











ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

THE SKIPTON ACADEMY

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ANTI-BULLYING
PARENT & CARER GUIDE

A clear summary of how we prevent, identify and respond to bullying.

A calm, safe, respectful and inclusive environment where every student belongs and is able to learn and thrive.

BULLYING IS UNACCEPTABLE

Every student has the right to feel safe, respected and able to learn without intimidation, humiliation, harassment, discrimination or deliberate harm.

OUR APPROACH

Our approach to bullying is based on **five key principles:**

PREVENT
Create a positive culture and clear expectations.

NOTICE
Identify concerns early.

REPORT
Make it straightforward for students to report concerns.

RESPOND
Investigate, support and address behaviour.

REVIEW
Monitor outcomes and improve practice.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is generally understood as behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and commonly involves an imbalance of power.

It may include:

- Physical or verbal bullying
- Social or relational bullying
- Online/cyberbullying
- Prejudice-related or discriminatory bullying
- Sexual, coercive or threatening behaviour

> "Repeated behaviour, intentional harm, an imbalance of power."

NOT EVERY INCIDENT IS BULLYING

Not every disagreement, argument, friendship difficulty, unpleasant comment or isolated incident is bullying.

Bullying is generally understood as behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and commonly involves an imbalance of power.

CONFLICT
A disagreement or dispute where there is not necessarily an imbalance of power.

RUDE BEHAVIOUR
Unkind behaviour that may be isolated but can still require action.

SINGLE INCIDENTS
Serious single incidents can require immediate safeguarding or disciplinary action even if they are not labelled as bullying.

HOW TO REPORT

Students can tell any trusted adult, including:

- Their tutor
- Head of Year
- Pastoral staff
- A teacher
- Student Support Centre
- Safeguarding team
- Senior leader
- Or another trusted member of staff.

Parents and carers should contact the Academy if they believe their child – or another child – may be experiencing bullying.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

REPORT → SAFEGUARD → INVESTIGATE → RESPOND → REVIEW

We listen and record the concern, consider immediate safety, establish what happened, decide appropriate action and then check whether the action has worked.

Safeguarding, support and behaviour action may happen at the same time.

A FAIR INVESTIGATION

- We consider the evidence reasonably available.
- Students are given an opportunity to provide their account.
- We balance probabilities.
- We do not need to prove an allegation beyond reasonable doubt.
- No CCTV or independent witness does not automatically prevent a finding.

SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Support may include a trusted adult, check-ins, pastoral/SEND/wellbeing support, safety planning and help with attendance or learning.
- Students responsible for bullying are held accountable.
- Responses can combine education, support, restorative approaches and sanctions – including suspension, or, in the most serious cases, permanent exclusion.
- Protective measures can be introduced before an investigation is complete.

WHAT PARENTS AND CARERS CAN DO

- Talk to your child regularly about their experiences at school.
- Listen and take concerns seriously.
- Encourage your child to report bullying so we can help.
- Work in partnership with the Academy and share relevant information.
- Support our expectations of respectful and kind behaviour.

HELP US TO

- Remain calm and reassure your child that reporting was appropriate.
- Preserve screenshots or messages if relevant.
- Share any other relevant information.
- Do not encourage retallation, confront another child directly or pursue the dispute on social media.

1. Purpose

The Skipton Academy is committed to providing a calm, safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which every student feels that they belong and is able to learn and thrive.

Bullying is unacceptable.

Every member of the Academy community has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to attend school without fear of intimidation, humiliation, harassment, discrimination or deliberate harm.

Our approach to bullying is based upon five principles:
Prevent → Notice → Report → Respond → Review

The Academy will seek to:

- prevent bullying through culture, curriculum, relationships and explicitly taught expectations;
- identify concerns early;
- make it straightforward for students to report concerns;
- investigate concerns fairly and proportionately;
- safeguard and support students who have experienced bullying;
- address the behaviour of students responsible for bullying;
- involve parents/carers appropriately;
- use educational, restorative and disciplinary responses as appropriate;
- monitor whether intervention has worked; and
- analyse patterns to improve Academy practice.

This policy should be read alongside the Academy's Behaviour and Relational Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety arrangements, SEND arrangements and Equality duties.

The Behaviour and Relational Policy already establishes that every member of the Academy community has the right to feel safe and respected and that relationships, appropriate support and accountability are fundamental to the Academy's approach. Behaviour and Relational Policy

2. Legal and statutory framework

The Academy will exercise its responsibilities in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance, including where relevant:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Education Act 2011;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- current DfE *Behaviour in Schools* guidance;
- DfE *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* guidance;
- SEND Code of Practice;
- statutory guidance concerning suspension and permanent exclusion; and
- relevant legislation concerning harassment, malicious communications, violence and criminal behaviour.

