

# Anti Bullying Policy

Date of Last Review: September 2025

Review Frequency: 1 Year

Review Date: September 2026

Person Responsible for the Policy: MRI/ FMU

Ratified by Governors: September 2025

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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<b>Version</b>	5.0	
<b>Status</b>	Approved	
<b>Publication Date</b>	Jan 2021	
<b>Review Date</b>	Annually	
<b>Approved/Ratified by:</b>	Local Governing Body	Date: September 2025
<b>Distribution:</b>  Central Academy staff  PLEASE NOTE, this version of the document contained within the Policy Folder in the All Staff Area on Teams within Policies folder is the only version that is maintained.  Any printed copies should therefore be viewed as “uncontrolled” and as such, may not necessarily contain the latest updates and amendments.		

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Author</b>
1.0	Jan 2021	New Policy	MRI
2.0	Mar 2022	Annual Review – no changes	MRI
3.0	May 2023	Changes made to reflect clarity on bullying incidents and terminology from aggressor to antagonist	MRI
4.0	Sept 2024	Annual review – changes made to reflect academy actions and sanction and flow chart updated and simplified. Ensure link to Behaviour Policy Review.	MRI/ FMU
5.0	Sept 2025	Including impact of behaviour for learning approach. Inclusion of use of AI and types of bullying. Responsibility of parents for their child’s online activity.	MRI/ FMU



## Introduction

Our 'Anti-Bullying Policy' sets out the expectations of behaviour at Central Academy and our approach in ensuring that all students are safe from bullying behaviour and able to thrive in a positive learning environment in keeping with our core aims, values and virtues.

All students at Central Academy are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to disclose any issue and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a telling school, meaning that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it.

All Academy staff, students, parents and carers should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it to make Central Academy a happier place for everyone. The responsibility for achieving the desired environment is not only the responsibility of the Principal and Local Governing Body, but the responsibility of all members of Central Academy staff. Everyone has a duty of care to observe, monitor and report any behaviour, conversation or action which they suspect may cause a child harm.

All Academy staff have a legal obligation through such legislation as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education/Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'The Equalities Act 2010 (PSED)' to ensure that every action, however apparently small or insignificant is dealt with and reported.

We will work hard to ensure that bullying does not feature in our community by proactively working with all students and their families to eradicate it and promptly deal with all reported incidents.

The Academy's explicit teaching of behaviour for learning minimises opportunities for children to be bullied or become bullies. We take all claims of bullying extremely seriously, and resolve individual issues promptly, fairly and with a view to teaching positive behaviours for the future.

The aims of our 'Anti-Bullying Policy' are:

- To prevent bullying
- To deal with bullying effectively if it occurs
- To contribute to overall Academy improvement by promoting a safe and happy learning environment conducive to raising standards
- To ensure that all students, staff and parents are clear that we do not tolerate bullying and have clarity on the actions taken by the Academy if it occurs

## Raising Awareness

While there is no single definition of bullying, the DfE identifies three points which most definitions share

- The behaviour is intended to cause distress
- The behaviour is repeated
- There is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s of bullying and the target

*'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally'.* (Safe to Learn, DfE)

It is important to understand that bullying is not occasional falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional 'joke' is played on someone which may happen in isolation. Students do sometimes fall out or



make comments because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not always classed as bullying. It is an important part of a student's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, occasional name calling or immature pranks. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

### What is bullying?

Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour that the Academy considers inappropriate and unacceptable in all its forms. Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

It can take many forms, including:

- online-bullying via phone messages, social media or the internet.
- prejudice-based bullying against particular groups, for example, on grounds of special educational need, race, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, disability or any other protected characteristic. Bullying can be motivated by actual differences or perceived differences.

Bullying can be:

- Physical e.g., punching, kicking, hitting, spitting at another person.
- Verbal e.g., name-calling and/or offensive, discriminatory verbal abuse.
- Exclusion e.g., deliberately excluding a person or encouraging another person to exclude a person from discussions/activities.
- Damage to property or theft e.g., deliberately damaging someone's or taking personal belongings.
- Physical or verbal threats might be used to force the person to hand over their property.
- Face-to-face or remote e.g., via the internet or text.
- By someone known to the recipient or an unknown person e.g., an anonymous email.
- Cyber-bullying e.g., communications that intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, or humiliate

### Where bullying occurs

Bullying can take place in many places. It can occur during the journey to and from the Academy, before lessons begin, at break, lunchtime and during lesson changeovers in corridors. Toilets and changing rooms are places where bullying can occur. Bullying may also take place in a subtle and surreptitious way during lessons when adults are present. Cyber-bullying incidents may originate from outside of the Academy but if it affects pupils during the school day then we will respond to it.

