Antibullying (KCSIE 2026) Summary

Our Core Approach

- BA MAT does **not tolerate bullying in any form** — offline or online.
- Bullying is always treated as a **safeguarding concern** and may meet the threshold for **child-on-child abuse** (KCSIE 2026).
- All incidents are taken seriously, investigated promptly, and logged on CPOMS using contextual/non-contextual flags.
- Staff must maintain the mindset: **"It could happen here."**

What Counts as Bullying

Bullying is:

- **Repetitive**,
- **Intentional**,
- **Harmful**,
- Involving an **imbalance of power**,
- Occurring **face-to-face or online**.

Bullying may be:

- Physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, indirect, or prejudice-based.
- Motivated by actual or perceived differences (SEND, LAC, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, home circumstances).
- Misogynistic bullying, including sexist language, gender-based harassment, objectification, sexualised comments, or hostility towards girls/women. (KCSIE 2026 requirement)
- Online/cyberbullying, including harmful messages, exclusion, sharing images, impersonation, trolling, or harassment.

KCSIE 2026 online risk categories:

- Content (harmful/illegal content)
- Contact (unsafe contact, grooming)
- Conduct (bullying, patterning, sharing images)
- Commerce (scams, exploitation)

Patterning (Child-on-Child Abuse)

- Patterning = filming violent assaults and sharing the footage online to humiliate a pupil.
- It is child-on-child abuse and a safeguarding incident.
- Staff must never view footage.
- Confiscate the device, reassure the pupil, report immediately to the DSL.
- Do not ask pupils to delete footage — this may destroy evidence.
- DSLs will assess police threshold, online harm, filtering alerts, and mental health impact.

AI-Generated Bullying

Staff must be alert to:

- Deepfakes
- Nudification apps
- AI-generated impersonation
- AI-generated sexual imagery of children (illegal CSAM)
- AI-generated bullying content
- AI-generated misogynistic content or harassment

Treat all AI-related bullying as **online harm** and **child-on-child abuse**. Report immediately to the DSL. Never view, save, delete, or forward harmful content.

Relational Conflict vs Bullying

Not all conflict is bullying. Relational conflict involves:

- Similar power levels
- Accidental or occasional incidents
- Remorse and willingness to repair

Staff must still **support pupils**, monitor the situation, and log concerns.

Vulnerable Pupils (SEND, Pathway 1 & 2, LAC)

Staff must be alert to:

- Communication barriers
- Echolalic language used without intent
- Difficulties recognising harm
- Increased risk of isolation or exploitation
- Misunderstanding online content

Use inclusive reporting routes:

- Communicate in Print
- Zones of Regulation
- Trusted adults
- Worry boxes / Talk Time
- Visual supports

Reporting Bullying

Staff must:

- Listen, reassure, and take concerns seriously.
- Log all incidents on CPOMS.
- **Alert the DSL immediately** if urgent or risk-related.
- Never dismiss concerns as “banter”.
- Consider mental health impact (self-esteem, self-harm risk).
- Use the **Whistleblowing** Policy if they believe concerns are not being addressed.

Staff must also:

- Supervise device use directly.
- Record which device each pupil/group is using.
- Address online issues raised in class.
- Teach pupils how to stay safe online and how to report concerns.
- Challenge prejudice, discrimination, misogynistic language, and harmful behaviour

Pupils must be taught multiple reporting routes:

- Trusted adults
- CEOP
- Childline
- Report Remove (IWF)
- Platform reporting tools

Parents must be encouraged to report concerns directly to school.

Filtering & Monitoring

Staff must:

- Know that all devices and networks are monitored.
- Close personal apps before arriving on site (to avoid WatchGuard alerts).
- Connect personal devices to school Wi-Fi.
- Report filtering/monitoring failures to the DSL or Head.
- Request filtering bypass only via the Head.
- Ensure filtering does not unreasonably restrict teaching and learning.

