

Askern Moss Road Infant Academy



Anti-Bullying Policy

VERSION	AUTHOR	SUMMARY OF CHANGES	DATE PUBLISHED	DATE OF REVIEW
1.0	CAT	NEW POLICY	Nov 2022	Nov 2024
1.1	CAT	Joint policy Sections 8 & 11- Made more relevant to school context. Section 9- Added reference to how school reports bullying.	Nov 2024	Nov 2026
1.2	SLa	Separated and updated previous policy	Sept 2026	Sept 2028

Contents

1. Statement of intent	3
2. Legal framework.....	3
3. Definitions	3
4. Types of bullying	4
5. Roles and responsibilities	5
6. Statutory implications.....	6
7. Prevention	7
8. Signs of bullying	7
9. Staff principles	8
10. Child-on-child abuse	8
11. Cyberbullying	9
12. Procedures	11
13. Sanctions	11
14. Support	12
15. Follow-up support	12
16. Bullying outside of school	13
17. Record keeping.....	13
18. Monitoring and review	13

1. Statement of intent

Askern Moss Road Infant Academy is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive and nurturing environment in which every pupil can learn, develop and thrive. Bullying is never acceptable and will always be challenged and addressed.

The academy recognises that very young children are still developing the language, self-regulation, social understanding and relationship skills needed to manage friendships and conflict. Staff will therefore distinguish carefully between bullying, one-off unkind behaviour, conflict, relational difficulties and behaviour arising from additional needs, while ensuring that all harmful or unkind behaviour is taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

The academy promotes kindness, respect, inclusion, equality and positive relationships through its curriculum, routines, assemblies, wider opportunities and day-to-day interactions. Pupils are taught, in an age-appropriate way, how to recognise behaviour that is unkind or unsafe, how to seek help and how to support others.

Under section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, maintained schools and academies are expected to have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying. These expectations are reflected in the academy's Behaviour Policy and this Anti-Bullying Policy.

The academy will work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors and external agencies where appropriate to prevent bullying, respond promptly to concerns and reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

2. Legal and policy framework

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and current national guidance, including:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997, where relevant
- DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- DfE, Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (2017), retained within current DfE guidance
- DfE, Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff
- DfE, Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools
- DfE statutory guidance relating to Relationships Education and Health Education
- UKCIS, Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (2024), where relevant

This policy operates in conjunction with the academy's:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Equality information and objectives

3. Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. Bullying commonly involves an imbalance of power, whether actual or perceived.

When deciding whether behaviour constitutes bullying, staff will consider:

- repetition or a pattern of behaviour over time;
- whether there is an intention to hurt, frighten, humiliate, exclude or control;
- whether the behaviour is targeted at a particular pupil or group;
- whether there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power, status, confidence, social influence or vulnerability;
- the impact on the pupil experiencing the behaviour; and
- the age, developmental stage, communication needs and additional needs of the pupils involved.

A one-off incident would not ordinarily meet the definition of bullying. However, a single incident may still be serious, harmful, discriminatory or a safeguarding concern and will be addressed through the academy's behaviour and/or safeguarding procedures. A single online incident may also have a wide or continuing impact because it can be shared, repeated or viewed by others.

Staff will avoid labelling a child as a 'bully'. The academy will normally refer to a 'pupil who has experienced bullying' and a 'pupil displaying bullying behaviour', recognising that behaviour can change and that both pupils may require support.

4. Forms of bullying

Bullying may be verbal, physical, emotional/relational or online. It may include:

- name-calling, teasing, threats, intimidation or repeated unkind comments;
- hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or damaging belongings, or other unwanted physical behaviour;
- deliberate and repeated exclusion, isolation, spreading rumours or manipulating friendships;
- online messages, images, comments or activity intended to upset, embarrass, exclude or intimidate;
- prejudice-related or discriminatory bullying connected to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief;
- bullying related to disability, SEND, health needs or perceived difference;
- sexist or sexualised bullying or harassment;
- homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying, including bullying based on actual or perceived identity or non-conformity with gender stereotypes;
- bullying related to family circumstances, caring responsibilities, adoption, looked-after status or home life;
- bullying related to appearance or socioeconomic circumstances.