### Signs of Bullying Incidents

Adults should watch for early signs of distress in students. These may be the early signs of bullying. These may include:

- Fears of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go to school on the school/public bus
- asks to be driven to school all the time
- changes their usual routine
- does not want to attend school (school phobic)
- begins truanting school
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- comes home starving
- stops eating
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged



- some possessions go 'missing'
- dinner or other monies continually get 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- starts becoming aggressive, disruptive, unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is scared to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

### Homophobic Bullying:

Central Academy will take an active approach to tackle all kinds of bullying, including homophobic bullying, and will follow the guidance of 'Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools – Preventing and Responding to Homophobic Bullying in Schools'.

Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people and can be experienced by:

- Students who are or who are thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual
- Students who are different in some way and who may not act like others
- Students who have gay friends or family or their parents or carers are gay
- Teachers who may or may not be lesbian, gay or bisexual

Academy staff will also challenge casual homophobic language and will ensure anyone who makes persistent remarks is withdrawn from the classroom and made to understand the consequences of their behaviour in terms of sanctions.

### Sexist, Sexual and Transphobic Bullying:

Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes that when expressed demean, intimate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying has a specific sexual dimension or a sexual dynamic and it may be physical, verbal, non-verbal or psychological. Behaviours may involve suggestive sexual comments or innuendo including offensive comments and sexual reputation, or using sexual language that is designed to subordinate, humiliate, or intimidate.

Transphobic bullying stems from a hatred or fear of people who are transgender. Transgender is a term that describes people whose sense of their gender or gender identity is seen as being different to typical gender norms. Transgender people commonly feel that their biological body is not aligned with their inner sense of gender identity. This leads some people to live in the gender role in which they feel more comfortable, and which relates to their own sense of their gender identity rather than to their biological body. Transphobic bullying is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes.

If incidents occur, students responsible will be sanctioned in line with the academy behaviour policy. A restorative approach with education would be preferable however if an offence has been committed, the police or other external support agency may be contacted.



### Online Safety:

Academy staff will promote and develop a culture of confident technology users, to support innovation, e-safety, and digital literacy skills. To raise awareness of online safety Academy staff will:

- Ensure our community understand and talk about online safety
- Ensure all policies and practices including safety policies are shared with all Academy staff, students, parents, and carers
- Make reporting online bullying more accessible by providing and publicising different ways of reporting it
- Promoting the positive use of technology including e-safety and digital literacy
- Evaluate the impact of preventative initiatives by using surveys to collect feedback
- Stay ahead of the development of AI and its impact on all aspects of school life.

If a student is involved in bullying through the use of mobile phones Central Academy staff will:

- Warn students about the need for care when providing their mobile phone number to others
- Record the date and time of any offensive messages on CPOMS
- Encourage students to show any messages to Academy staff
- Contact the families of the students involved to inform them there may be a need to contact the police if the bullying is serious and if a possible criminal offence has been committed
- Respond to bullying that is carried out on a persistent basis or if there is threat of violence as any other serious bullying incident
- Consider malicious emails in the same manner
- Treat students who take photographs or videos on their mobile phones with malicious intent in the same manner

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Schools have wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 to give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. The Academy will share information with parents to enable them to have proper oversight of their child's online activity and provide them with the methods of reporting.

A student's online activity is predominantly the responsibility of the parent or guardian, where a student is not being safeguarded by those responsible for them, the academy may seek advice and support from services such as the police or safeguarding hub. This is especially important where students are placing themselves in situations which cause significant harm.

### Bullying around Race, Religion or Culture:

We recognise Central Academy needs to be a tolerant and diverse community where racism and bullying should have no place. Every student deserves respect and a safe learning environment whatever their racial or religious background and every student needs to learn that modern British society value diversity and mutual respect.



We also know that racist bullying is an aspect of bullying that schools find particularly challenging. The law recognises the seriousness of abuse and attacks that are motivated by racism. The Academy has a duty of law to promote race equality. Creating an ethos where racist bullying rarely happens, and is dealt with convincingly when it does, is one way in which we can fulfil that duty, and one aspect of the Academy's 'Equality and Diversity Policy'.

Students have access to a bespoke reporting system regarding racist incidents which is accessible via their desktop, this is monitored and tracked by the pastoral and senior leadership team. All logs are investigated and appropriate actions taken.

### Prevention of Bullying

No matter what form bullying takes, it damages both the victim and the antagonist to differing extents. Central Academy will make use of the best information and practices available to address this problem.

Bullying affects the ability of a student to fully participate in and enjoy educational life and it is both an equal opportunity issue as well as a disciplinary offence, which the Principal, Governors and Academy staff will do all in their power to resolve.