Schools are required to have measures within their behaviour arrangements which encourage good behaviour and prevent bullying. Schools also have duties under equality legislation to prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

KCSIE 2026 places bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based/discriminatory bullying, firmly within the wider safeguarding context of child-on-child abuse. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns must therefore not be viewed solely as behaviour matters where there are indicators of harm.

3. Relationship with the Behaviour and Relational Policy

This policy does not create a separate disciplinary system.

Bullying is dealt with through the Academy's Behaviour and Relational Policy alongside appropriate safeguarding and pastoral procedures.

The Behaviour and Relational Policy establishes that:

- bullying is unacceptable;
- discriminatory and derogatory behaviour will not be dismissed as banter;
- sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour are not tolerated;
- online behaviour may be addressed where there is a sufficient connection with the Academy;
- incidents will be investigated;
- support, education, safeguarding, restorative intervention and sanctions may operate together; and
- responses will be proportionate to the individual circumstances.

Behaviour and Relational Policy

The Academy will therefore not operate an automatic bullying tariff.
Seriousness, frequency, impact, vulnerability, intent, SEND, safeguarding considerations, previous behaviour and other relevant circumstances will inform the response.

4. What is bullying?

Bullying is generally understood as **behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally and commonly involves an imbalance of power**.
That imbalance of power may be:

- physical;
- psychological;
- social;
- relational;
- reputational;
- numerical;
- related to popularity or status;
- related to age;
- related to SEND or vulnerability; or
- created or amplified through technology.

The imbalance does not have to involve physical strength.

Online environments can significantly increase that imbalance because harmful material can be shared repeatedly, reach a large audience and remain accessible.

5. Bullying and other harmful behaviour

Not every disagreement, argument, friendship difficulty, unpleasant comment or isolated incident is bullying.

The Academy will distinguish, where reasonably possible, between:

- **Conflict** – a disagreement or dispute where there is not necessarily an imbalance of power.
- **Unkind behaviour** – behaviour which causes upset but may be isolated and not form part of a repeated pattern.
- **Bullying** – repeated intentional behaviour involving harm and commonly an imbalance of power.
- **Harassment/discriminatory behaviour** – behaviour related to a protected characteristic or other discriminatory conduct, which may require action whether or not it has happened repeatedly.
- **Child-on-child abuse** – behaviour between children which reaches a safeguarding threshold, including some forms of bullying, discriminatory abuse, sexual harassment and violence.
- **Serious single incidents** – an incident does **not** need to meet the definition of bullying before the Academy will act.

A single racist comment, sexualised incident, assault, threat, sharing of an intimate image or serious online incident may require immediate safeguarding and/or disciplinary action.

6. Forms of bullying

Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

- **physical** – hitting, kicking, pushing, intimidating physical behaviour, taking or damaging property;
- **verbal** – repeated insults, threats, humiliation, name-calling or abusive comments;
- **relational/social** – deliberate exclusion, manipulation of friendships, spreading rumours, ostracising someone or encouraging others to exclude them;
- **online/cyberbullying** – harmful messages, posts, images, videos, group chats, impersonation, exclusion, threats, harassment or deliberate humiliation using technology;
- **prejudice-related bullying** – connected with race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or another protected characteristic;
- **SEND-related bullying**;
- **sexist or misogynistic bullying**;
- **homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying**;
- **racist or faith-based bullying**;
- **sexual bullying or harassment**;
- **appearance-related bullying**;
- bullying relating to **family circumstances, care status or socioeconomic circumstances**;
- bullying because a student is perceived to be different;
- **coercive or controlling behaviour**;
- repeated intimidation or threats; and
- bullying through encouraging others to participate in harmful behaviour.

Several forms may occur simultaneously.

7. Online bullying

Online bullying is treated as seriously as face-to-face bullying.

It may include:

- abusive messages;
- group-chat harassment;
- deliberate exclusion from online groups;
- spreading rumours;
- sharing embarrassing images or recordings;
- creating or sharing altered images;
- impersonation;
- anonymous accounts;

- threats;
- discriminatory content;
- encouraging others to target a student;
- repeated unwanted contact;
- sharing footage of incidents;
- sexual harassment;
- non-consensual sharing of intimate images; and
- use of AI-generated or manipulated content to humiliate, sexualise or target another person.

