ST GEORGE'S ACADEMY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Rationale

This policy and procedure shall apply to all employees and volunteers of St George's Academy.

This policy and procedure outlines the manner in which instances of bullying behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with DfE guidance, July 2026 (Preventing and Tackling Bullying) and the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty). Part 1 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026/Working together to safeguard children 2026.

Please also refer to our separate Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

2. Responsibility and Implementation

It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to this policy and wherever possible to resolve issues swiftly and effectively. The implementation of this policy on an operational level is the responsibility of the Senior Leader responsible for student welfare.

The named contacts for this Policy and Procedure are Mrs S Jerman, Vice Principal, Sleaford Campus and Miss N Roberts, Associate Vice Principal, Ruskington Campus.

We strive to create a culture based on our core values of Respect, tolerance and kindness. Students must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are a school which sets high standards for our students it is important that we create an atmosphere in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no student has to suffer from harassment of any kind. Because bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make our students knowledgeable about bullying, through a comprehensive Life Skills curriculum and teach them strategies that enable them to stand up for themselves without resorting to physical retaliation. Because bullying is prominent in society and is a source of real anxiety for parents, it is important that we inform parents about our approach to dealing with bullying, so that parents are able to distinguish between what is classified as bullying and what is not.

3. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 requires all academies to have due regard of the need 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

The Academy will endeavour to provide inspirational, happy and comfortable environments, which positively encourage students to want to come and learn.

Our values are crucial: especially respect and tolerance. Everyone, students and staff, has a right to maintain their dignity and their values. Everyone is expected to acknowledge, understand and respect every other individual.

4. Objectives

- To provide a caring and supportive environment for all students
- To enable all students to develop the personal skills necessary to deal with bullying if they encounter it
- To enable students to recognise actions that may lead to bullying and therefore prevent bullying behaviour
- To encourage students to take appropriate action if they see bullying behaviour
- To promote positive strategies to combat bullying
- To ensure that all staff are aware of policies and procedures related to bullying behaviour
- Adopt a definition of bullying that is agreed across the Academy (see Appendix A)
- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur
- Raise awareness of bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect
- Promote positive action to prevent bullying through our Life Skills Programme and related activities
- Provide support for all members of the Academy community who may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexual orientation and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds

5. Our School Community

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately
- Promotes a culture of anti-bullying within our school community
- Challenges instances of bullying behaviour
- Ensures that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that students feel safe to learn; and that students abide by the anti-bullying policy
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations, when appropriate

6. Forms of Bullying Covered by this Policy

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

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist or sexual bullying
- Bullying related to LGBTQ+ communities

7. Safeguarding of Children who have been Bullied

If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm because of bullying, the Academy will consult and refer such instances immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) in the Academy.

Even when safeguarding is not an issue, the Academy DSO may consult and work with external agencies to support students who are being bullied, or involved in bullying behaviour.

8. Harassment

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassment or threatening behaviour or communications could be criminal offences under the following Acts:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- The Communications Act 2003
- The Public Order Act 1986

If an Academy DSO feels that an offence may have been committed, they may seek assistance from the Police.

For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety; or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender (see guidance on cyber-bullying and e-safety in Appendix B).

9. Bullying Outside of Academy Premises

The Academy has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives schools the authority to regulate students' conduct when they are not on Academy premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff.

This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the Academy premises, such as on Academy or public transport, outside the local shops or in a town or village centre.

When bullying outside an Academy is reported to staff, it will be investigated and acted on. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police or Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator in the local authority of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the Police must be informed.

10.Preventing, Identifying and Responding to Bullying

Clearly, the best way to deal with bullying is to prevent it occurring. The Academy actively seeks to prevent bullying.

We will:

- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying, including through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support and through the student voice
- Train all staff, including lunchtime staff, to identify bullying and follow Academy policy and procedures on bullying
- Actively create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable children and young people
- Educate students on what constitutes bullying
- Use schemes such as 'Girls on Board' to help educate students about friendships and managing conflicts with their peers in a respectful manner

11.Involvement of Students

We will:

- Regularly canvas students' views on the extent and nature of bullying
- Ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in school
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites
- Offer support to students who have been bullied
- Work with students who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have

12.Liaison with Parents/Carers

We will:

- Ensure that parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying
- Ensure parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively
- Ensure parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying
- Work with parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying

13.Responsibilities

This policy and procedure only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.

