 At Indie Education, we are concerned with our learners’ conduct and welfare outside as well as inside college, and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the college premises. The following steps may be taken:
- (a) Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets.
 - (b) Talk to the transport companies about bullying on college buses and in college taxis.
 - (c) Talk to the Headteachers of other colleges whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises.
 - (d) Map out safe routes to college for learners, linking them to our College Travel Plan.
 - (e) Discuss coping strategies with parents.
 - (f) Talk to the learners about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the college premises.

6. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- 6.1 A learner may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:
- (a) Is frightened of walking to or from college.
 - (b) Doesn’t want to go on the college bus/in the taxi.
 - (c) Begs to be driven to college.
 - (d) Changes their usual routine/route to college.
 - (e) Begins truanting.
 - (f) Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
 - (g) Starts stammering.
 - (h) Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
 - (i) Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
 - (j) Feels ill in the morning.
 - (k) Begins to underperform in college work.
 - (l) Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
 - (m) Has possessions go “missing”.
 - (n) Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully).
 - (o) Has dinner or other monies continually “lost”.
 - (p) Has unexplained cuts or bruises.

- (q) Comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen).
- (r) Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable.
- (s) Starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason.
- (t) Is bullying other children or siblings.
- (u) Stops eating.
- (v) Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- (w) Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

7. WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

- 7.1 No matter where you are in college, you have the right to feel safe.
- 7.2 No one has the right to make you feel unhappy or uncomfortable. If you are experiencing bullying, remember that it is not your fault. There are people who care and are ready to help you.
- 7.3 Below is some advice shared by young people who were interviewed about how they dealt with bullying:
 - (a) Get help and support immediately.
 - (b) Talk through concerns that you have with a teacher or assistant teacher.
 - (c) Stay in a group; bullies usually pick on individuals.
 - (d) Get away as quickly as you can.
 - (e) Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, a teaching assistant, a midday supervisor, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister, or a relative.
 - (f) If you are struggling to speak to someone you know, call Childline on 0800 11 11.
 - (g) If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
 - (h) If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and post it in the 'Worry' box.
 - (i) When you tell an adult about the bullying, give them as many facts as you can (What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?).
 - (j) Keep a diary of what's been happening and refer to it when you tell someone.
 - (k) Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
 - (l) Never be afraid to do something about it and quickly.
 - (m) Don't suffer in silence.
 - (n) Don't blame yourself for what is happening.
 - (o) Find further support on youngminds.org.uk

8. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

- 8.1 All colleagues will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Indie Education. They will be taken seriously by all colleagues and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Colleagues will protect and support all learners involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved
- 8.2 Colleagues will ensure that all forms of bullying are addressed, including cyberbullying (bullying that takes place online or via electronic devices) and prejudice-based bullying, such as bullying related to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.
- 8.3 Particular attention will be given to incidents involving discriminatory language or behaviour, and these will be recorded and monitored to ensure that Indie Education remains a safe and inclusive environment for all learners. .
- 8.4 The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:
- (a) Report all bullying allegations and incidents to colleagues and recorded on college's MIS.
 - (b) Colleagues will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
 - (c) Colleagues will contact parents/carers of both the victim and perpetrator. Home contact will be recorded on Indie Education MIS.
 - (d) Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
 - (e) Colleagues will listen and speak to all learners involved about the incident separately.
 - (f) The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
 - (g) Colleagues will attempt to adopt a problem-solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
 - (h) Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
 - (i) Colleagues will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
 - (j) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied.
 - (k) If possible, the learners will be reconciled.
 - (l) An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change their behaviour.
 - (m) In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by colleagues on the our internal monitoring system. In serious cases, parents and carers may be invited to come into college for a meeting to discuss the problem.
 - (n) After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place. Parents and carers will again be contacted.
 - (o) Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at colleague briefings.

- (p) The anti-bullying advocate will present termly reports on serious bullying incidents to all college colleagues.

9. SANCTIONS

9.1 The following sanctions may be used:

- (a) Apologise to the victim verbally or in writing.
- (b) Group mediation between learners and colleagues.
- (c) Bullying workshop
- (d) 1 to 1 intervention.
- (e) Parents informed and a meeting called.
- (f) 1 to 1 offsite provision for a fixed period of time.

10. POLICY REVIEW

10.1 In accordance with Indie's Policy review protocol, this Policy will be reviewed by the DCEO and site leads at least annually, or more frequently, if needed, to address findings from the regular monitoring of the behaviour data. At each review, the Policy will be approved by CEO and presented to the Indie Board of Trustees.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Behaviour Policy and Strategy
- Exclusions and Suspensions policy
- Online Safety Policy

12. AUTHORISATION

12.1 This document has been authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

APPENDIX A: BEHAVIOUR REMINDER FIGURES

Figure 1: Indie Behaviour Strategy

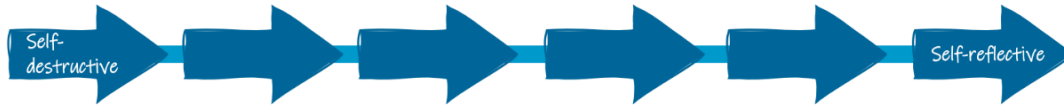
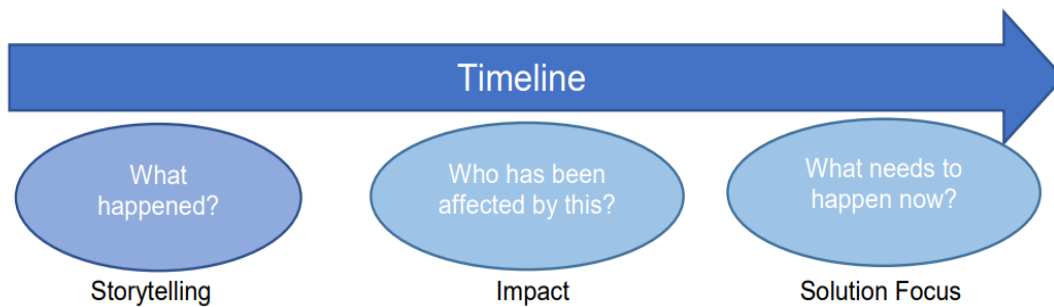


