

Anti-Bullying Policy

Written by:	Approved by:	Status	Last Review	Next Review
LCOU	Trustees	Ratified	September 2026	September 2027

1. Introduction and Aims

Caistor Yarborough Academy is committed to providing a caring, respectful, inclusive and safe environment in which every student can learn, develop and thrive.

Bullying in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This includes bullying that takes place:

- within the Academy;
- travelling to or from the Academy;
- during Academy visits, trips or activities;
- online;
- outside the Academy where the behaviour has an impact upon students within the Academy.

All members of the Academy community have a responsibility to contribute to an environment in which students feel safe, valued and able to report concerns.

The Academy recognises that bullying can have a significant impact upon a child's physical and emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, attainment and sense of safety.

The Academy also recognises that a child displaying bullying behaviour may themselves have unmet needs or safeguarding vulnerabilities. Appropriate support will therefore be considered alongside proportionate consequences.

This policy aims to:

- prevent bullying wherever possible;
- ensure students understand what bullying is and how to report it;
- ensure all reports are taken seriously;
- provide a consistent response to allegations and incidents;
- protect and support children who experience bullying;
- address and change bullying behaviour;
- identify when bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern or child-on-child abuse;
- promote respectful, inclusive and positive relationships throughout the Academy.

This policy should be read alongside the Academy's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;

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- Online Safety arrangements;
- Equality information and objectives;
- SEND arrangements;
- Attendance Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education/PSHE arrangements.

The Academy has regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* (KCSIE), the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant statutory guidance.

2. What is Bullying?

2.1 Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can involve an imbalance of power. This may relate to physical strength, popularity, group size, age, SEND, vulnerability, social status, access to information or technology, or other factors.

Bullying can occur face-to-face, online, or through a combination of both.

Although bullying is generally characterised by repeated behaviour, the Academy recognises that a single incident can still be serious and may constitute harassment, discrimination, violence, harmful sexual behaviour, child-on-child abuse or another safeguarding concern.

A concern will therefore never be dismissed simply because an incident has occurred only once.

2.2 Forms of bullying

Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

Emotional/relational bullying

- deliberately excluding or isolating someone;
- humiliating, ridiculing or intimidating another person;
- manipulating friendships or social groups;
- spreading rumours or deliberately damaging someone's reputation.

Physical bullying

- hitting, kicking, pushing, pinching or other physical aggression;
- damaging, hiding or taking another person's belongings;
- threatening physical harm.

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Verbal bullying

- name-calling;
- insults;
- threats;
- intimidation;
- repeated teasing or humiliating comments;
- comments relating to appearance, body image or personal circumstances.

Prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying

This may relate to actual or perceived:

- race or ethnicity;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- disability;
- special educational needs;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- socioeconomic circumstances;
- being looked after or previously looked after;
- being a young carer;
- nationality, refugee or asylum status;
- body image or appearance;
- another aspect of a child's identity or perceived identity.

This includes racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, misogynistic and misandrist behaviour.

2.3 Sexual bullying, harassment and harmful sexual behaviour

Sexualised behaviour may constitute bullying and/or child-on-child abuse.

Examples include:

- sexual comments or remarks;
- sexual "jokes";
- unwanted sexual attention;

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- sexualised name-calling;
- comments about someone's body or sexual activity;
- unwanted physical contact;
- sexual harassment;
- sexual violence;
- displaying or sharing sexual material;
- deliberately exposing another student to unwanted sexual content;
- making, altering, threatening to share or sharing nude or semi-nude images;
- sexualised online harassment.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence are never acceptable and will not be dismissed as "banter", "having a laugh", "part of growing up" or similar.

Where behaviour may constitute harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence, the matter will be managed as a safeguarding concern in accordance with the Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.

3. Cyberbullying and Online Behaviour

Cyberbullying is bullying behaviour that takes place using technology.

It can occur through:

- social media;
- messaging services;
- group chats;
- gaming platforms;
- websites and forums;
- email;
- photographs or videos;
- livestreaming;
- anonymous accounts;
- impersonation or fake accounts;
- sharing personal information;
- AI applications and generative AI;
- manipulated, altered or AI-generated images, audio or video.

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Cyberbullying can take place both during and outside Academy hours.

Online abuse can include abusive, harassing, discriminatory, misogynistic or misandrist messages and the sharing of abusive images, pornography or other harmful material.