It is the responsibility of:

- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy
- Governors, the Principal, Senior Managers, teaching and support staff to be aware of this policy and procedure and implement it accordingly
- The Principal to communicate the policy and procedure to the school community
- Students to abide by the policy and procedure

Students who have been bullied may be supported by:

- Being provided with an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a Form Tutor or member of staff of their choice
- Being reassured about the circumstances of their situation
- Being monitored by the appropriate pastoral team to provide a programme of support to restore self-esteem and confidence
- Reporting to Children's Services when a child may be suffering or likely to suffer harm
- Involving other external agencies to support when appropriate

Students who have bullied others may be helped by:

- Discussing what happened and how to resolve the situation
- Discovering why the students became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- Informing parents, carers or guardians to help change the attitude of the student
- The implementation of a programme that aims to foster positive interpersonal skills. This may involve work with specialist outside agencies

The following disciplinary steps ***may*** be taken against the perpetrators of bullying:

- Official warnings to cease offending
- Parental meetings
- Behaviour contracts
- Exclusion from certain areas of Academy premises
- Removal from lessons
- Isolation
- Reflection and Resolution Room
- Minor fixed-term suspension
- Major fixed-term suspension
- Permanent exclusion: a decision taken by the Principal

14.Records

We encourage students to report bullying issues via their trusted adult in school. Parents and students can also report bullying concerns on our website email or our Anti-bullying hotline.

Advice to students is in all student planners.

15.Supporting Organisations and Guidance

DfE guidance, (Preventing and Tackling Bullying) July 2017 and the Equality Act 2011.

Anti-Bullying Alliance guidance: http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Social Media
Childnet International: www.childnet.com
Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

LGBTQ
Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

SEND
Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk

Racism and Hate
Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

Appendix A – Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on groups of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities.
(Preventing and tackling bullying, 2017)

It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It often involves a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship, which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves.

Bullying includes:

- Verbal abuse, such as name calling and gossiping
- Non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or text messages
- Emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- Exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
- Undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours
- Controlling or manipulating someone
- Racial, sexual, homophobic, biphobia and transphobic bullying
- Physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
- Making silent, hoax or abusive calls
- Online or cyber bullying

"Bullying" usually, but not exclusively, has three common elements:

- It is deliberately hurtful
- It is repeated, often over a period of time
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Relationships between young people can break down from time to time and relational conflict occurs. To minimise the number of times these differences lead to bullying requires everyone to respect one another.

Appendix B – Cyber-bullying Guidance

The Academy has a duty of care to all students and staff to ensure they are safe to work, learn and develop unimpeded by fear.

Where bullying is found to have taken place by any means, whether on-Campus or off-Campus, including cyber-bullying, robust action shall be taken to protect the well-being of students and staff. We reserve the right to contact the police or CEOP where appropriate.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member staff who has been formally authorised by the Principal, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, 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.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the Police. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

In all our communications, whether written, spoken, texted, emailed or published on websites, we must treat other people with respect. Even if we disagree with another person, fall out with them, or become angry with them, we should state our case clearly and respectfully.

- If you feel you are being bullied by mail, text or online, do talk to someone you trust
- Never send any bullying or threatening messages. Anything you write and send could be read by an adult
- Serious bullying should be reported to a member of staff: in some cases the Academy will inform the Police, for example threats of a physical or sexual nature
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent and note any details about the sender
- **Don't** reply to bullying or threatening text messages or emails – this could make matters worse. It also lets the bullying people know that they have found a 'live' phone number or email address. They may get bored quite quickly if you ignore them
- **Don't** forward abusive texts or emails or images to anyone. You could be breaking the law just by forwarding them. If they are about you, keep them as evidence. If they are about someone else, delete them and don't reply to the sender
- **Don't** ever give out passwords to your mobile, email account or social media account/s
- **Remember** that sending abusive or threatening messages is against the law

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Policy Developed by: Samantha Jerman, Vice Principal
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Name S. Harvey Signature S. Harvey
Committee: Behaviour + Culture