The Academy may respond to online behaviour occurring outside school where there is a sufficient connection with the Academy, its students or community.

This is consistent with TSA's Behaviour and Relational Policy, which specifically covers cyberbullying, threats, harassment, discriminatory abuse, sexual harassment, intimate images, malicious communications, impersonation and sharing footage where there is an appropriate connection with Academy life. Behaviour and Relational Policy

8. Prejudice-related and discriminatory bullying

The Academy will challenge prejudice and discrimination.

This includes behaviour associated with:

- race;
- nationality or ethnicity;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- disability;
- SEND; and
- other actual or perceived differences.

A student does not need actually to possess the characteristic being targeted for the behaviour to be unacceptable.

Discriminatory language will not be dismissed as:

- “banter”,
  “a joke”,
  “just messing around”, or
  “what teenagers do”.

The Academy may address discriminatory behaviour even where it does not meet the definition of repeated bullying.

9. Sexual bullying and harmful sexual behaviour

Sexualised bullying, sexual harassment and sexual violence require particular care.

Concerns may constitute child-on-child abuse and will be managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.

A safeguarding response and a behavioural response may operate simultaneously.

Students will not be expected to resolve serious sexual harassment or sexual violence through mediation or restorative work.

Restorative approaches will only be considered where they are safe, appropriate and genuinely voluntary.

10. Prevention

The Academy's primary objective is not simply to respond effectively when bullying happens, but to reduce the likelihood of it occurring.

Prevention is part of the Academy's wider behaviour curriculum and culture.

This may include:

- explicitly teaching respectful behaviour;
- consistent staff modelling;
- teaching Academy values;
- Personal Development;
- assemblies;
- tutor activities;
- relationships and sex education;
- online-safety education;
- teaching about protected characteristics;
- teaching about healthy friendships and relationships;
- challenging discriminatory language;
- teaching appropriate online conduct;
- transition work;
- targeted intervention;
- supervision of identified locations;
- student voice;
- parent/carer communication; and
- staff training.

11. Staff responsibility

All staff have responsibility for preventing and challenging bullying.

Staff should:

- model respectful relationships;
- notice changes in behaviour or presentation;
- challenge inappropriate language and conduct;
- intervene where safe to do so;
- listen carefully when concerns are disclosed;
- avoid minimising concerns;
- record relevant information;
- pass safeguarding concerns to the DSL/DDSL;
- avoid promising confidentiality;
- avoid requiring students to confront one another;
- implement agreed safety/support measures; and
- remain professionally curious about patterns of behaviour.

Staff should not wait until behaviour has happened several times before acting simply because the formal definition of bullying commonly involves repetition.

Early intervention may prevent behaviour developing into bullying.

12. Reporting bullying

Students are encouraged to tell someone.

Reporting bullying is **not telling tales or snitching**.

Students may report concerns to:

- their tutor;
- Head of Year/pastoral staff;
- a teacher;
- Student Support Centre staff;
- a member of the safeguarding team;
- a senior leader; or
- another trusted member of staff.

A student may report:

- something happening to them;
- something happening to another student; or
- something they have witnessed online or offline.

Parents/carers should contact the Academy if they believe their child, or another child, may be experiencing bullying.

13. What happens when bullying is reported?

The Academy will adopt the following framework:
REPORT → SAFEGUARD → INVESTIGATE → RESPOND → REVIEW

- **Report**
  - The concern is listened to and appropriately recorded.
- **Safeguard**
  - Staff consider whether anyone is at immediate risk and whether safeguarding action is necessary.
  - Immediate measures may be introduced before an investigation is completed where reasonably necessary to protect students.
- **Investigate**
  - The Academy will establish the circumstances to the extent reasonably necessary.
- **Respond**
  - Once sufficient information is available, appropriate action will be determined.
- **Review**
  - The Academy will check whether the action taken has been effective and whether further intervention is required.

This is **not necessarily a linear process**. Safeguarding action, support and behavioural intervention may occur simultaneously.

14. Investigation, evidence and standard of proof

The Academy will investigate reported bullying to the extent reasonably necessary to establish what happened and determine an appropriate response.

Investigations will be conducted fairly, proportionately and with appropriate regard to safeguarding, the age and needs of the students involved and the seriousness of the allegation.