The Academy recognises that online and offline behaviour frequently overlap. An incident occurring outside the Academy may therefore still require Academy intervention where it affects the welfare, safety or education of students.

3.1 AI-generated and manipulated imagery

The Academy recognises the increasing safeguarding risks associated with artificial intelligence and image-manipulation technology.

Bullying or abuse may involve the creation, alteration or sharing of false or manipulated images, video, audio or other content relating to another student.

This includes AI-generated nude or semi-nude imagery, sometimes referred to as "deepfakes" or "deep nudes".

Any incident involving the making, requesting, altering, threatening to share or sharing of nude or semi-nude imagery involving a child will be treated as a safeguarding matter and referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL.

Staff must not view, copy, print, forward or unnecessarily handle such imagery and must follow the Academy's safeguarding procedures.

4. Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse

All staff must understand that children can abuse other children.

Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, can be a form of child-on-child abuse.

Child-on-child abuse can occur:

- between two children;
- within friendship or peer groups;
- between children of any age or sex;
- online or face-to-face;
- inside or outside the Academy.

The Academy maintains a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse.

Staff must never dismiss abusive or harmful behaviour as:

- "banter";
- "just having a laugh";
- "part of growing up";
- "boys being boys";

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- a normal part of friendship.

The absence of a report does not mean that bullying or abuse is not occurring.

Children may be reluctant to disclose bullying or abuse because they are embarrassed, frightened, threatened, concerned about retaliation, worried they will not be believed, or do not recognise their experience as harmful.

Staff should remain professionally curious and act where they have concerns.

Where bullying raises a safeguarding concern, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy takes precedence and the DSL or a Deputy DSL must be informed.

5. Students Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable

Bullying can happen to any child.

However, the Academy recognises that some students may be particularly vulnerable to bullying or may experience additional barriers to reporting it.

This may include children who:

- have SEND;
- have disabilities or health conditions;
- are looked after or previously looked after;
- are young carers;
- are experiencing mental health difficulties;
- are socially isolated;
- are experiencing difficulties at home;
- identify as, or are perceived to be, LGBT+;
- are from minority ethnic or religious groups;
- are refugees or asylum seekers;
- experience socioeconomic disadvantage;
- have communication difficulties.

Children with SEND may be disproportionately affected by bullying without outwardly showing signs that it is taking place.

When concerns involve a student with SEND, staff should consider the child's individual communication needs and any reasonable adjustments required.

Where appropriate, the DSL and SENDCO will work together to ensure appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support is provided.

6. Signs and Indicators

There is no single sign that demonstrates a child is being bullied.

Staff and parents should be alert to changes including a child:

- becoming reluctant or refusing to attend the Academy;
- experiencing declining or irregular attendance;
- avoiding particular lessons, social times or journeys;
- becoming withdrawn or isolated;
- becoming anxious or experiencing changes in confidence;
- experiencing changes in mood or behaviour;
- becoming unusually aggressive or disruptive;
- experiencing unexplained injuries;
- having belongings damaged or go missing;
- experiencing deterioration in academic performance;
- showing changes in eating or sleeping;
- experiencing unexplained physical symptoms;
- appearing distressed after using a phone or device;
- avoiding social media or becoming unusually preoccupied with it;
- changing friendship groups;
- experiencing deterioration in emotional or mental wellbeing;
- expressing thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

These indicators may have causes other than bullying. However, staff should exercise professional curiosity and investigate concerns appropriately.

Any immediate concern regarding a child's safety or welfare must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

7. Responsibilities

7.1 Trustees

Trustees will ensure that the Academy has appropriate arrangements to prevent and respond to bullying and that safeguarding requirements are met.

7.2 Headteacher

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The Headteacher will:

- promote an Academy culture in which bullying and child-on-child abuse are not tolerated;
- ensure this policy is implemented consistently;
- ensure staff receive appropriate information and training;
- ensure appropriate systems exist for reporting, recording and responding to incidents;
- ensure the effectiveness of the Academy's approach is reviewed.

7.3 Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Deputy Headteacher/DSL will:

- oversee the strategic implementation of this policy;
- ensure safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately;
- support staff in identifying where bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse;
- oversee serious or complex cases as appropriate;
- ensure appropriate safeguarding referrals are made;
- monitor patterns, trends and repeat concerns;
- ensure appropriate training is provided;
- report relevant information to the Headteacher and Trustees;
- work with external agencies where necessary.