Searching Devices & Image-Based Abuse

Staff must:

- Follow the **Searching, Screening & Confiscation Policy**.
- Never view harmful content.
- Never ask pupils to delete images.
- Report immediately to the DSL.
- Follow the **Nudes & Semi-Nudes Policy** for image-based bullying.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Supervise device use directly.
- Record which device each pupil/group is using.
- Address online issues raised in class.
- Teach pupils how to stay safe online and how to report concerns.
- Challenge prejudice, discrimination, and harmful language.
- Support all pupils involved: target, alleged perpetrator, bystanders.

Bourne Alliance Multi Academy Trust

Policy Document for: Anti-bullying (non statutory)

Next review: Autumn term 2027

Additions/amendments in this version

Sept 26	*Review with changes from KCSIE 2026*

This policy outlines Bourne Alliance MAT schools will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community. All BA MAT schools are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children and staff is not tolerated in any form.

Our schools aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our pupils to learn in an atmosphere which is focussed on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. We expect our pupils to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it. We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours.

When an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school. In our schools we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

Bullying is always treated as a safeguarding concern and may meet the threshold for child-on-child abuse under KCSIE 2026.

Bullying may fall under the KCSIE 2026 online risk categories of *content, contact, conduct,* and *commerce*, particularly where incidents occur online or via digital technologies.

Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with numerous school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Behaviour policy (mainstream schools) and Behaviour & Wellbeing policy (Aspire)
- Cyber bullying policy
- Racism, discrimination and derogatory language (added Jan 25)
- Complaints policy
- Child protection & safeguarding policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Online safety policy
- Safely using digital devices and social media (includes acceptable use policy)
- Curriculum policies, such as: PSHE/SRE
- Screening, searching and confiscation

- Equality statement for each school
- AI & Online Risks Policy
- Deepfakes Policy
- Nudes & Semi-Nudes Policy
- Filtering & Monitoring Policy
- Children at Greater Risk of Harm Policy

Links to legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Keeping children safe in education (2024)

This policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" on www.gov.uk and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and "Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges" on www.gov.uk guidance. The setting has also read Childnet's "Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools".

Aims

The aims in managing incidents of bullying are:

- to provide a secure environment in which pupils can report incidents confidently
- to show all pupils and parents that bullying is taken seriously
- to enable teachers to respond calmly and consistently to bullying incidents
- to reassure pupils that the school will protect and support all parties whilst the issues are resolved
- to provide long term and positive programmes of personal development where it is required

Responsibilities

All staff at our schools are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

It is the responsibility of:

- The Heads to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

Definition of bullying

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups (for example on grounds of race & ethnicity, religion & belief,

gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities). Bullying can be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. See the **racism, discrimination and derogatory language** policy.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out. Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, pupils show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), pupils who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the pupils to resolve any negative feelings. Our schools will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our schools will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all pupils feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

The Anti-Bullying Alliance and its members have a shared definition of bullying based on research from across the world for over 30 years:

> "the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online"

It is the responsibility of the school and everyone associated with the school to eradicate bullying by ensuring the development of a caring and supportive ethos. There is strong evidence to support a 'whole school approach' (Cambridge Education 2005) which involves the whole community include pupils, teachers, support staff, parents and governors.

All bullying incidents must be considered through a safeguarding lens, including whether they meet the threshold for child-on-child abuse as set out in KCSIE 2026 and the BA MAT Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

DSLs must assess whether bullying is linked to protected characteristics, online harm, harmful content, or AI-generated content (deepfakes, nudification, impersonation).

- Bullying can be physical – such as pushing, poking, kicking, biting, pinching, taking belongings etc
- Bullying can be verbal – such as name calling, taunting, making offensive comments, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling etc

- Bullying can be emotional – such as gossiping, isolating others, tormenting, hiding belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidation, excluding others, spreading hurtful rumours, manipulation and coercion
- Bullying can be sexual – such as unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc
- Bullying can include all these behaviours online – such as posting on social media platforms, social exclusion from groups, sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos
- Bullying can be indirect – such as 'false friendships', targeting others through offensive graffiti, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and radicalisation
- Bullying can be prejudice related - derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior

Banter

Our schools understand that banter is an increasingly relevant part of discussions relating to bullying; however, it is important to acknowledge that banter is not inherently bullying, and it can be an important part of social bonding and friendships. At the same time, we know that some bullying in society is passed off as 'just banter', and we know that banter can quickly escalate to inappropriate or harmful exchanges and bullying.