Some bullying may be prejudice-related and may engage the Equality Act 2010. Some behaviour may also constitute child-on-child abuse or another safeguarding concern. In these circumstances the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the direction of the DSL will take precedence.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

- provides strategic oversight of the academy's approach to preventing and responding to bullying;
- ensures that the policy supports equality, safeguarding and the welfare of pupils;
- receives appropriate information about patterns and trends in bullying, without compromising individual pupils' confidentiality;
- provides challenge and assurance that identified issues lead to appropriate action;
- ensures safeguarding link-governor arrangements support scrutiny of relevant safeguarding practice.

The Headteacher

- ensures this policy is implemented consistently and reviewed in light of legislation, guidance, academy experience and emerging need;
- ensures staff understand how to recognise, record, report and respond to bullying;

- ensures bullying information is reviewed at least termly to identify patterns, groups or locations of concern and evaluate the impact of actions taken;
- ensures appropriate staff training and communication with parents and carers;
- ensures serious or safeguarding-related incidents are escalated appropriately.

The DSL and safeguarding team

- advise on incidents that may constitute child-on-child abuse or otherwise meet safeguarding thresholds;
- ensure safeguarding concerns are recorded and managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- consider vulnerability, contextual factors and whether early help, children's social care, police or other agency involvement is required;
- support analysis of safeguarding and bullying information to identify patterns or emerging risks.

Teachers and other staff

- model respectful and inclusive behaviour;
- remain alert to changes in friendships, behaviour, attendance, wellbeing and engagement;
- listen carefully to pupils and take concerns seriously;
- challenge unkind, discriminatory, harmful and bullying behaviour;
- record and report concerns in accordance with academy procedures;
- provide and contribute to follow-up support.

Parents and carers

- raise concerns promptly with the academy and share relevant information;
- support the academy's expectations for respectful behaviour, including online;
- avoid confronting other children or families directly about alleged bullying;
- work constructively with the academy while concerns are investigated and followed up.

Pupils

In developmentally appropriate ways, pupils are encouraged to:

- tell a trusted adult if they are worried, hurt, frightened or repeatedly treated unkindly;
- tell an adult if they see someone else being treated unkindly or unsafely;
- use respectful language and behaviour;
- seek adult help rather than retaliating;
- understand that reporting a concern is the right thing to do.

6. Equality, safeguarding and SEND

The academy will take particular care to identify and respond to bullying that is discriminatory or prejudice-related. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the academy will work to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying and may also experience additional barriers to recognising, describing or reporting what has happened. Communication difficulties, differences in social understanding or regulation needs may affect how an incident is experienced or communicated. Staff will make reasonable adjustments to reporting, investigation and support arrangements so that pupils can participate meaningfully.

Staff will use professional curiosity and a child-centred approach. Changes in behaviour, emotional regulation, attendance, engagement, sleepiness, toileting, eating, play or relationships may indicate that a young child is worried or distressed, but will not be assumed to prove bullying. Concerns will be explored sensitively.

Where bullying is linked to abuse, neglect, exploitation, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, online harm or risk of significant harm, staff must follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and report the concern to the DSL or deputy without delay.

7. Prevention

The academy uses a whole-school preventative approach. This includes:

- clear, consistently taught expectations for behaviour and relationships;
- an age-appropriate Relationships and Health Education/PSHE curriculum that develops empathy, respect, kindness, consent, personal boundaries, friendship skills and help-seeking;
- teaching pupils about difference, equality and protected characteristics in an age-appropriate way;
- teaching online safety and respectful use of technology;
- regular opportunities for pupils to identify trusted adults and practise how to ask for help;
- staff supervision and active awareness of areas, times or activities where relational difficulties may arise;
- planned support for pupils who need additional help with communication, emotional regulation, friendships or social interaction;
- pupil voice to understand pupils' experiences of safety, relationships and belonging;
- communication with parents and carers about behaviour, relationships and online safety where appropriate;
- staff training so that bullying, prejudice-related incidents and safeguarding concerns are recognised and responded to consistently.

8. Recognising possible bullying

Possible indicators may include a pupil:

- becoming reluctant or distressed about attending school or particular activities;
- showing changes in attendance or punctuality;
- becoming anxious, withdrawn, tearful, unusually quiet or lacking confidence;
- showing changes in behaviour, emotional regulation or relationships;
- complaining repeatedly of feeling unwell without an identified cause;
- showing reduced engagement in learning or play;
- having unexplained injuries or damaged/missing belongings;
- becoming unusually fearful of particular pupils, places or routines;
- showing changes in eating, toileting or other age-related behaviours;
- showing distress connected to use of a device, game or online interaction.