Figure 2: The Three Bubbles and Table



What Happened? (Bubble 1)	Who has been affected by this? (Bubble 2)	What needs to happen now? (Bubble 3)
What was happening before?	How have you been affected?	What else needs to happen?
How were you feeling?	Who else has been affected?	What would that look like?
What were your thoughts at the time?	How have others been affected?	What will help you to move on from this?
What do you think about it now?	How do you feel now?	What would that look like?
At that point, what were you thinking/feeling?	Was anyone else involved?	If you can't do that, what can you do?
Can you tell us more about the incident?	What has been the hardest thing for you?	What do you think about what has been suggested?

APPENDIX B: STAFF TRAINING LOG – INDIE EDUCATION SPECIFIC DATA SHEET KEPT ON ‘MIS’

TRAINING RECEIVED	DATE COMPLETED	TRAINER OR TRAINING ORGANISATION	TRAINER’S SIGNATURE	STAFF MEMBER’S SIGNATURE	SUGGESTED REVIEW DATE

APPENDIX C: BEHAVIOUR LOG RECORDED IN 'MIS'

LEARNER'S NAME:	
LEARNER'S KNOWN PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS: (sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation)	
NAME OF STAFF MEMBER REPORTING THE INCIDENT:	
DATE:	
WHERE DID THE INCIDENT TAKE PLACE?	
WHEN DID THE INCIDENT TAKE PLACE? (before college, after or lunchtime, break time...)	

WHAT HAPPENED?	
WHO WAS INVOLVED?	
IS ANY FOLLOW-UP ACTION NEEDED? IF SO, GIVE DETAILS.	
PEOPLE INFORMED OF THE INCIDENT: (staff members, governors, parents, guardians, police)	

APPENDIX D: LETTERS TO PARENTS ABOUT LEARNER BEHAVIOUR

PART 1: FIRST BEHAVIOUR LETTER

Dear [insert parent name],

I wanted to make you aware of an incident that happened today. [Insert brief description of the behaviour incident]. As you will appreciate, this behaviour doesn't adhere to our behaviour curriculum, which is set out in our behaviour policy. [You may want to reference the specific part, e.g. 'treating others fairly' or 'respecting other learners' property'].

This has been promptly followed up at Indie Education with [insert brief description of what Indie Education has done, e.g. talk with pastoral lead, missed break time].

I am confident that no further action will need to be taken, but would be grateful if you could discuss [insert learner's name] behaviour with them to ensure a consistent message between Indie Education and home.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Staff name: _____

Staff signature: _____

Date: _____

Behaviour Letter – Return Slip

Please return this slip to Indie Education to confirm you have received this letter. Thank you.

Name of learner: _____

Parent name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

PART 2: SECOND BEHAVIOUR LETTER

Dear [insert parent name],

Following my previous letter regarding the behaviour of [insert learner name], I am sorry to say that they are still struggling to adhere to our behaviour curriculum, which is set out in our behaviour policy. [Insert brief description of behaviour incident.]

I would appreciate it if you could arrange to meet me so we can discuss a way forward.

[Insert details of how to contact Indie Education to arrange the meeting].

Yours sincerely,

Staff name: _____

Staff signature: _____

Date: _____

Behaviour Letter – Return Slip

Please return this slip to Indie Education to confirm you have received this letter. Thank you.

Name of learner: _____

Parent name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

PART 3: THIRD BEHAVIOUR LETTER

Dear [insert parent name],

I am sorry to let you know that, despite meeting and [insert agreed steps forward from your previous meeting, e.g. creating a behaviour contract], there has been an incident today where [insert brief description of latest behaviour incident]. [Insert learner's name] would now benefit from a structured approach to help improve their behaviour in Indie Education. As outlined in our behaviour policy, I would be grateful if you could attend a meeting with [insert who will be at the meeting, e.g. the DCEO, site leader, the site leader, subject coordinator, specialist support], to discuss the further support we will be putting in place for [insert learner's name]. [Insert details of the meeting time, date and location, as necessary, or how to contact Indie Education to arrange the meeting].

Yours sincerely,

Staff name: _____

Staff signature: _____

Date: _____

Behaviour Letter – Return Slip

Please return this slip to Indie Education to confirm you have received this letter. Thank you.

Name of learner: _____

Parent name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

PART 4: REPARATION OR CATCH UP WITH LEARNING LETTER

Dear [insert parent name],

I am writing to inform you that [insert learner's name] has been given a session on [insert date] at [insert time] with to support learning and follow up the warnings we have shared previously.

The detailed reason(s) for this are set out below.

[Insert a brief description of the behaviour incident that led to the required session here].

If you need to see me about this matter, please call Indie Education to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Staff name: _____

Staff signature: _____

Date: _____

Behaviour Letter – Return Slip

Please return this slip to Indie Education to confirm you have received this letter. Thank you.

Name of learner: _____

Parent name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____