



Diocese of Norwich
St Benet's
Multi Academy Trust



Diocese of Norwich
Education and
Academies Trust

Open Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)

Policy Type:	Trust Policy
Date Issued by MAT:	04/05/2023
Approved By:	Trust Board (Joint Policy Development Committee)
Approval Date:	09/03/2023
Review Date:	March 2026
Person Responsible:	Chief Executive Officer

Summary of Changes

The model policy has been revised to reflect these changes to the statutory guidance as outlined below.

Page Ref.	Section	Amendment	Date of Change
All	All	To reflect a Trust wide Approach and age appropriate policy for both Primary and Secondary students and students along with updated DfE Guidance DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'	Jan 2023
Page 5	2.2	Updated policies in accordance to guidance	Jan 2023
Page 12	11	Replaced peer on peer with child on child	Jan 2023
Page 5	2	Update to links to other policies references	Jan 2023
Page 3		Table of Contents updated	Jan 2023
Page 5	1	Reference to 'Behavioural Policy' updated to 'Behaviour Policy'	March 2023

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Our Christian Ethos and Values

All policies within the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (hereafter referred to as “the Trust”), whether relating to an individual academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our Christian ethos and values.

DNEAT: We make no apologies for having high ambition for all, and we truly value the wider educational experience.

We walk and talk our Christian values. That means we put people at the centre of the organisation and want to see them flourish and grow. Our schools are inclusive, welcoming those of all faiths and none.

Overall accountabilities and roles

The Trust has overall accountability for all its academies and staff. Through a Scheme of Delegation for each academy it sets out the responsibilities of the Trust, its Executive Officers, the Local Governing Body and the Principal / Head Teacher. The Principal / Head Teacher of each academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Trust.

All employees of the Trust are subject to the Trust’s policies.

1. Policy Statement of Intent

Open Academy (hereafter referred to as “the Academy”) takes great pride in its friendly atmosphere and the Christian values which all members of the academy (both staff and students) show towards each other. This considerate behaviour is encouraged at all times. We celebrate the fact that everyone in our community may be different and have different points of view, not that they are better or worse than anyone else.

The academy must be a safe, friendly and secure place to each individual, and this cannot be so for any individual who is in any way bullied. The academy’s objective is to promote and encourage the maintenance of a friendly atmosphere.

This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the academy’s curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the academy.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the academy’s response to bullying. Under section 89, school must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of the academy’s Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all students, academy staff and parents. All staff, parents and students work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the academy. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the academy.

The Academy believes that all students are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour.

Signed by:	
Headteacher	Chair of Governors

Date:	Date:
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2. Legal framework

2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

2.2. This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in school'
- DfE 2022 Keeping children safe in education 2022
- DfE 2020 Sharing nudes and semi nudes' advice for education settings working with children and young people

2.3. This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust and academy policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Offensive Weapons Policy

3. Definition

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

3.2. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations

3.3. Vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

3.4. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:

- Students with SEND.
- Students who are adopted.
- Students suffering from a health problem.
- Students with caring responsibilities.

4. Types of bullying

4.1. Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything.

4.2. Teasing another student because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

4.3. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

4.4. **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

4.5. **Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

4.6. **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

4.7. **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

4.8. **Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

4.9. **Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

4.10. **Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. The CEO of the Trust is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

5.2. The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Receiving reports from the headteacher regarding patterns of bullying and monitoring the impact of the strategies implemented by the school to prevent recurrences of bullying.

5.3. The Principal is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy
- Ensuring that the academy adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the academy is inclusive.
- using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a Bullying Report Form of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at **termly** intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

5.4. The Heads of Year are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for students and parents, when more serious bullying incidents occur.

5.5. Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for students/students who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the student's/students Head of Year / Assistant Head of Year of such observations.
- Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.

5.6. The Pastoral lead/ DSL/ Safeguarding team is responsible for:

- Offering emotional support to victims of bullying.
- Alerting the relevant Heads of year/ Assistant Heads of Year regarding any incidents of bullying.

5.7. Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Informing their child's Head of year / Assistant Heads of Year or form tutor/teacher] if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

5.8. Students are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other students in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

6. Statutory implications

6.1. The academy understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

6.2. The academy understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the academy to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

6.3. The Principal will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the Principal understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

6.4. Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is

grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

7. Prevention

- 7.1. The academy clearly communicates a whole-academy commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole academy.
- 7.2. All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.
- 7.3. Staff will encourage student cooperation and the development of interpersonal skill using group work and pair work.
- 7.4. All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum. Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- 7.5. Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- 7.6. Potential victims of bullying are placed in working groups with other students/students who do not abuse or take advantage of others.
- 7.7. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- 7.8. All members of the academy are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- 7.9. All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- 7.10. A safe place, supervised by a teacher, is available for students to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone. The teacher supervising the area will speak to students to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.
- 7.11. Students deemed vulnerable, will meet with their form teacher/ Head of Year/Assistant Head of year to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.
- 7.12. Form teachers/SEND/CO/ Pastoral teams will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing students to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- 7.13. Before a vulnerable student joins the academy, the student's Assistant Head of Year and the ADSL will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include giving the student a buddy to help integrate them into the academy

7.14. The academy will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst students, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.