These indicators do not in themselves establish that bullying has occurred. Staff will consider the whole child and investigate sensitively, including whether there may be safeguarding, SEND, SEMH, family or other factors requiring support.

9. Staff principles and responding to concerns

- All reports and observations of possible bullying will be taken seriously.
- Staff will respond calmly, promptly and proportionately.
- Unkind or harmful behaviour will be challenged even when it does not meet the definition of bullying.
- Staff will listen to pupils in a way suited to their age, communication and developmental needs.
- Staff will avoid leading questions, premature conclusions and language that labels children.
- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis. Confidentiality cannot be promised where safeguarding information needs to be shared.
- Bullying concerns and confirmed incidents will be recorded on CPOMS in accordance with academy procedures.
- Any safeguarding concern will be reported immediately to the DSL or deputy.
- Staff will follow up concerns to check that behaviour has stopped and that pupils feel safe.

10. Child-on-child abuse and harmful behaviour

The academy recognises that children can abuse other children and that this can happen inside or outside school and online. The academy does not dismiss harmful behaviour as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or otherwise inevitable.

In an infant setting, harmful behaviour may present in developmentally different ways. Staff will consider the child's age and stage, the nature and context of the behaviour, any imbalance of power, coercion, repetition, impact, additional needs and whether the behaviour is developmentally expected, problematic, harmful or abusive.

Examples requiring careful consideration may include:

- repeated or coercive physical aggression;
- sexualised language or behaviour that is inappropriate for the child's age or stage;
- unwanted touching or behaviour involving private parts;
- coercion, threats, humiliation or controlling behaviour;
- prejudice-related abuse;
- harmful online behaviour or inappropriate sharing of images;
- behaviour that causes another child to feel unsafe or frightened.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE 2026. The DSL will determine the appropriate safeguarding response and whether external agencies should be involved.

11. Online bullying

Online bullying is bullying that takes place through digital technology. Although pupils at an infant academy may have limited independent access to social media or messaging services, children may use games, tablets, shared devices, video platforms, messaging functions or other online services at home.

Online bullying may include:

- unkind, threatening or excluding messages or comments;
- using online games or group functions to repeatedly exclude or upset another child;
- sharing an embarrassing or inappropriate image or recording;
- impersonating another person or using another person's account;
- encouraging others to join in with harmful online behaviour.

Online incidents can have a continuing impact because material may be copied, forwarded or viewed by others. The academy will consider the impact and safeguarding implications even where the original activity occurred outside school.

Pupils and parents should preserve relevant evidence where it is safe and appropriate to do so and report concerns to the academy. Staff must not ask pupils to forward sexual or indecent imagery. Any concern involving nude or semi-nude imagery will be managed by the DSL in accordance with current safeguarding guidance.

Any search, examination or confiscation of a pupil's device will be undertaken only in accordance with the academy's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy and current DfE guidance. Staff will not rely on a general power to search through a child's device.

12. Reporting and investigation procedures

Concerns may be raised by a pupil, parent/carer, member of staff or another person, or may arise from staff observation. The academy will adapt the process to the age and communication needs of the pupils involved.

1. Ensure immediate safety. If a pupil is injured, distressed or at risk, staff will provide appropriate first aid, reassurance and safeguarding action.
2. Listen and record. The member of staff will listen carefully, avoid promising confidentiality and make a factual record.
3. Report. Concerns will be passed to the appropriate senior member of staff and recorded on CPOMS. Safeguarding concerns will be referred to the DSL/deputy without delay.

4. Establish the facts. Accounts will normally be obtained separately and sensitively from the pupils involved and, where appropriate, witnesses. Staff will avoid leading questions and premature assumptions.
5. Consider context and needs. Staff will consider repetition, intent, impact, power imbalance, SEND, communication, age and developmental stage, protected characteristics, previous incidents and any safeguarding factors.
6. Determine the response. Leaders will decide whether the behaviour meets the academy's definition of bullying and what behaviour, safeguarding, support and parental actions are required.
7. Communicate appropriately. Parents/carers of pupils directly involved will normally be informed, subject to safeguarding considerations and the need to protect confidential information about other children.
8. Follow up. The academy will check whether the behaviour has stopped, whether the pupil feels safe and whether further intervention is required.

The academy will not disclose confidential information about another pupil, including details of sanctions, support needs or personal circumstances, beyond what it is lawful and appropriate to share.