At Central Academy everyone is expected to conduct themselves respectfully, demonstrating tolerance and understanding always. This is enshrined in the Code of Conduct and key policies such as Behaviour, E-safety and Safeguarding. The ULT "Staff Student relationships" document provides clear expectations for adults in the Academy too. Through clear implementation of these policies students and staff can go about their work in a safe and happy climate where achievement and praise prevail.

Prevention is better than cure so at Central Academy we are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take seriously reports of bullying. We use the curriculum and other appropriate times to reinforce the ethos of the school and help students to develop strategies that combat bullying-type behaviour. Bullying is an action directly against a key value of the school, RESPECT. We strive to organise our community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying. We use a variety of methods to help students prevent bullying. As and when appropriate these may include:

- TELLING school ethos
- 'Zero Tolerance' approach from Principal – no bullying
- Anti-bullying leaders
- Intervention work from Anti-bullying leaders for students who are repeat offenders - recalibration session'
- Buddy/mentoring systems
- Assemblies
- Anti-Bullying week
- Internet Awareness week
- Display materials around the school by a variety of means (posters, website etc)
- Behaviour plans for individuals
- Positive achievement assemblies
- PSHE sessions on E-safety and bullying
- Parental/Staff/Student surveys
- External Drama workshops/performances





The responsibility of “all” cannot be stressed enough. The responsibility of the bystander challenging bullying (not being complicit) is vital. All students should know that the Academy cares about bullying

### Role of Students

For pupils who experience bullying:

If you are being bullied:

- You will be heard and supported in reporting bullying and given help. Action will be taken. We are a TELLING school
- You will be supported and helped to rebuild confidence and feel safe again at Central Academy

For pupils who engage in bullying behaviour:

- Sanctions and interventions hold them to account for their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused.
- They learn to behave in ways which do not cause harm in future because they have developed their emotional skills and knowledge
- They learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused

### Role of Staff

For Academy staff (including Governors):

- They promote a climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish, and they continually develop best-practice based on knowledge of what works
- There is a review of the school anti-bullying policy at least every two years and, as a result, the policy and procedures are updated as necessary curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying pupil support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying
- They have addressed Academy-site issues and promote safe play areas, all staff take part in relevant professional development, and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying
- All staff are aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships
- Data systems (CPOMS/ ARBOR) gathers information about bullying incidents, and this data is used for monitoring and evaluation
- They work in partnership with parents, other schools and with Children's Services and community partners to promote safe communities

### The power to discipline beyond the school gate:

Be aware that the Behaviour Policy and Anti-bullying Policy can extend to activities outside of the school day and off the school premises when the student is:

- taking part in any school organised or school related activity
- travelling to or from school
- wearing school uniform
- in some other way identifiable as a student at the school.

Even where the four conditions above do not apply, the Behaviour Policy can extend to any misbehaviour which could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, pose a threat to another student, or member of the public, or could adversely affect the reputation of the school, and that broad definition should be included to give the school maximum control over issues such as bullying. Consider whether there are specific circumstances that should be included such as cyber-bullying. (*RRCA Bullying Policy*)





Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Principal will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or 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 should always be informed. The Academy reserves the right to consider permanent exclusion from school if persistent or violent instances of bullying happen in or outside of school.

### **Role of Parents/Carers**

Central Academy will ensure that the robust stance regarding bullying is made clear to parents and carers through the website, post or email. Parents should be encouraged to inform the Academy staff of any concerns or suspicions they may have regarding bullying incidents and inform their child's tutor or Pastoral Team at the earliest opportunity should they note any unexplained change of behaviour in their child or if information about bullying becomes known. This can be done either by direct email, by telephoning the Academy reception on 01228 822060 or by making an appointment to discuss in person.

### **Recording of Incidents:**

Bullying incidents can be reported in person, via a written statement, using the worry box, the anonymous reporting form on the website, the bullying icon on academy desktop or by parents via phonecall, email or face to face meeting. There is also a specific route for reporting racist incidents for both students and staff via an icon on the desktops.

In dealing with bullying, Central Academy staff will:

- Not make premature assumptions
- Listen to all accounts of the incidents
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages students to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves
- Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed
- Record the incident promptly on CPOMS, as soon as practicably possible after the incident
- Take action to resolve the issue in line with the 'Behaviour Policy'
- Liaise with the Assistant Principal (Behaviour) and Safeguarding team to ensure there is targeted support to address underlying issues
- Consult the police if necessary and appropriate

### **Supporting Victims:**

- Victims will be offered an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with a member of the Academy staff for as long as it is required
- Victims will be offered the opportunity to be a part of a restorative justice approach with the aggressor(s) if they feel comfortable with this
- The parents/carers of the victim will be informed as soon as possible

Students may also be offered:

- A safe space at social times
- A go to member of staff that they identify
- A daily check in
- Mentoring and support for social and emotional needs



We will also ensure that a series of follow up welfare checks are completed the following day, the following week and the following month. An opportunity to raise any further issues at this time will be logged.