Evidence considered may include:

- accounts from the student reporting harm;
- accounts from the student alleged to have caused harm;
- witness accounts;
- staff observations;
- CCTV;
- messages, group chats and other electronic communications;
- screenshots;
- photographs and videos;
- social-media material;
- behaviour and pastoral records;
- safeguarding information;
- previous relevant incidents or patterns;
- information provided by parents/carers;
- information from other schools or settings;
- information from external agencies; and
- any other relevant and reasonably available evidence.

Students should ordinarily be given an appropriate opportunity to provide their account.

Standard of proof – balance of probabilities

When the Academy needs to determine whether alleged bullying or associated behaviour occurred, the standard applied will be the balance of probabilities. This means that, having considered the evidence reasonably available, the Academy will decide whether it is more likely than not that the behaviour occurred.

The Academy is not required to establish an allegation beyond reasonable doubt.
A finding may therefore reasonably be made even where:

- there is no CCTV footage;
- there are no independent witnesses;
- accounts differ;
- some evidence is circumstantial;
- an incident occurred online or outside the Academy;
- messages or other evidence have subsequently been deleted; or
- the student alleged to have caused harm denies the allegation.

Equally, an allegation will **not automatically be treated as established simply because it has been made**.

Where accounts conflict, the Academy will consider the available evidence as a whole. This may include:

- the consistency and detail of accounts;
- whether accounts are supported or contradicted by other evidence;
- contemporaneous reports or messages;
- witness evidence;
- CCTV or digital evidence;
- staff observations;
- relevant behaviour or safeguarding information;
- evidence of a developing or repeated pattern;
- the circumstances in which disclosures were made;
- whether evidence has changed during the investigation; and
- any other information reasonably considered relevant.

The Academy will make a reasonable assessment of the evidence rather than requiring any particular form of evidence before reaching a conclusion.

Serious allegations
The seriousness of an allegation does not change the standard of proof. The standard remains the balance of probabilities. However, where an allegation is particularly serious, the Academy will ordinarily undertake an appropriately careful consideration of the evidence and the potential consequences of any finding.

Possible findings
Following an investigation, the Academy may determine that:

1. **The allegation is substantiated**
   On the balance of probabilities, it is more likely than not that the alleged behaviour occurred.
2. **The allegation is not substantiated**
   There is insufficient evidence to conclude, on the balance of probabilities, that the alleged behaviour occurred.
3. **Some aspects are substantiated**
   The evidence supports some elements of the allegation but not others.
4. **The evidence establishes different or additional behaviour**
   The evidence may not establish bullying as originally described but may establish another breach of Academy expectations requiring intervention.

A finding that an allegation is not substantiated does not mean that the student deliberately made a false allegation. It means that the available evidence did not enable the Academy to make the relevant finding on the balance of probabilities.

Similarly, the Academy does not have to determine that behaviour meets the formal definition of bullying before taking action in relation to unkind, discriminatory, threatening, sexualised, disruptive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour.

Previous incidents and patterns
Because bullying commonly involves repeated behaviour, the Academy may consider previous relevant incidents when determining whether a pattern has developed. An individual incident which might appear relatively minor when viewed in isolation may take on greater significance when considered alongside other incidents. However, previous concerns will not automatically establish that a new allegation occurred. Each allegation will be considered on the evidence reasonably available.

15. Immediate protective measures

The Academy does not have to wait until an investigation is completed before taking reasonable steps to safeguard students.

Temporary measures might include:

- increased supervision;
- changes to seating;
- changes to movement arrangements;
- separate social arrangements;
- identified safe spaces;
- changes to arrival/departure;
- staff check-ins;

- increased monitoring;
- restrictions concerning contact;
- safeguarding separation; or
- other proportionate arrangements.

Such arrangements are protective rather than an indication that the allegation has already been determined. Where possible, arrangements should avoid unnecessarily restricting the education or normal school experience of the student who has reported harm.

16. Supporting a student who has experienced bullying

Support will be based upon individual need rather than a fixed programme.

It may include:

- an identified trusted adult;
- regular check-ins;
- pastoral support;
- safeguarding support;
- support with friendships;
- social-time support;
- changes to supervision;
- SEND support;
- wellbeing intervention;
- counselling or external support where appropriate;
- support with online safety;
- safety planning;
- academic support where learning has been affected; and
- support with attendance where bullying has contributed to absence.

The student's views will be considered.

Students should not be made responsible for stopping bullying themselves.

They will not be advised simply to ignore serious behaviour, appear unaffected or change who they are to avoid being targeted.

17. Students responsible for bullying behaviour

Students who engage in bullying will be held accountable for their behaviour.