13. Responses, consequences and restorative approaches

Where bullying is established, the academy will respond in accordance with the Behaviour Policy. Responses will be proportionate, age-appropriate and informed by the circumstances and needs of the pupils involved.

Responses may include:

- clear explanation of why the behaviour is unacceptable and the impact it has had;
- appropriate consequences in line with the Behaviour Policy;
- increased supervision or changes to routines where necessary to secure safety;
- teaching or intervention relating to empathy, emotional regulation, social communication or relationships;
- work with parents/carers;
- restorative work, only where appropriate and safe;
- pastoral, SEND or SEMH support;
- safeguarding action or external agency involvement where thresholds are met.

An apology may form part of restorative work but will not be forced, and a pupil who has experienced bullying will not be required to meet face-to-face with the pupil displaying bullying behaviour. Reconciliation is not a prerequisite for the academy to consider an incident resolved.

Suspension or permanent exclusion may be considered for serious or persistent behaviour in accordance with the academy's Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy and statutory guidance. Disciplinary action and supportive intervention may take place alongside one another.

14. Support for pupils

Pupils who have experienced bullying

- reassurance that reporting was the right thing to do;
- access to a trusted adult and regular check-ins;
- age-appropriate emotional and pastoral support;
- reasonable adjustments where SEND or communication needs affect participation or recovery;
- support to rebuild confidence, friendships and engagement;

- safety planning or supervision changes where needed;
- liaison with parents/carers and external services where appropriate.

Pupils displaying bullying behaviour

- clear boundaries and appropriate consequences;
- help to understand the impact of their behaviour;
- support to develop empathy, regulation, communication and relationship skills;
- consideration of unmet SEND, SEMH, safeguarding or contextual needs;
- work with parents/carers and, where appropriate, external services;
- ongoing monitoring to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Support for a pupil displaying bullying behaviour does not minimise the harm experienced by another pupil. The academy will seek both to protect pupils from harm and to help children develop safer, more positive behaviour.

15. Follow-up and monitoring

Following a confirmed incident, staff will monitor the wellbeing and behaviour of the pupils involved. The frequency and duration of follow-up will reflect the seriousness and persistence of the concern.

- A trusted adult will check that the pupil who experienced bullying feels safe and that the behaviour has stopped.
- Staff will monitor relevant lessons, playtimes, transitions and peer relationships.
- Parents/carers will receive appropriate follow-up where necessary.
- Further incidents will be linked to previous records so that patterns are visible.
- Support and consequences will be reviewed if they are not having the intended impact.

16. Bullying outside school

Bullying may occur outside the school premises, including on journeys to and from school, in the local community or online. Where behaviour outside school is reported to staff, the academy will consider the impact on pupils' safety, welfare and education and will respond in accordance with its legal powers, Behaviour Policy and safeguarding procedures.

The headteacher may regulate pupils' conduct in circumstances permitted by law. Where an incident may constitute a criminal offence, pose a serious threat or meet a safeguarding threshold, the DSL/headteacher will consider referral to the police, children's social care or other relevant agencies.

17. Record keeping, analysis and strategic oversight

The academy will maintain clear, accurate and timely records of reported and confirmed bullying. Bullying concerns and incidents will be recorded on CPOMS using the academy's agreed categories and procedures.

Records should include, as appropriate:

- a factual summary of the concern or incident;
- the pupils involved and relevant witnesses;
- the type or apparent motivation of the behaviour, including whether it is prejudice-related;
- actions taken, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions;
- parent/carer communication;
- safeguarding referrals or consultation where applicable;
- support and consequences provided;
- follow-up and outcome.

The headteacher and DSL will review bullying information at least termly to identify patterns, recurrence, vulnerable groups, locations, times, types of behaviour and any links with safeguarding, attendance, SEND or wider school culture. Leaders will use this analysis to

evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and response arrangements and to determine further action.

The governing board will receive proportionate information about bullying patterns, trends, actions and impact as part of its strategic oversight. Reporting will preserve individual pupils' confidentiality.

Where analysis identifies a concern, leaders will take action and subsequently evaluate whether that action has improved pupils' safety and experience. This may include changes to supervision, curriculum content, staff training, targeted intervention, parental communication or wider safeguarding arrangements.

18. Monitoring and review

The headteacher and DSL will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The policy will be formally reviewed at least every two years and sooner where changes to legislation or statutory guidance, safeguarding learning, academy experience or identified need make this necessary.

The next scheduled review is September 2028. Material changes will be communicated to staff and other relevant stakeholders.