

Unity Academy Blackpool — Anti-Bullying Policy 2026-2027

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Electronic copies available from: Unity Academy Blackpool Website

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Date of Next Review: September 2027 (or earlier, as required)

Person Responsible for Review: Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding)

1. Statement of Intent

Unity Academy takes bullying and harassment seriously. This policy is designed in alignment with our **Behaviour Policy (2026–2027)** and statutory guidance, including **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 26)**, to maintain a safe, caring, and supportive learning community.

Our academy ethos is underpinned by our core values: **Ready, Respectful, Safe**, and our motto *"In Unity we succeed."* We are committed to ensuring all pupils develop academically and socially free from fear, ridicule, harassment, or physical threat. Incidents of bullying will always be taken seriously, investigated swiftly, and addressed using a whole-academy approach involving pupils, staff, parents, and carers.

2. Definition and Forms of Bullying

Bullying is defined as *"behaviour, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally."* It can be carried out by an individual or a group, face-to-face or online.

2.1 Types of Bullying

- **Verbal:** Name-calling, teasing, taunting, shouting, or making derogatory remarks.
- **Indirect / Relational:** Spreading hurtful rumours, excluding individuals from social groups, or pressuring peers to alienate others.
- **Physical:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, damaging or taking belongings, or forcing someone to perform harmful or humiliating acts.
- **Cyberbullying / Online Abuse:** Misuse of social media, digital devices, messaging platforms, or sharing inappropriate/hurtful images, text, or video content.
- **Prejudice-Based / Targeted Bullying:** Harassment or hostility based on protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010), including race, ethnicity, religion, disability/ableism, gender identity, sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying), or care status.

3. Harmful Sexual Behaviour & KCSIE '26 Compliance

In full alignment with **Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 26)**, Unity Academy maintains a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, online sexual abuse, and sexual violence (including sexualised language).

- **Zero-Tolerance to 'Banter':** Harmful sexual behaviour will never be dismissed or passed off as "banter," "teasing," or "pupils just having a laugh."
- **Culture of Reporting:** Pupils are supported to report concerns freely, with full confidence that allegations will be taken seriously, documented comprehensively, and acted upon immediately.
- **Proactive Prevention:** Staff operate under the assumption that sexual harassment and online abuse may occur even without explicit reports, delivering preventative education through our Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum and pastoral assemblies.
- **Vulnerability Awareness:** Staff remain alert to risk factors that heighten pupil vulnerability, including special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), mental ill-health, domestic abuse, and pupils belonging to higher-risk cohorts (e.g., girls and LGBT+ children).

4. Mobile Devices & Online Safety

To prevent cyberbullying and digital distractions during the academy day, Unity Academy enforces strict rules on portable digital devices in accordance with Section 6.0 of the Behaviour Policy:

Policy Requirement	Details & Sanctions
Device Restrictions	No portable digital devices (mobile phones, smartwatches, headphones) may be used between 8:30 am and 3:15 pm.
Y7–Y11 Secure Pouches	Secondary students are issued secure pouches in which all digital devices must remain stored throughout the academy day.
Confiscation & Delivery	Failure or refusal to adhere to device rules results in confiscation. Confiscated devices are held in Student Support and can only be collected after 3:30 pm.
Off-Site / Online Misbehaviour	Online bullying or harassment occurring outside academy hours that impacts pupils or brings the academy into disrepute will be investigated and sanctioned under academy authority.

5. Preventative Strategies

Unity Academy proactively works to eliminate bullying through a whole-school culture built around **Ready, Respectful, Safe**:

1. **Anti-Bullying Ambassadors:** Trained student leaders who champion a zero-tolerance culture, support peers, and participate in external awards (e.g., Diana Award Anti-Bullying Programme).
2. **School Council:** Pupils are provided with direct channels to liaise with the Student Council, which maintains clear feedback mechanisms with senior school leaders
3. **Curriculum Delivery:** Proactive coverage through RSHE, PSHE, pastoral tutorials, assemblies, and House activities.
4. **Active Supervision:** Adequate, high-visibility staffing during transition, lunchtimes, and social times in key unstructured areas, which is supported by CCTV.
5. **Early Help & Transition Support:** Tailored pastoral support for pupils joining at non-routine times or transitioning across key stages.
6. **Pupil Voice & Feedback:** Regular pupil surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-bullying interventions and measure school climate.

6. Incident Response & Consequences

When bullying or harassment occurs, Unity Academy responds swiftly using the standardised **C1–C5 Consequence Framework** detailed in the Behaviour Policy:

Consequence Level	Secondary Action / Sanction	Primary Action / Sanction
C1 / C2	Reminder and formal warning regarding behaviour expectations.	Reminder and formal warning.
C3	Continued disruption / low-level peer harassment: Lunchtime detention issued.	Use of Faculty Remove Class.
C4	Defiance or repeated peer hostility: After-school detention, removal to Subject Removal / Withdrawal Room.	Primary Reflection Room (1/2 day).
C5 / Serious Incident	Severe bullying, persistent harassment, or harmful sexual behaviour: Internal Suspension (Reflect and Restore Room), Fixed-Term Suspension, Off-Site Direction, or Permanent Exclusion.	Internal Suspension or External Suspension / Escalation to SLT.

6.1 Support & Restorative Interventions

- **Restorative Conversations:** Facilitated by trained pastoral staff, Year Heads, or the Behaviour Support Team to promote accountability and empathy.
- **Support for Victims:** Safety plans, designated quiet/safe spaces (e.g., Student Services, 'The Bridge'), counselling signposting, and regular monitoring checks.
- **Intervention for Perpetrators:** Targeted support to address underlying causes of behaviour, tier-based daily behaviour reports (Class Teacher, Form Teacher, Pastoral, Head of Key Stage, SLT), and external agency referral where appropriate.

7. Screening, Searching, and Confiscation Powers

In accordance with statutory powers detailed in Section 17.0 of the Behaviour Policy:

- **Screening:** The academy reserves the right to screen pupils using walk-through or hand-held metal detectors (arch/wand) without consent. Refusal to comply may result in denied admittance.
- **Searching:** Authorised staff may search pupils or their possessions without consent where there are reasonable grounds to suspect possession of prohibited items (e.g., weapons, illegal drugs, vapes, stolen items, pornographic material, or digital devices used inappropriately).
- **Confiscation:** Staff have the legal right under Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to confiscate, retain, or dispose of prohibited/banned property. Weapons or dangerous items will be handed directly to the police.

8. Partnership with Parents and Carers & Reporting

Unity Academy recognises that parental partnership is essential in eradicating bullying:

- **Communication via MCAS:** Parents are expected to download and engage with the *MyChildAtSchool (MCAS)* app to monitor daily RRS points, behaviour logs, and notifications.
- **School Reporting System:** If a parent or child has concerns about bullying, this can be reported through the school website under the heading '*Raise a pastoral or bullying concern*'.
- **Prompt Notification:** Parents of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator will be contacted swiftly (aiming within 24 hours) when a bullying concern is established.
- **Escalation Path:** Initial contact is maintained through Form Tutors and Pastoral Leads, escalating to the Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour, Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher, and Local Governing Body as required.

9. Monitoring, Data, and Policy Governance

- **Real-Time Tracking:** Behaviour and bullying data are compiled daily, reviewed weekly, and analysed each half-term for trends across sub-cohorts and protected characteristics.
- **Governance:** Senior Leadership receives daily reports, and data summaries are provided to the Local Governing Body each half-term.
- **Review Cycle:** Annually