



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Introduction

This policy has been prepared with due regard for the Department for Education (DfE)'s "Preventing and tackling bullying – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies 2017" (the most recent DfE update) and "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026". This policy complements the following Academy School's policies: "The Academy School Policy Statement relating to the Equality Act 2010" and "Good Behaviour Policy".

Bullying, including child-on-child abuse, is recognised by the Academy School as a safeguarding matter where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. All such concerns will therefore be managed in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy and "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026".

This policy should be read alongside the School's Child Protection Policy, Good Behaviour Policy,

Definition

We define bullying as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, or, in some cases of sufficient seriousness, a one-off incident, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying may take many forms, including (but not limited to):

Physical: hitting, fighting, pushing, shoving, gestures, invasion of personal space

Verbal: name calling, "put-downs", offensive comments, "nuisance" phone calls, spreading malicious rumours, tone of voice, threats, insults.

Social/relational:: spreading rumours, humiliation, coercion, damage or theft of others' possessions, threats to "get" people, exclusion, being ignored

Cyber-bullying: the use of technology (including social media, messaging platforms, gaming environments, image sharing) to harm others

Bullying may be motivated by prejudice or discrimination, including in relation to race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, special educational needs, or perceived differences.

Aims and objectives

Hurtful behaviour of this nature will not be tolerated at the Academy School. All pupils, parents and staff of the Academy School are valued as individuals and have the right to feel safe and happy within the school environment.

The aim is to raise awareness among staff and children of vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of bullying, and to promote in the school an ethos which deplores anyone being left out, being unsupported or being humiliated.

If any of the above types of bullying are recognised or reported by a child, parent, peer group or teacher, it is vital for the staff to act immediately. Pupils should regularly be made aware of how they

can report an incident of bullying to staff and, be confident that reports will be carefully investigated, and substantiated, will be acted upon.

Identifying bullying

Staff should be alert to changes in a pupil's behaviour, presentation or wellbeing which may indicate that they are experiencing bullying. These indicators should always be considered in context and do not, in isolation, confirm that bullying is taking place; however, they may prompt further enquiry or monitoring.

Possible indicators may include (but are not limited to):

- Emotional and behavioural changes:
 - becoming withdrawn, anxious, tearful or distressed
 - sudden loss of confidence or self-esteem
 - outbursts of temper or unusual aggression
 - reluctance or refusal to participate in lessons or activities
 - changes in friendship groups or social isolation
- Physical or health-related indicators:
 - unexplained injuries, marks or damage to clothing or belongings
 - frequent complaints of illness (e.g. headaches, stomach aches)
 - changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Attendance and engagement:
 - reluctance or refusal to attend school
 - frequently arriving late or seeking to leave early
 - a decline in academic performance or concentration
 - loss of interest in schoolwork or activities previously enjoyed
- Practical indicators:
 - belongings going missing or being damaged
 - regularly asking for money or reporting a loss of money

In addition, staff should be alert to signs that a pupil may be displaying bullying behaviour towards others, including a pattern of negative interactions, use of derogatory language, or attempts to exclude or control peers.

Any concerns should be taken seriously, recorded, and reported in accordance with the School's procedures set out below.

Procedures to follow

A child who feels that they are being bullied or a child who notices bullying of any other child are encouraged to report it immediately to a member of staff, including teaching and pastoral staff, or directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL.

The School will ensure that pupils understand how to report concerns, including confidentially, and that all reports will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

In some cases, a member of staff may identify behaviour which could constitute a minor or isolated incident of unkindness or conflict. In such cases, the member of staff may exercise professional judgement to address the matter promptly and proportionately at that stage. Where a member of staff deals with an incident directly, they must ensure that:

- the pupil(s) involved are supported and the immediate situation is made safe;
- the behaviour is clearly addressed and expectations reinforced; and
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Where an incident is more serious, repeated, involves a potential power imbalance, or gives rise to any safeguarding concern, the matter must be referred promptly to the Headteacher and the DSL.