Our schools define 'prosocial banter' as 'playful, typically funny, teasing between friends'. Prosocial banter can occur both online and offline and includes a range of behaviours that may be verbal, physical, or information/message sharing (online). Banter can include some of bullying behaviours set out in this policy document, so it is important to distinguish between shared positive social bonding and inappropriate banter and bullying. School staff will distinguish between banter and bullying by taking careful consideration of the intention, content and topic of reported incidents and the impact on those affected.

Cross over with Child on Child incidents

(Added January 2025)

Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of child on child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately. This policy should be read in conjunction with the BA MAT Child on Child policy in Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Library

All bullying incidents must be considered through a safeguarding lens, including whether they meet the threshold for child-on-child abuse as set out in KCSIE 2026 and the BA MAT Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

An incident between children could be classified as bullying if it is repeated, has intent to harm and/or is targeted at protected characteristics. The incident will be considered with an understanding of cognitive awareness/stage of development.

DSLs must assess whether bullying is linked to protected characteristics, online harm, harmful content, or AI-generated content (deepfakes, nudification, impersonation).

Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying – see **cyber bullying policy in Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Library**
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):
    - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
    - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
    - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
    - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
    - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
    - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

In our schools we want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report all types of bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community.

We have clear reporting systems for each group of our school community, the effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

Pathway 1 and 2 pupils and LAC

Some pupils are more vulnerable, such as those children with SEND (especially in Pathway 1 and 2) or those who have been or are in care. These children can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group could face and ensure the mechanisms for reporting are inclusive.

Staff must consider whether bullying behaviours arise from cognitive developmental stage, communication barriers, or misunderstanding of online content (KCSIE 2026 SEND vulnerabilities)

Staff must ensure reporting routes are accessible, including :

- Communication toolkits to allow pupils to show an adult their feelings or concerns
- Zones of Regulation to support communicating the feelings of a child
- DSL posters which are child friendly are being implemented to support children
- Trusted adults

Additional barriers include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges; and

- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content behaviours in schools or the consequences of doing so.

It is important that any witnessed incidents which are potentially bullying, or the use of inappropriate language, are considered as contextual or non contextual and the perceived intent/offense caused. The school works closely with parents and carers around these concerns.

Aspire school and the Hub provision in the mainstream schools provide Communicate in Print resources to enable pre-verbal children to communicate their concerns so these can be dealt with in

Mainstream pupils & Aspire Pathway 3 pupils - including bystanders/witnesses

We ask that all pupils report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, a TA, the Head, a member of the site team or a member of the office team.

In the mainstream schools, we talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies to remind our pupils of who they can report concerns to.

The member of staff will listen to the pupil and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

We understand that some pupils may find it difficult to tell a member of staff about their concerns verbally, we therefore have additional reporting mechanisms in place. These can include:

- A classroom worry box/pupil comments where the pupil can put their name/a brief note about their concerns/draw a picture of their concern – these worry boxes are introduced to the pupils at the start of the year and pupils are reminded of them regularly.
- Talk time access – pupils add a slip to the Talk Time box which is triaged by the external counselling agency and addressed
- Trusted adults – all staff work to ensure that every child has trusted adults they can share their concerns with. This may include non-class facing staff such as site team
- Communicate in Print resources to enable pre-verbal children to communicate
- PSHE curriculum circle time
- Individual and small group talk time
- School pupil council

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

Cyber bullying

Bullying can include all these behaviours online – such as posting on social media platforms, social exclusion from groups, sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Cyberbullying may include AI-generated bullying such as deepfakes, nudification apps, impersonation, edited/manipulated media, or AI-generated sexual imagery of children (illegal CSAM).

Cyberbullying indicators may be identified through the Trust's filtering and monitoring systems. DSLs and Heads must review relevant alerts weekly.

Pupils must be taught multiple reporting routes including CEOP, Childline, Report Remove (IWF), and platform reporting tools.

