



George Eliot Academy

The best in everyone

Part of United Learning

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: Autumn Term 2026

Date of Next Review: Autumn Term 2027

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Academy's Behaviour, Safeguarding and Child Protection, and SEND Policies.

Georg Eliot Academy Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. Introduction

At George Eliot Academy, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where every member of our community feels valued, supported, and able to thrive. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment in which all members of the Academy community can flourish, achieve their potential and experience a strong sense of belonging.
- Support and complement the Academy's Behaviour Policy.
- Ensure all members of the Academy community understand that bullying is unacceptable, the actions that may be taken when it occurs, and the role everyone plays in preventing it.
- Promote an upstanding culture where individuals take responsibility for supporting others and challenging inappropriate behaviour.
- Uphold and promote the Academy's core value of kindness.
- Take a proactive approach to preventing bullying through education, awareness, and early intervention.
- Increase understanding of what constitutes bullying, the different forms it can take, and the strategies used to prevent and address it.
- Respond effectively and consistently to incidents of bullying when they occur.
- Monitor, review, and evaluate bullying-related data to inform staff training, pupil education, and ongoing improvement.

At George Eliot Academy, we believe that everyone has a responsibility to contribute to a culture where bullying is challenged, concerns are reported, and all members of our community are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.

2. What is Bullying?

The Department for Education defines bullying as:

"Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally."

Bullying is typically characterised by three key features:

- Intentional behaviour designed to cause harm, distress, or intimidation.
- Repeated behaviour over time.
- An imbalance of power between those involved.

Bullying can take many forms and may occur face-to-face or online.

It is important to recognise that not all incidents between pupils constitute bullying. Single incidents, disagreements, friendship difficulties, and conflict between peers may require intervention and support but may not meet the definition of bullying. Staff will consider the circumstances of each incident carefully when determining an appropriate response.

3. Types of Bullying

Bullying can include, but is not limited to:

Verbal Bullying

- Name-calling
- Insults and taunts
- Threats
- Offensive comments
- Deliberate humiliation

Physical Bullying

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Damaging property
- Stealing or hiding belongings

Social and Relational Bullying

- Deliberately excluding others
- Spreading rumours
- Gossiping
- Manipulating friendships
- Public humiliation

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying behaviour carried out through technology and digital communication, including:

- Social media platforms
- Messaging services
- Email
- Online gaming platforms

- Websites and applications
- Artificial intelligence (AI) tools and image manipulation software

Cyberbullying can occur at any time, reach a wider audience, and have a significant impact on a pupil's wellbeing.

Prejudice-Based Bullying

George Eliot Academy recognises that prejudice-based harm can significantly affect a pupil's welfare, wellbeing, and sense of safety.

Bullying motivated by prejudice or discrimination may relate to:

- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Disability
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Looked-after or adopted status
- Any other protected characteristic

Such incidents will be taken seriously and considered within the Academy's safeguarding response where appropriate.

4. Bullying and Safeguarding

George Eliot Academy recognises that bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and may indicate wider safeguarding concerns.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse can occur both inside and outside of school and may take place online as well as face-to-face. It may include:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Prejudice-based harm
- Physical abuse
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual violence
- Sharing of nude or semi-nude images
- Coercive and controlling behaviour

- Hazing or initiation activities

Any incident that raises safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the Academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

The Academy maintains a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Any report will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately, and responded to in line with safeguarding procedures. Support will be provided to all pupils affected.

The Academy also recognises emerging risks linked to technology, including AI-generated content, manipulated images, deepfakes and other forms of online abuse.

5. Building an Upstanding Community

At George Eliot Academy, we are committed to building an upstanding community where everyone takes responsibility for creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

Upstander

An upstander is someone who recognises when something is wrong and takes action to make it right.

An upstander:

- Speaks out appropriately when behaviour is unacceptable.
- Supports others.
- Reports concerns to a trusted adult.

Bystander

A bystander is someone who witnesses or becomes aware of bullying behaviour but takes no action to challenge or report it.

Remaining silent can allow bullying to continue. Every member of the Academy community has a responsibility to report concerns and support others.

Banter

At George Eliot Academy, we recognise that behaviour described as "banter" can sometimes cause genuine harm.