In such cases, the School will:

- take immediate steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil(s) involved;
- carry out a prompt, fair and proportionate investigation;
- keep a written record of the incident, investigation and outcome;
- involve parents where it is considered appropriate and in the best interests of the pupil; and
- determine appropriate outcomes, which may include disciplinary measures and/or supportive interventions.

Appropriate support will be provided to any pupil who has been subjected to bullying. This may include pastoral support, monitoring, adjustments within the school day, and, where appropriate, involvement of external agencies. The School will assess the ongoing risk and take reasonable steps to ensure that the pupil who has been bullied feels safe and supported.

Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour may face disciplinary measures. If appropriate, they will also be supported to understand and change their behaviour. This may include restorative approaches, behavioural interventions, and, where appropriate, assessment of underlying needs.

Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently and proportionately taking into account the individual circumstances of the pupil, including any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupil may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

In serious cases of bullying, it may be necessary to exclude the child for a period of time, and ultimately, if the behaviour persists despite all other disciplinary measures being taken, to exclude the child permanently.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for online 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying can happen at all times of the day, may involve a wide or unknown audience, and may be experienced as particularly distressing due to its persistent and pervasive nature.

Cyber-bullying may take place via social media, messaging applications, gaming platforms or through the sharing of images, videos or other content, including material created or shared anonymously.

. Any report or indication of cyber-bullying must be treated seriously and reported promptly to the Headteacher or in his absence, Chloe Sandars, as appropriate.

Where cyber-bullying involves the sharing of images or other material which may be indecent or unlawful, this will be treated as a safeguarding concern. Staff must not view, forward, delete or store such material unless this is in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures. Any such concerns must be referred immediately to the DSL.

The School will take appropriate action in respect of cyber-bullying which occurs outside the school where it has an impact on the wellbeing of pupils within the school or affects the School community.

Prejudice Based Bullying

The school ensures that there is zero tolerance of prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying, including in relation to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 such as race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability. Any such bullying will be immediately and effectively addressed.

Play Policy

Pupils are supervised during play and break times by teaching and/or support staff, who are familiar with the pupils and their individual needs. Staff are expected to remain vigilant during these periods and to be proactive in identifying and addressing any behaviour which may give rise to bullying or exclusion.

Staff should use these opportunities to observe pupil interactions, promote positive play, and intervene early where concerns arise. Any incidents or patterns of concern identified during break times should be addressed in accordance with the School's anti-bullying procedures and, where appropriate, recorded and shared with relevant staff.

Bullying outside the school premises

The School recognises that bullying may take place outside the school premises. The School has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school where it is reasonable to do so. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as and including online, on the way to and from school, public transport or outside local shops.

The School will take action in respect of bullying outside the school where the behaviour:

- has an impact on the wellbeing of a pupil within the school;
- affects the orderly running of the school; or
- brings the School or members of its community into disrepute.

Where bullying outside school is reported, it should be investigated and addressed in accordance with this policy. The Headmaster or designated senior member of staff will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police (where the behaviour may constitute a criminal offence, or poses a serious risk to a pupil or a member of the public).

Involvement of parents and pupils

The bullying policy is regularly sent to parents and comments are gratefully received and acted upon.

The School recognises the importance of working in partnership with both parents and pupils to prevent and address bullying. Parents are to be encouraged at the earliest opportunity if they have any concerns about their child's happiness or well-being at the school. All concerns will be taken seriously and responded to in accordance with this policy.

Where bullying is identified, the School will normally engage with the parents of the pupils involved at an appropriate stage of the process, having regard to the best interests of the pupils. The School will seek to work constructively with parents to support a resolution and to prevent recurrence.

The School will ensure that pupils are regularly informed about the importance of reporting bullying, how to do so, and the support available to them.

The bullying policy is regularly reviewed and incidents of bullying are considered as part of the Board of the Academy School (Hampstead) LLP review of child protection policies.

Reviewed and Updated by Andrew Sandars

July 2026