See the Trust **Cyber Bullying Policy**

Patterning

'Patterning' is a term used to describe behaviour where children film child-on-child violent assaults and share the footage on social media platforms.

Patterning is treated as child-on-child abuse and must be managed under the BA MAT Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and Cyber Bullying Policy.

Staff must never view footage. Devices must be confiscated and reported immediately to the DSL. Staff must not ask pupils to delete footage.

See **Child-on-Child Abuse Policy**

Image based bullying

Image-based bullying must be managed under the BA MAT **Nudes & Semi-Nudes** Policy and **Searching, Screening & Confiscation** Policy.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT, CoPilot and Google Bard. BA MAT recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others.

- AI-generated bullying is considered both online harm and child-on-child abuse. Staff must report any suspicion of AI-generated content immediately to the DSL.
- Staff receive annual training on AI-related safeguarding risks including deepfakes, nudification, impersonation, and AI-generated CSAM.

See **AI and online risks, child on child abuse, deepfakes and safeguarding and child protection** policies

Misogyny

Misogyny is explicitly recognised by BA MAT as a form of bullying and a safeguarding concern. Misogynistic behaviour may include sexist language, gender-based harassment, objectification, sexualised comments, hostility towards girls or women, or attitudes that reinforce gender inequality.

KCSIE 2026 identifies misogyny as an early indicator of sexual harassment, sexual violence and child-on-child abuse; therefore, all misogynistic incidents will be taken seriously, logged on CPOMS, and responded to under the **Anti-Bullying** Policy, **Child-on-Child Abuse** Policy and **Safeguarding & Child Protection** Policy.

Staff must challenge misogynistic language and behaviour immediately, consider the impact on the victim, and report concerns to the DSL without delay.

Responsibilities to identify and tackle bullying

School Leaders as DSLs

The senior team will support the Head to:

- Leaders must ensure staff understand their role in monitoring and responding to filtering alerts related to bullying and online harm
- Leaders must ensure parents are informed what pupils are asked to do online, who they interact with, and what systems filter/monitor their activity (KCSIE 2026)
- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Ensure all staff, regardless of role, are trained in identifying all forms of bullying and how to take appropriate action, following school policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents
- Continue to develop new projects to deliver online safety teaching for our children
- Work with staff to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently and fairly
- Take steps to involve parents and carers in developing policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.
- Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvas children's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil-led education and support
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.

School staff

Our staff work closely with our pupils and therefore may notice a change in a pupil's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a pupil or a member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or are concerned that a pupil is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

We ask that staff report their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (all members of the senior staff) as appropriate and this should be recorded on CPOMs where other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff must **directly** alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

Teaching teams will:

- Staff must supervise device use directly and ensure pupils only access checked, appropriate sites.
- Staff must record which device each pupil/group is using to support investigations
- Staff must never view harmful content, including violent videos, sexual images, or AI-generated content
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.
- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, pupil council, etc.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying bought to the schools' attention, which involves or effects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

Parents/Carers

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying. We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff.

Initially we ask parents/carers to contact their child's class teacher to explain their concerns. The class teacher will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the teacher will make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk. Other members of staff may become involved as outlined below. The Head or senior staff may become involved at any point in the process if deemed appropriate.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online.

Our schools remain committed to supporting pupils and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the pupils involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations). This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

Visitors and contractors

We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of our Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures and which staff member they should report any concerns to – this information is all contained in the leaflets held at each school main office.

We ask that if a visitor to our school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/a member of the Senior Leadership Team. We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the end of the school day. For example, it would not be appropriate to wait until the following day or leave a written note with concerns.

The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on the school's recording system (CPOMs) and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a pupil is considered at risk.

How the schools respond

The BA MAT Trust school communities recognise that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

All reports of bullying or reported concerns of bullying behaviours will be taken seriously and investigated. Even if an incident is deemed 'not bullying' or a 'relational conflict', our schools remain committed to supporting all pupils who have been involved and effected. Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Some of our school's responses may include, but may not be limited to:

- Talk to all pupils involved in the reported incident – this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses
- Talk to the parents (of the target and/or the alleged perpetrator)
- Implement appropriate consequences in accordance with our school's behaviour policy. These consequences will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable
- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate
- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the Police, District Council etc.)
- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken – this may include a pupil, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.
- Implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the alleged perpetrator, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school community etc.)
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate

- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns – a DSL may then refer to the Front Door (edited Jan 25)

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website and on request from the school office.

