



BOA Anti-Bullying Policy 2026/27

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Description of changes	

Aim

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied and that staff are free from fear of bullying by students. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at the academy.

Statutory duties of schools

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools / academies must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures should be part of the academy's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all students, academy staff and parents.

Scope of this policy and links to other policies

This policy includes:

- Bullying of students by students within the academy
- Bullying of and/or by students outside of the academy, where the academy is aware of it
- Bullying of staff by students within or outside the academy

Allegations about bullying of students by staff will be dealt with under the academy's Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has links to the following academy policies and procedures:

- Equality Scheme
- Behaviour Handbook
- Acceptable Use Policy (internet safety)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints procedures
- SEN Policy and Practice

Purpose

The Academy's aim is to create an environment where students can grow and flourish without fear. Each student has the right to be safe in and out of the academy and to be protected when they are feeling vulnerable.

BOA's aim:

- To ensure that children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied.
- To demonstrate that the academy takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated.

- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the academy and during off- site activities, such as via cyber-bullying.
- To support students, staff and parents in in actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To clarify for all students and staff that bullying is wholly and always unacceptable.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of students is paramount.
- To promote an environment where children feel they can trust and tell adults if they are being bullied or know about any bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in students
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their duty of care over those in their charge and the need to be alert to signs of bullying.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of procedures through regular training.
- To work with external agencies and companies to raise awareness of and tackle bullying.
- In addition, this policy sets out a range of proactive strategies, reactive strategies and intervention systems which are in place to:
 - Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
 - React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
 - Safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for them.
- Apply appropriate consequences to the student/s causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, in some cases through multi-agency support, and using Restorative Justice techniques where applicable.

Bullying and Safeguarding

The Academy recognises that bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern. Some incidents may meet the threshold for child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, online abuse, hate incidents or exploitation. Concerns will therefore be considered in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate.

Definition

At BOA we recognise that there is no hierarchy of bullying. All forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. We understand that bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. We understand that all children have disagreements with each other and friends fall out for a time. This is not usually considered bullying.

Bullying can be identified as five main types:

Verbal Bullying: Verbal bullying is a type of bullying that takes place when the victim is threatened, called names and made to feel inferior. Verbal bullying usually focuses on a specific area, such as race, nationality, disability, sexuality, physical appearance or ability.

Physical Bullying: Physical bullying takes place when the victim is physically assaulted in the form of physical aggression leading to bruises, torn clothes, personal belongings being stolen/damaged or any other kind of physical injury.

Social Bullying: Social bullying is a type of bullying that takes place when someone is deliberately excluded from group activities and treated like an outsider. Laughing and making fun of someone, spreading mean stories, writing bad things and teasing the victim emotionally.

Cyber Bullying: Cyberbullying includes the creation, sharing or distribution of manipulated, AI-generated or deepfake content designed to intimidate, humiliate, harass or harm another person. Cyber bullying targets its victims through networking sites, emails, chat rooms, instant messaging or mobile phones. By texting the victim posting obscene pictures or unkind comments, the perpetrator succeeds in causing untold damage to the target as a number of people may be able to access this kind of information online.

Prejudice-related: Prejudice-related bullying may be based upon actual or perceived race, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, special educational needs, physical appearance, social background, caring responsibilities, looked-after status or any other aspect of a person's identity.

Bullying occurs when a person or group of people, over a period of time, by word, action or gesture, deliberately deny the dignity of another individual or group i.e.

- Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried
- Unsafe and/or frightened
- Unable to do well and achieve
- Different, alone, unimportant and/or unvalued
- Unable to see a happy and exciting future for yourself.

For BOA to be successful in 'valuing and respecting all individuals' and in 'providing opportunities for students to develop their confidence and self-respect', bullying must be identified and eradicated.

Misogyny, Misandry and Sexist Behaviour

The Academy recognises that misogyny, misandry and sexist behaviour can have a significant impact on the safety, wellbeing, dignity and educational experiences of students.

Misogyny refers to prejudice, discrimination, hostility or hatred directed towards women and girls. Misandry refers to prejudice, discrimination, hostility or hatred directed towards men and boys.

The Academy adopts a zero-tolerance approach to misogynistic, misandrist and sexist behaviour and recognises that such conduct may occur in person, online or using emerging technologies.