7.4 Heads of Year/Pastoral Staff

Pastoral staff will:

- investigate reported incidents promptly and impartially;
- ensure students are listened to;
- communicate appropriately with parents/carers;
- identify appropriate support;
- consider safeguarding needs;
- record incidents and actions appropriately;
- monitor students following incidents;
- escalate serious or repeated concerns appropriately.

7.5 Tutors and Teachers

Tutors and teachers will:

- listen to concerns and take them seriously;

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- report bullying concerns through the Academy's agreed systems;
- record safeguarding concerns on CPOMS;
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour;
- reinforce expectations regarding respectful behaviour;
- liaise with pastoral and safeguarding staff where appropriate.

7.6 All Staff

All staff must:

- understand this policy;
- remain vigilant to signs of bullying and child-on-child abuse;
- challenge bullying, discrimination and harmful behaviour;
- never dismiss concerning behaviour as banter;
- listen to children;
- reassure children that reporting concerns is the right thing to do;
- never make a child feel that they are causing a problem by reporting;
- never promise confidentiality where a safeguarding concern exists;
- report safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL;
- record concerns accurately using CPOMS.

If a member of staff is unsure whether behaviour constitutes a safeguarding concern, they should seek advice from the DSL or Deputy DSL.

8. Reporting Bullying

Students are encouraged to report bullying as soon as possible.

A student can speak to:

- their tutor;
- a teacher;
- their Head of Year;
- a member of the pastoral team;
- the DSL or Deputy DSL;
- any other trusted member of staff.
- Report via Buddy@cyac.org.uk email

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Students who witness bullying are encouraged to report what they have seen.

Students should understand that reporting bullying is not "snitching" or "telling tales". Reporting concerns helps the Academy protect students and prevent further harm.

A student who reports bullying will be listened to, taken seriously and supported.

Where a student feels their concern has not been addressed, they should tell another trusted adult.

Students should not retaliate or attempt to resolve serious incidents themselves.

9. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in preventing and responding to bullying.

Parents/carers are encouraged to:

- talk regularly to their child about school and friendships;
- look for changes in behaviour or wellbeing;
- inform the Academy promptly if they suspect bullying;
- preserve relevant evidence, including screenshots where appropriate;
- encourage their child to report concerns;
- work constructively with the Academy;
- discourage retaliation or physical confrontation.

Parents/carers should not approach another child directly in an attempt to resolve an incident.

Concerns should normally be raised with the child's tutor or Head of Year in the first instance, unless the concern is urgent or relates to safeguarding.

10. Responding to Reports

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously.

The response will be proportionate to the circumstances and may include:

1. ensuring the immediate safety of those involved;
2. listening carefully to the child reporting the concern;
3. speaking separately to relevant students and witnesses;
4. gathering available evidence;
5. considering online evidence where appropriate;

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6. recording the concern;
7. considering whether the matter constitutes a safeguarding concern;
8. involving the DSL/Deputy DSL where appropriate;
9. informing parents/carers where appropriate;
10. providing appropriate support;
11. applying proportionate consequences;
12. monitoring the situation following intervention.

The Academy will consider the wishes and feelings of the child affected while recognising that these cannot override the Academy's responsibility to safeguard children.

Staff will maintain appropriate confidentiality and information will only be shared with those who need it in order to safeguard and support the children involved.

11. Recording

Bullying concerns will be appropriately recorded.

CPOMS will be used to record safeguarding and bullying concerns in accordance with Academy procedures.

Bromcom will be used to record behaviour incidents and sanctions where appropriate.

Records should include, where relevant:

- the nature of the concern;
- students involved;
- dates/times;
- relevant evidence;
- actions taken;
- safeguarding considerations;
- parent/carers communication;
- support offered;
- sanctions or interventions;
- decisions made and the rationale for those decisions;
- follow-up and monitoring arrangements.

Recording should allow the Academy to identify patterns of behaviour, repeated concerns, vulnerable students and locations or times where bullying is more likely to occur.

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12. Safeguarding Escalation

At every stage staff should consider:

"Could this be a safeguarding concern or child-on-child abuse?"