All our schools are committed to:

- Monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Support staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensure our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Require all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognise the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy
- Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

Logging and dealing with bullying

The wide range of stages of development and experiences out of school means that there are some children who use racist, discriminatory or derogatory language (including swearing) in an echolalic manner (repeat words they have heard) and these are used out of context i.e. without intent to cause harm. However, this does not mean that the victim in the incident has not been offended – both factors are considered by the staff when logging the incident and responding appropriately.

Monitoring by the senior teams

CPOMS has 2 flags in the Trust schools – contextual or non-contextual so that the senior staff can undertake monitoring of incidents to ensure that these are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

DSL meetings and/or SLT meetings are used to monitor incidents and discussed. This is then recorded in the meeting minutes and/or on the CPOMS incident so that this is clear and any next steps are identified to ensure that incidents are dealt with fairly and consistently by all staff.

Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The Head or a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.

- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentially policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- Bullying incidents will be reported to the Local Authority using Report Racial and Bullying Incidents - KELSI

Remember:

- All bullying incidents must be logged on CPOMS using contextual/non-contextual flags.
- DSLs must consider mental health impact, including self-harm risk, suicidal ideation, or trauma responses.
- DSLs must consider whether police involvement is required (e.g., malicious communications, harassment, hate crime, image-based abuse, AI-generated sexual imagery).
- Staff must use the **Whistleblowing** Policy to report failures in filtering, monitoring, or safeguarding responses.

Supporting pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Children Social Work Service, or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.

- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Children Social Work Service, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Supporting adults

Our Trust takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.

Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Head.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Head to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

Note: Specific guidance is available for leaders regarding dealing with complaints made on social networking sites: *www.kelsi.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding/e-safety*

Preventing bullying

Online Safety Act 2024 duties apply where harmful online content is involved. Schools must support pupils to report harmful content to platforms and external agencies where appropriate.

Filtering must not unreasonably restrict teaching and learning (DfE Filtering & Monitoring Standard).

In our schools we are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours.

Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community. The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.

- Have a school council and Trust wide Parliament which discusses issues which affect children and gives children a voice
- Embedding the ethos of each school through assemblies, in class and through staff briefings
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Ensure our curriculum is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that we promote friendships and positive relationships between children, including respecting protected characteristics – see the **whole school overview on SRE/PSHE**
- Consulting stakeholders on our SRE curriculum to ensure this reflects the context of our schools, in line with National Curriculum expectations
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
- Take part in anti-bullying week each year
- Provide counselling and 'talk time' opportunities with external providers, as well as internal supports such as Drawing & Talking, Logo therapy, ELSA etc
- Providing specialist support from our Trauma teacher who works with staff and children to support them (added January 2025)
- Continued focus on speech and language, particularly for children with S&L difficulties, so all children can indicate their worries

Equal Opportunities

At BA MAT we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of our school community irrespective of race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life. We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment that champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim.

Impact assessment

An initial impact assessment has been carried out for this policy and is graded as follows:

A	Positive impact is explicitly intended and very likely
B	An adverse impact is unlikely, and on the contrary the policy has the clear potential to have a positive impact by reducing and removing barriers and inequalities that currently exist
C	An adverse impact is unlikely. On the contrary there is potential to reduce barriers and

	inequalities that currently exist. There is insufficient evidence, however, for this assessment to be made with as much confidence as is desirable
D	Adverse impact is unlikely, but positive impact is also unlikely
E	Adverse impact is probable or certain, since certain groups will be disadvantaged, either proportionately or absolutely, or both. Remedial action is therefore necessary

Appendix 1: Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama:www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBT

- Barnardo's LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- A Guide for Schools: www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW-Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related/preventing-and-responding-sexual
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related

Appendix 2: Online bullying – support for families