7.15. The academy will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

8. Signs of bullying

8.1. Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from the academy
- Asking to be driven to the academy
- Unwillingness to attend the academy
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in academy work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

8.2. Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.

8.3. Students who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

8.4. In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the student becoming aggravated
- They have been the victim of domestic abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed

8.5. If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the students Assistant Head of Year /form tutor, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

9. Staff principles

- 9.1. The academy will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.
- 9.2. Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- 9.3 Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- 9.4. Staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- 9.5. Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- 9.6. If a member of staff believes a student is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.
- 9.7. Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

10. Preventing child on child sexual abuse

- 10.1. The academy has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of Child on Child sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- 10.2. Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline.
- 10.3. Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence.
- 10.4. Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:
 - **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - **Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - **Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

- 10.5. The academy's Safeguarding Policy including Child Protection outlines our stance on addressing child on child sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.
- 10.6. To prevent child on child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the academy will educate students/students about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.
- 10.7. The academy will also ensure that students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, RSE and group sessions. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as the following:
- Healthy relationships
 - Respectful behaviour
 - Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
 - Body confidence and self-esteem
 - Prejudiced behaviour
 - That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
 - Addressing cultures of sexual harassment
- 10.8. All staff will be aware that students/students of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers and will never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up".
- 10.9. All staff will be aware that child on child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting and gender issues, such as girls being sexually touched or assaulted, and boys being subjected to hazing/initiation type of violence which aims to cause physical, emotional or psychological harm.
- 10.10. All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of students/students with SEND, who are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.
- 10.11. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the student's SEND and will always explore indicators further.
- 10.12. LGBT children can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBT, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBT children.
- 10.13. The academy's response to boy-on-boy and girl-on-girl sexual violence and sexual harassment will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.
- 10.14. Students will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.

- 13.3. The academy will support students who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the student about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with section 15 and section 16 of this policy.
- 13.4. In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the academy has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.
- 13.5. If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
- 13.6. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the Principal will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.
- 13.7. The academy's Positive Behaviour Culture Policy will be followed at all times.

14. Procedures

- 14.1. Minor incidents are reported to the victim's form teacher/ Assistant Head of Year, who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and informs the Head of Year in writing of the incident and outcome.
- 14.2. When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:
- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
 - Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the student being interviewed, including electronic communication
 - If a student is injured, members of staff take the student immediately to the first aider for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries
 - A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
 - A witness is used for serious incidents
 - If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
 - Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
 - Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
 - All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students
- 14.3. Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic, sexual, etc bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

15. Sanctions

- 15.1. If the Principal is satisfied that bullying did take place, the student will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- 15.2. The Principal informs the student of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (detentions, service-based activities, etc.) and future sanctions if the bullying continues.
- 15.3. If possible, the Principal will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.
- 15.4. The perpetrator is made to realise, by speaking once per week with their form tutor, that some students do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour.
- 15.5. Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- 15.6. The Head of Year informally monitors the students involved over the next half-term.

16. Support

- 16.1. If the student visits the Assistant Head of Year, the Assistant Head of Year informally checks whether the bullying has stopped.
- 16.2. For a month after the initial complaint of bullying, the Assistant Head of Year holds an informal discussion, on a weekly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped.
- 16.3. The Head of Year / Assistant Head of Year holds a formal meeting, on a monthly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings will continue to take place once a month until the Head of Year and victim are confident the bullying has stopped.
- 16.4. If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes.
- 16.5. The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in academy if bullying is repeated.
- 16.6. The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-academy club or activity.
- 16.7. The academy, particularly the DSL, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.
- 16.8. The academy realises that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend a mandatory counselling session, to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

village centre.

18.3. Where bullying outside the academy is reported to academy staff, it is investigated and acted on.

18.4. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the student on academy premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on an academy trip.

18.5. The Principal is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police, or the anti-social behaviour coordinator, of the action taken against a student.

18.6. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

19. Monitoring and review

19.1. This policy is reviewed every 3 years by the Trust.

Appendix 1: Bullying Report Form

This form will be sent to the headteacher/principal upon completion.

Personal details		
Name of person reporting incident:		
Name of student(s) being bullied:		
Gender:		
Year group:		
Form group:		
How may we contact you (please circle)?		
At academy		At home
Home address:		
Email:		
Telephone:		

Incident details
What happened?
Where did the incident take place?
When did the incident occur?
Who has been suspected of bullying?
Did anyone else see the incident?
According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?
According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?

Appendix 2: Anti-Bullying Code

Open Academy's Anti-Bullying Code

If you see someone being bullied:

- **Don't rush over and take the bully on.**
- **Do let a teacher or other staff member know.**
- **Do try to be a friend to the person being bullied.**
- **Don't be made to join in.**
- **Do try to help the bully stop bullying.**

If you are victim of bullying:

- **Tell a teacher or another adult at the academy.**
- **Tell your family.**
- **Take a friend with you if you are scared to tell someone yourself.**
- **Keep telling people, until someone listens.**
- **Don't blame yourself for what has happened.**