The Academy will also seek to understand why the behaviour occurred and what intervention is necessary to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Responses may therefore combine:
Accountability + Education + Support + Repair

Intervention may include:

- explicit teaching/reteaching;
- parental involvement;
- pastoral intervention;
- mentoring;
- work concerning empathy and relationships;
- social and emotional intervention;
- SEND assessment/review;

- behaviour plan;
- increased monitoring;
- restorative work;
- detention;
- removal;
- SSC/internal isolation;
- loss of privileges;
- restrictions on activities;
- safeguarding intervention;
- external-agency involvement;
- suspension; or
- in the most serious or persistent circumstances, permanent exclusion.

18. Restorative approaches

Restorative work can be valuable but is **not automatically appropriate following bullying**.

The Academy may use:

- restorative conversations;
- structured reflection;
- repairing harm;
- facilitated discussion; or
- other restorative approaches.

However:

- the student who has experienced bullying will not be required to participate;
- restorative work will not be used where it would create further distress or risk;
- it will not replace safeguarding action;
- it will not replace an appropriate sanction simply because an apology has been made; and
- it will not be used to suggest equal responsibility where this is not supported by the evidence.

An apology may form part of repairing harm but does not automatically resolve an incident.

19. Bystanders and peer behaviour

Bullying can be strengthened by an audience.
Students are expected not to:

- encourage bullying;
- laugh at or celebrate harmful behaviour;
- knowingly spread harmful material;
- share humiliating posts, images or videos;
- join discriminatory or abusive group-chat activity; or
- deliberately assist another student to target someone.

Students who witness bullying are encouraged to:

- **Not join in.**
- **Not record and then share it on social media.**
- **Support the person affected were safe.**
- **Tell an adult.**

The Academy will consider the individual involvement of each student rather than assuming everyone present bears equal responsibility.

20. Parents and carers

The Academy seeks to work constructively with parents/carers.

Where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed of significant bullying concerns involving their child.

Parents/carers are encouraged to:

- listen calmly;
- reassure their child that reporting was appropriate;
- preserve online evidence where relevant;
- provide relevant information to the Academy;
- avoid encouraging retaliation;
- avoid confronting another child directly;
- avoid confronting the child's family directly;
- avoid using social media to pursue disputes;
- allow the Academy a reasonable opportunity to investigate; and
- inform the Academy if concerns continue.

There may be safeguarding circumstances where information cannot immediately be shared in full. The Academy will not normally disclose confidential information concerning sanctions, safeguarding arrangements or personal circumstances relating to another child.

21. SEND, disability and vulnerability

Students with SEND or disabilities can experience particular forms of bullying and may face additional barriers to reporting it.

Staff should consider:

- communication needs;
- social understanding;
- cognition;
- sensory needs;
- vulnerability;
- ability to recognise bullying;
- ability to communicate what happened;
- susceptibility to manipulation;
- reasonable adjustments; and
- whether apparently isolated incidents form a wider pattern.

Reasonable adjustments may be required during reporting, investigation and subsequent support. The Academy's wider behaviour policy already establishes that fairness does not necessarily mean identical treatment and requires consideration of SEND, disability, communication needs and reasonable adjustments. Behaviour and Relational Policy

22. Bullying as a safeguarding concern

Bullying can cause significant physical and emotional harm.

Where bullying raises a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the Academy's safeguarding procedures.

The DSL/DDSL may become involved where concerns include:

- significant emotional harm;
- self-harm or suicidal ideation;
- sexual harassment or sexual violence;

- exploitation;
- discriminatory abuse;
- serious violence;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- intimate images;
- threats;
- significant online abuse; or
- another indication that a child may be suffering or likely to suffer harm.

23. Behaviour outside school

The Academy may respond to bullying outside school where there is an appropriate connection with the Academy.

This may include bullying:

- travelling to or from school;
- on school or public transport;
- in the local community;
- while wearing Academy uniform;
- during educational visits;
- during work experience;
- at sporting events;
- through social media;
- through messaging platforms or group chats; or
- otherwise involving members of the Academy community.

The response will depend upon the connection with the Academy, impact, risk and individual circumstances.

24. Criminal behaviour and external agencies

Some bullying behaviour may also constitute a criminal offence.

This may include:

- assault;
- threats of serious violence;
- theft;
- repeated harassment or intimidation;
- hate crime;
- malicious communications;
- sexual offences; or
- sharing certain intimate images.

The Academy may contact police, children's social care or another appropriate agency.