Examples may include:

- Sexist comments or "jokes".
- Derogatory comments about women, girls, men or boys.
- Gender-based insults.
- Unwanted comments about appearance.

- Sexualised language.
- Objectification of others.
- Rating or ranking individuals based on appearance.
- Sharing sexist, degrading or humiliating content.
- Online harassment.
- Sharing manipulated, AI-generated or deepfake images.
- Promotion of harmful online content that encourages misogyny, discrimination, coercive attitudes or unhealthy relationship expectations.
- Dismissing harmful behaviour as banter, "boys being boys" or "just having a laugh".

The Academy recognises that sexist behaviour exists on a continuum and, if left unchallenged, can contribute to a culture in which sexual harassment, sexual violence and abusive attitudes become normalised.

All reports of misogynistic, misandrist or sexist behaviour will be taken seriously. Incidents will be recorded, investigated and responded to in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Responses may include:

- Educational and restorative interventions.
- Behaviour sanctions.
- Parental engagement.
- Safeguarding risk assessment.
- Referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Referral to external agencies where appropriate.

Through its curriculum, assemblies, enrichment programme and wider academy culture, BOA promotes respectful relationships, equality, inclusion, consent and mutual respect.

What does bullying look like, feel like, sound like?

Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:

- Is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it.
- Happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a 'one-off' incident
- Involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

It can be:

- Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
- Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive/personal remarks
- Relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Cyber, e.g. e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM) and any social media platform.

- Indirect, e.g. graffiti, defacing of property, display of pornographic, class, disability, homophobic, racist or sexist material.

Who bullies?

Anyone has the capacity to bully. There are no completely reliable predisposition diagnoses. However, those who perceive themselves as low status within a community, institution or group may use bullying in an attempt to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not. This puts equal opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all anti-bullying work in schools and academies.

Who is bullied?

Anyone can be bullied – young person, parent/carer/guardian, staff member or volunteer. People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and possessions, accent, perceived inappropriate behaviour.

Frequently the perceived difference comes from assigning an individual to a group. Such bullying would then be designated as class, disability, homophobic, racist, religious or sexist. People can be assigned or be a member of more than one group.

Identifying and reporting concern about bullying

BOA recognises that low-level inappropriate, prejudiced, sexist or discriminatory behaviours can create an environment in which more serious forms of bullying or abuse become normalised. Staff are therefore expected to challenge such behaviours consistently and proportionately, even where they may appear minor in isolation.

All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Students who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absence or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from the academy.

All members of staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

Students who are bullying others also need support to help them understand and change their behaviour.

Students who are aware of bullying ('bystanders') can be a powerful force in helping to address it and will be encouraged to do so in a safe way.

All students will be encouraged to report bullying by:

- Talking to a member of staff of their choice
- Completing a 'bullying concern' form and placing it in the box at reception
- Contacting local and national support agencies for advice/support

A member of staff, who believes that he or she is being bullied or harassed, will be encouraged to report it to a colleague of their choice.

Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the academy in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with the bully or their families can lead to problems escalating.

Academy

The academy will take the following steps when dealing with concerns about bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, it will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware of it.
- A clear account of the concern will be recorded and given to the appropriate Head of Year. Incidents that require immediate escalation will sent directly to the Assistant Principal for Pastoral Care
- The investigating member of staff will interview everyone involved and keep a detailed record.
This will be held in line with the academy's data protection policy/practice.
- Parents and other relevant adults will be kept informed.
- Where bullying occurs outside the academy, any other relevant schools or agencies will be informed and advice/support obtained.
- Restorative justice approach will be used whenever possible.
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties involved.
- The Academy is committed to maintaining 'professional curiosity' when addressing disclosures of bullying. In line with KCSIE 2026 BOA is committed to ensuring appropriate support is provided to both victim and alleged perpetrator.

Students & Staff

The Principal and BOA Senior Leadership Team will:

- Determine strategies and procedures within the Academy to proactively tackle bullying
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, volunteers, parents and students; and report to the governing body
- Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies.
- Refer and liaise with multi-agency working groups if necessary
- Ensure proper record keeping
- Arrange relevant student training and determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.