Where the answer is yes, or staff are unsure, the DSL or a Deputy DSL must be consulted.

Depending upon the nature and seriousness of the concern, safeguarding action may include:

- additional Academy support;
- Family Help;
- children's social care;
- police involvement;
- other specialist or external services.

The Academy will follow its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and relevant statutory guidance when determining the appropriate response.

13. Supporting a Child Who Has Experienced Bullying

Support will be individualised according to the child's needs.

This may include:

- immediate reassurance and support;
- a named trusted adult/key contact;
- regular check-ins;
- pastoral support;
- support with friendships;
- safety planning;
- changes to arrangements where appropriate;
- SEND support or reasonable adjustments;
- support with attendance;
- support for emotional wellbeing;
- referral to internal or external services where appropriate;
- communication with parents/carers;
- ongoing monitoring.

Children will be kept appropriately informed about the outcome of concerns they have raised.

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A child will never be made to feel ashamed or responsible for experiencing bullying or abuse.

14. Supporting a Child Displaying Bullying Behaviour

The Academy will make clear that bullying behaviour is unacceptable while also seeking to understand why it has occurred.

Support and intervention may include:

- discussion about the behaviour and its impact;
- work around empathy and relationships;
- pastoral intervention;
- parental involvement;
- targeted behaviour support;
- SEND support;
- consideration of Family Help or safeguarding needs;
- educational interventions;
- appropriate consequences.

Staff should avoid unnecessarily labelling a child as "a bully". The focus should be upon the behaviour, its impact and the changes required.

Where there are concerns that the child displaying harmful behaviour may themselves be at risk of harm, these concerns will be referred to the DSL.

15. Restorative Approaches

Restorative work may be beneficial in some cases but will not automatically be used following bullying.

Restorative approaches will only take place where:

- they are considered safe and appropriate;
- those involved freely agree;
- there is no risk of further harm or intimidation;
- safeguarding considerations have been addressed.

A child who has experienced bullying will never be required to meet, reconcile with or apologise to another child as a condition of resolving an incident.

Restorative approaches will not replace safeguarding action where safeguarding action is required.

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16. Sanctions and Consequences

Bullying is a breach of the Academy's Behaviour Policy.

Consequences will be determined according to the circumstances of each case and may take account of:

- seriousness;
- frequency;
- intent;
- impact;
- previous incidents;
- vulnerability of those involved;
- aggravating factors;
- safeguarding considerations;
- SEND and reasonable adjustments;
- the child's response following the incident.

Consequences will be applied in accordance with the Academy's Behaviour Policy.

Serious incidents may result in significant sanctions, including suspension or, in the most serious circumstances, permanent exclusion, in accordance with statutory guidance.

The Academy will not operate an automatic sanction ladder based solely upon the number of bullying incidents.

Support and sanctions are not mutually exclusive. A student may receive a consequence for their behaviour while also receiving support to address its causes and prevent recurrence.

17. Preventing Bullying

The Academy recognises that preventing bullying requires a whole-school approach.

Preventative strategies include:

- high expectations of behaviour;
- consistent staff modelling;
- a strong safeguarding culture;
- PSHE/RSHE education;
- teaching about respectful relationships;
- teaching about consent and healthy relationships;
- online safety education;

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- education about discrimination and protected characteristics;
- teaching students how to report concerns;
- assemblies and tutor activities;
- Anti-Bullying Week;
- Safer Internet Day;
- staff training;
- pastoral support;
- effective supervision;
- monitoring behaviour and safeguarding data;
- responding to inappropriate language at an early stage;
- working with parents and carers.

The Academy will actively challenge cultures that normalise harassment, sexualised behaviour, discrimination or abuse.

18. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Academy will monitor bullying and child-on-child abuse in order to identify patterns and improve preventative work.

This may include analysis of:

- CPOMS records;
- Bromcom behaviour data;
- repeat incidents;
- students repeatedly involved in incidents;
- prejudice-related incidents;
- sexual harassment/HSB concerns;
- online incidents;
- locations and times;
- year groups;
- attendance;
- student voice;
- parent feedback;

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- safeguarding information.

The DSL and pastoral leadership will consider whether individual incidents form part of a wider pattern.

Significant trends and relevant safeguarding information will be reported appropriately to the Headteacher and Trustees.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are significant changes to statutory guidance or Academy procedures.