Government guidance recognises that violence, theft, repeated harassment/intimidation and hate crimes may cross the threshold into criminal behaviour.

Police involvement does not automatically prevent the Academy from undertaking its own safeguarding or behaviour processes.

25. Recording

Reported bullying and the Academy's response will be appropriately recorded.

Depending upon the circumstances, records may include:

- the allegation;
- students involved;
- date/time/location;
- type of bullying;
- protected characteristic/prejudice element;
- online involvement;
- evidence considered;
- safeguarding considerations;
- findings;
- parental communication;
- sanctions;
- support;
- protective arrangements;
- restorative work;
- referrals; and
- follow-up/review.

Safeguarding information will be recorded on the appropriate safeguarding system.

26. Follow-up: has it stopped?

An incident should not automatically be considered resolved because an investigation has concluded or a sanction has been completed.

Where appropriate, the Academy will follow up with the student who reported bullying.
Follow-up may consider:

- Has the behaviour stopped?
- Does the student feel safe?
- Has anything moved online?
- Has retaliation occurred?
- Has the behaviour become more subtle?
- Are attendance or learning being affected?
- Is further support required?

Where concerns remain, the response will be reviewed.

27. Retaliation

Retaliation following a report of bullying is unacceptable.

This includes targeting someone because they:

- reported bullying;
- supported another student;
- acted as a witness;
- provided information during an investigation; or
- participated in a safeguarding process.

Retaliation may result in additional safeguarding and behavioural intervention.

28. Monitoring and identifying patterns

Bullying will be monitored as part of the Academy's wider behaviour and safeguarding quality assurance.

Leaders may analyse:

- number and type of incidents;
- repeated incidents;
- students repeatedly experiencing harm;
- students repeatedly responsible for harmful behaviour;
- locations;
- times of day;
- year groups;
- online trends;
- prejudice-related incidents;
- sexualised behaviour;
- SEND;
- disadvantaged students;
- protected characteristics;
- attendance;
- behaviour patterns; and
- student perceptions of safety.

This reflects the Academy's existing commitment to analyse bullying and prejudice-related incidents alongside patterns affecting SEND, disadvantaged and vulnerable students and students sharing protected characteristics. Behaviour and Relational Policy

Patterns will be used to inform:

- supervision;
- curriculum;
- assemblies;
- staff training;
- targeted intervention;
- student support;
- environmental changes; and
- Academy improvement planning.

29. Student voice

The Academy will seek students' views about:

- whether they feel safe;
- where bullying occurs;
- online behaviour;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- social times;
- whether they know how to report;
- whether students feel confident reporting; and
- whether they believe adults respond effectively.

Student voice will be considered alongside behaviour, safeguarding and pastoral information rather than used in isolation.

30. Staff training

Staff will receive appropriate information, induction and/or professional development concerning:

- recognising bullying;
- prejudice-related behaviour;
- SEND-related bullying;
- online bullying;
- sexual harassment;

- harmful sexual behaviour;
- responding to disclosures;
- recording;
- investigation;
- safeguarding thresholds;
- restorative practice;
- appropriate sanctions; and
- supporting affected students.

31. Measuring effectiveness

The success of this policy will not be judged simply by whether the number of recorded bullying incidents decreases.

A very low number of reports can indicate either:

- **a genuinely safe environment**
- or
- **a culture in which students do not report concerns.**

Leaders will therefore triangulate:

- recorded incidents;
- repeat incidents;
- safeguarding information;
- student voice;
- parent/carer feedback;
- staff feedback;
- attendance;
- behaviour information;
- location/time patterns;
- protected-characteristic data where appropriate; and
- evidence that interventions have stopped recurrence.

The Academy's aim is that students:

- **know what bullying is;**
- **know how to report it;**
- **trust adults to act;**
- **feel safe reporting it; and**
- **see that action leads to improvement.**

32. Complaints

Parents/carers who have concerns about how the Academy has responded to bullying should initially raise these with the Academy so that the matter can be reviewed.

Where concerns remain, the Academy/Trust Complaints Policy may be used.

A disagreement about the precise label applied to an incident does not prevent the Academy from taking appropriate safeguarding, pastoral or behavioural action.

33. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually and may be reviewed earlier where:

- legislation or statutory guidance changes;
- safeguarding guidance changes;
- monitoring identifies an emerging issue;
- student voice identifies a concern;

- significant incidents identify learning; or
- the Academy considers amendment necessary.

The Principal retains overall responsibility for the policy.