The Heads of Key Stage and Heads of Year will:

- Take a lead in investigating reported incidents of bullying
- Take a lead in facilitating conflict resolution conversations

- Ensure appropriate record keeping of bullying incidents and have oversight of trends.
- Use the assembly programme and form time curriculum to promote Anti-Bullying where possible
- Communicate issues and interventions with the parents of students involved

Staff who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. educational psychology, where appropriate.
- Help and advice on how to remove online material.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- Informing parents to help change the attitude of the pupil
- The use of special interventions and/or referrals to other agencies where appropriate.
- Peer Mentors
- A school counselling referral will be made with consent of parents/carers where appropriate

Responding to reports about bullying

The following disciplinary steps can be taken in line with the Student Professional Conduct Policy 2026:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- SLT Detention in line with the BOA Consequences Ladder
- Restorative justice conversation to resolve conflict between parties. This is led by a member of the pastoral team and outcomes are communicated with parents/carers
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises
- Confiscation of mobile phones, in line with our Acceptable use (internet safety) policy
- Minor fixed term exclusion
- Major fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion
- Group or 1 to 1 work to explain the negative effects of bullying to the perpetrators and their cohort.

Parents

Parents/carers have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying behaviour to a member of the school staff and allow the person investigating the incident the time to ensure it is a full and accurate investigation which ensures student safety remains uncompromised.

The role of parents/carers in supporting their child to develop the range of social and emotional skills which minimise the chances of their child bullying cannot be underestimated and will significantly support the school in seeking to reduce incidents of bullying or preventing incidents of bullying.

Parents should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive, active approach towards educating students on how to combat it. Parents will be informed of actions taken by the Academy in line with the Professional Student Conduct Policy 2026:

- Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and the academy. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure.
- Where a pupil is involved in bullying others outside academy, i.e. in the street or through the use of internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the academy in addressing their child's behaviour, for example, restricting/monitoring their use of the internet or mobile phone
- Referral of the family to external support agencies will be made where appropriate.

Preventative measures

The academy will:

- Raise awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, tutorial time, assemblies, subject areas and informal discussion, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.
- Give care and support to create and maintain a safe learning environment where all students feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously in line with the school ethos.
- Participate in local and national initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week
- Seek to develop links with the wider community that will support inclusive, anti-bullying education
- Consider the use of specific strategies, e.g. implement vertical tutoring across the school and peer mentoring on a more regular basis subject to available resources.
- Refer to the LA guidelines on 'Bullying in the Workplace' where an adult in the community believes that he/she is being bullied by another adult.

Bullying beyond Academy premises

It is the safeguarding responsibility of all members of staff at BOA to ensure all student are protected from maltreatment within or outside the home, including online. At BOA we reserve the right to respond to incidents of bullying beyond academy site to a reasonable extent.

Where bullying outside of school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and escalated to external agencies where appropriate. BOA will assess whether incidents should be reported to the police, social care or an appropriate third party.

Whilst the Academy's powers may be limited outside of school, BOA will take all reasonable steps to investigate concerns, provide support to students and liaise with parents, carers and external agencies where appropriate. BOA will sign post parents to relevant guidance and agencies to ensure their child is able to access up to date information and advice when outside the Academy.

Promotion of this Policy

The policy and methods for reporting bullying concerns will be promoted throughout the academy, for example in information packs for new students and staff and through regular awareness raising activities with existing students and parents. The Anti-bullying focus group (Voice of BOA) will promote their awareness in assemblies with peer mentors who will support these efforts. Pupil surveys will be carried out in each year group.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

A senior member of staff at the academy will be identified to lead on the implementation of the policy and act as the link person with the LA and outside agencies.

An annual report will be made to the governing body, including statistics about:

- The number of reported concerns
- Monitoring information about the students involved
- Motivations for bullying
- Actions taken and outcomes

The Academy will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Bullying is behaviour that is intended to hurt, intimidate, harm or humiliate another person. It is often repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power. However, the Academy recognises that some serious one-off incidents may also be treated as bullying where the impact on the victim is significant.

For BOA to be successful in 'valuing and respecting all individuals' and in 'providing opportunities for students to develop their confidence and self-respect', bullying must be identified and eradicated.