Pupils are taught to recognise when comments, jokes or behaviour have crossed the line and become hurtful, intimidating or bullying in nature. Behaviour that causes distress or humiliation will not be dismissed simply as banter.

6. Reporting Concerns and Accessing Support

If a pupil is experiencing bullying, witnessing bullying or concerned about another pupil, they are encouraged to report it as soon as possible.

Pupils can speak to:

- Any trusted member of staff
- Their Form Tutor
- Their Head of Year
- Their Director of Key Stage
- A member of the Safeguarding Team
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team

Support is available throughout the school day, including tutor time and breaktimes.

Anti-Bullying Support Network

In addition to support available from all staff, pupils can access advice and guidance from:

- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- SENDCO
- Safeguarding Officer
- School Counsellor

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are pupil leaders from across all year groups who work alongside the Academy's Anti-Bullying Lead to promote kindness, inclusion, and respect.

They support awareness campaigns, lead anti-bullying initiatives, encourage pupils to be upstanders and provide peer support through regular drop-in sessions.

Other Ways to Access Support

Concern Boxes

Concern boxes are located throughout the Academy and provide pupils with an additional way to report worries or concerns. These are regularly checked and concerns acted upon.

Email

All pupils have access to school email and can contact members of staff directly.

School Website

Contact email details for the school counsellor are available through the Academy website.

7. Online Safety

The Academy recognises that bullying can occur both online and offline.

Online safety forms an integral part of the Academy's safeguarding approach. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online, recognise harmful behaviour, report concerns, and use technology responsibly.

Incidents involving cyberbullying, AI-generated content, manipulated images, online harassment or other digital harms will be addressed in line with this policy and the Academy's safeguarding procedures.

The Academy operates a no-phone policy. Pupils' phones must be switched off and stored in their bags throughout the school day.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils

All pupils are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness, dignity and respect.
- Report concerns about bullying promptly.
- Support peers who may be experiencing bullying.
- Be upstanders rather than bystanders.
- Contribute positively to the Academy community.

Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Promote a culture where bullying is not tolerated.
- Model positive relationships and behaviour.
- Maintain an "it could happen here" approach to safeguarding.
- Recognise and respond appropriately to concerns.
- Report concerns in line with Academy procedures.
- Follow safeguarding procedures where appropriate.
- Participate in relevant training and professional development.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Report concerns promptly.
- Work in partnership with the Academy.
- Support their child in understanding bullying and respectful relationships.
- Encourage their child to seek help when needed.
- Maintain open communication with school staff.

Senior Leadership Team and Governors

Senior leaders and governors will:

- Monitor bullying trends and incidents.
- Ensure effective anti-bullying practice across the Academy.
- Review the policy annually.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training.
- Promote anti-bullying education through the character curriculum.
- Monitor bullying-related data and identify areas for improvement.

9. Vulnerable Pupils

The Academy recognises that some pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying than others.

This may include pupils with:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Medical conditions
- Caring responsibilities
- Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- Additional vulnerabilities identified through safeguarding processes

The Academy will ensure that support and reporting mechanisms are accessible to all pupils and that vulnerable pupils receive appropriate support.

10. Signs of Bullying

Possible indicators that a pupil may be experiencing bullying include:

- Reluctance to attend school
- Changes in attendance or punctuality
- Anxiety or emotional distress
- Fear of travelling to or from school
- Withdrawal from friendship groups or activities
- Changes in behaviour or attitude
- Loss of confidence
- Difficulties engaging in learning
- Physical injuries

- Unexplained headaches or stomach aches
- Sleep difficulties or nightmares
- Changes in appearance or presentation
- Risk-taking behaviour or substance misuse

Any concerns should be reported to a member of staff.

11. Responding to Bullying

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated fairly.

Investigation

The Academy will:

- Listen to all parties involved.
- Establish the facts.
- Consider the context and nature of the behaviour.
- Determine whether the behaviour meets the definition of bullying.
- Communicate appropriately with parents and carers where necessary.

Recording

All concerns, actions taken, decisions made and outcomes will be recorded in accordance with the Academy's safeguarding and recording procedures.

Confirmed incidents of bullying will be recorded using the Academy's established systems, including CPOMS where appropriate.