#### Supporting Antagonists:

- The antagonist(s) will be asked about what happened, predominantly to discover why they became involved in the incident
- The parents/carers of the antagonist(s) will be informed as soon as possible
- Central Academy will continue to work with the student(s) in order to re-educate and support them in changing their behaviour in tailored support sessions
- The support of external agencies will be considered through an Early Help, if appropriate and necessary
- Antagonists(s) will be offered the opportunity to be a part of a restorative justice approach with the victim(s) if they feel comfortable with this

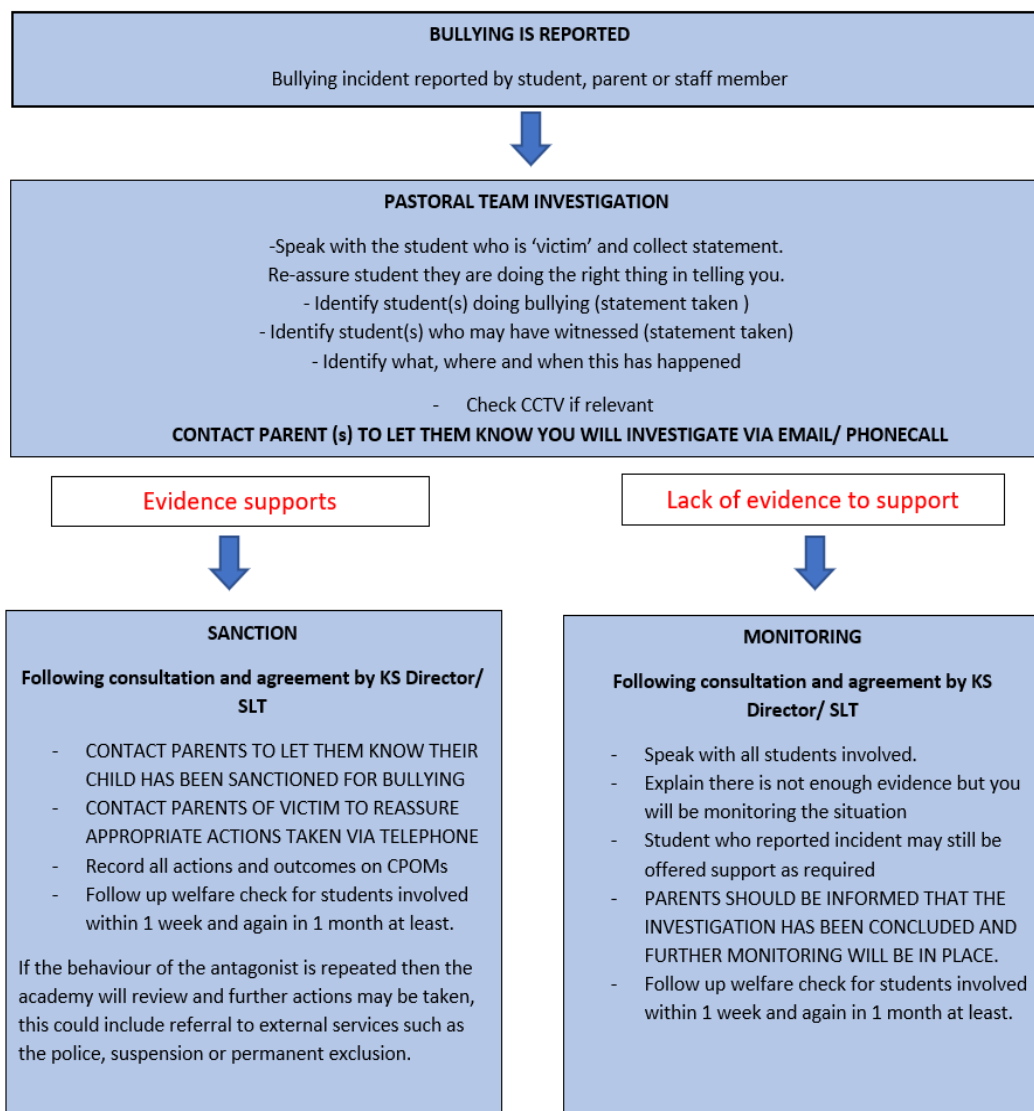
#### Confidentiality

Central Academy staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made. All instances deemed as bullying will be reported using CPOMS.



### **Bullying incident is reported**

**Bullying is defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.**



Parents should note that it may not be appropriate to discuss support or sanctions in place for students involved but be reassured that the policy has been applied fully and proportionately.