Support and Intervention

Responses may include:

- Restorative conversations
- Educational interventions
- Conflict resolution
- Mediation
- Mentoring
- Counselling
- Behaviour support programmes
- Parental meetings
- External agency involvement

The Academy works closely with a range of external agencies and services to provide support where required.

Sanctions

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

Where bullying is established, sanctions will be applied in line with the Behaviour Policy and may include suspension or, in the most serious cases, permanent exclusion.

12. Bullying and the Law

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, some bullying behaviour may constitute criminal conduct, including:

- Harassment
- Hate crime
- Assault
- Threatening behaviour
- Sexual offences
- Malicious communications

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the matter will be treated as a safeguarding concern and referred in accordance with statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

The Academy will work closely with external agencies where appropriate to safeguard pupils and address serious incidents.

13. Monitoring and Review

The Academy will regularly monitor and evaluate bullying-related information to identify trends, inform staff training, and strengthen preventative practice.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance or Academy practice require it.

Through education, early intervention, effective support and a shared commitment to kindness, George Eliot Academy seeks to ensure that all pupils feel safe, respected, and able to thrive.

Annex A: External Support and Resources

General Anti-Bullying Support

Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)

The Anti-Bullying Alliance brings together organisations and individuals committed to preventing bullying and creating safer environments for children and young people. It provides guidance, resources, staff training, and support on all aspects of bullying prevention.

Website: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

Kidscape

Kidscape is a national charity dedicated to preventing bullying and promoting child protection. It provides practical advice and support for children, young people, parents, carers, and schools.

Website: <https://www.kidscape.org.uk>

Restorative Justice Council

Provides guidance and resources to support restorative approaches and conflict resolution.

Website: <https://restorativejustice.org.uk>

Wellbeing and Mental Health Support

Childline

Free, confidential support for children and young people.

Website: <https://www.childline.org.uk>

NSPCC

National charity providing safeguarding advice and support for children, families, and professionals.

Website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

YoungMinds

Mental health information and support for young people, parents, and professionals.

Website: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Family Lives

Advice and support for families, including bullying-related concerns.

Website: <https://www.familylives.org.uk>

MindEd

Free educational resources focused on children and young people's mental health.

Website: <https://www.minded.org.uk>

Victim Support

Practical and emotional support for victims of crime and abuse.

Website: <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk>

Young Carers

Support for young people with caring responsibilities.

Website: <https://carers.org/young-carers>

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Changing Faces

Support for people with visible differences and disfigurements.

Website: <https://www.changingfaces.org.uk>

Mencap

Information, support, and advocacy for people with learning disabilities and their families.

Website: <https://www.mencap.org.uk>

SEND Code of Practice

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Online Safety and Cyberbullying

Childnet

Website: <https://www.childnet.com>

Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)

Website: <https://www.iwf.org.uk>

Thinkuknow (NCA CEOP)

Website: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

UK Safer Internet Centre

Website: <https://saferinternet.org.uk>

Department for Education: Preventing and Tackling Bullying

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Race, Faith and Prejudice-Based Harm

Anne Frank Trust UK

Website: <https://www.annefrank.org.uk>

Kick It Out

Website: <https://www.kickitout.org>

True Vision (Police Reporting Service)

Website: <https://www.report-it.org.uk>

Stop Hate UK

Website: <https://www.stophateuk.org>

Educate Against Hate

Website: <https://www.educateagainsthate.com>

Show Racism the Red Card

Website: <https://www.theredcard.org>

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**EACH (Educational Action Challenging Homophobia)**

Website: <https://each.education>

The Proud Trust

Website: <https://www.theproudtrust.org>

Stonewall

Website: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk>

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence**End Violence Against Women Coalition (EVAW)**

Website: <https://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk>

Disrespect Nobody

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disrespect-nobody-campaign>

Anti-Bullying Alliance: Sexual Bullying Resources

Website: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

Annex B: Statutory Guidance and Reference Documents

This policy has been informed by the following legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (Department for Education, September 2026). [\[gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current version). [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#), [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (Department for Education). [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (Department for Education)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (Department for Education)
- The Equality Act 2010
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years
- Relevant safeguarding guidance relating to child-on-child abuse, online safety, sexual harassment, sexual violence and AI-enabled harms