Fair Ways Schools
Anti-Bullying Policy

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Fair Ways Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision
To build a community that changes lives, makes a difference to society and leaves a legacy greater than us and our contributions.

Our mission
To grow a compassionate, resilient, and trauma-informed community, that embraces learning, so that we improve the lives and outcomes of individuals.

Our values
Our values form the heart of the work we do, defined by Fair Ways people, for Fair Ways people. These are the values by which we operate, by which we are governed, and to which we are held accountable.

We therefore expect every individual within Fair Ways to *play their part*:

P ROFESSIONAL	**A CCEPTING**	**R EFLECTIVE**	**T RANSPARENT**
· We do what we say we will. · We approach challenges with optimism and enthusiasm. · We don't judge, we notice. · We put the needs of the service before our own personal gains.	· We don't give up on people. · We value all individuals and are willing to challenge them. · We embrace each other's differences as much as our similarities. · We accept responsibility for our actions.	· We give feedback, we invite feedback, we listen to feedback. · We look inward before we look outward. · We learn as much from our mistakes as from our successes. · We listen to each other, learn from each other and grow together.	· We are always willing to explain why. · We have the courage to be open and honest. · We earn trust through our transparency. · We live by our values even when no-one is watching.

1. Purpose and scope

1.1 Fair Ways Education is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful and trauma-informed environment in which every student can learn and participate free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. Every member of the school community has a responsibility to prevent bullying, challenge harmful behaviour and respond promptly to concerns.

1.2 This policy applies to bullying involving students and to bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour affecting staff where relevant. It should be read alongside the safeguarding, behaviour, child protection, online safety, complaints, staff code of conduct and equality arrangements.

1.3 The policy applies to behaviour in school, on school-related activities and journeys, and to behaviour outside school or online where the school has a lawful and reasonable basis to act, including where behaviour has an impact on the school community.

2. Definition of bullying

2.1 Fair Ways Education adopts the Department for Education's 2026 approach: bullying is unwanted behaviour that can be repeated, or can be a one-off incident causing harm, intimidation or offence. Bullying may involve a power imbalance, although a power imbalance is not required in every case. It can be physical, psychological, emotional, threatening, harassing or exclusionary and may occur face-to-face or online.

2.2 A single serious incident may therefore be managed as bullying where its nature and impact meet the definition, even where there is no established pattern of repetition. Where behaviour does not meet the definition of bullying, it will still be addressed under the school's behaviour, safeguarding or other relevant procedures.

2.3 Bullying can include, but is not limited to:

- physical aggression, assault, damaging or taking belongings, or threatening violence;
- name-calling, insults, intimidation, humiliation, threats or abusive language;
- deliberate exclusion, isolation, social manipulation or spreading rumours;

- online bullying, including harmful posts, messages, group exclusion, impersonation, sharing material without consent, or repeated unwanted contact;
- behaviour connected to a protected characteristic, including racist, faith-related, disability-related, sex-based, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying;
- sexual harassment, sexist behaviour or other harmful sexual behaviour. Such incidents must also be considered under safeguarding procedures;
- bullying connected to appearance, family circumstances, care experience, SEND, health, social or economic circumstances, or any other actual or perceived difference; and
- bullying of staff, including online bullying or harassment by students, parents/carers or others, which will be managed through the appropriate school/employer procedures.

3. Terminology and person-centered language

3.1 Fair Ways Education uses language that describes behaviour without defining a child by it. The following terminology should normally be used in records and conversations:

Avoid / use cautiously	Preferred terminology
victim	student/child experiencing bullying; use 'victim' where required by a legal, safeguarding or source context
bully	student/child displaying bullying behaviour
perpetrator	student/child alleged to be displaying bullying behaviour; where established, student/child responsible for the behaviour
cyberbullying / e-safety	online bullying / online safety (cyberbullying may be used where useful for clarity)
homophobia / transphobia as a label for a person	homophobic or transphobic bullying/harassment or discriminatory behaviour
anti-social traits	harmful, unsafe, concerning or unacceptable behaviour, as appropriate
punish the bully	respond proportionately to the behaviour, support affected students and address underlying needs

4. Equality, inclusion and protected characteristics

4.1 Bullying and harassment related to a protected characteristic will be taken particularly seriously. The Equality Act 2010 protects the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

4.2 The school will not discriminate unlawfully and will take reasonable steps, where required, to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Staff should consider whether an incident indicates wider equality or safeguarding concern and record the relevant characteristic where known and appropriate.

4.3 Teaching and pastoral provision should promote equality, respect and healthy relationships in accordance with the statutory RSHE guidance in force from 1 September 2026.

5. Aims

The aims include:

- create a culture in which bullying, harassment and discrimination are not normalised, ignored or minimised;
- ensure students feel safe to report concerns and know that reports will be taken seriously and acted upon;
- provide accessible reporting routes and trusted adults, including for students who may find disclosure difficult;
- identify concerns early and act promptly, proportionately and consistently;
- protect the physical and emotional safety of students and staff;
- work with parents/carers and, where appropriate, external agencies to reduce risk and support all affected people;
- provide appropriate education through RSHE, PSHE, tutor time, assemblies and other curriculum opportunities on respectful relationships, equality, online safety and seeking help;
- use incident data to identify patterns, hotspots, repeat concerns and groups who may be disproportionately affected; and

- review this policy and practice against current legislation and statutory/non-statutory guidance.

6. Prevention

Actions for prevention include:

- A positive whole-school culture will be maintained through clear expectations, school values, consistent adult responses and modelling of respectful behaviour.
- Staff will receive safeguarding and behaviour training sufficient to recognise bullying, harassment, discrimination, online harms and signs of distress.
- Students will be taught how to recognise harmful behaviour, report concerns, support peers safely and use digital technology responsibly.
- The school will use reporting , environmental checks, student voice and incident data to identify locations, times, activities or online contexts where additional controls may be required.
- Parents/carers will be given accessible information about reporting concerns and the school's expectations for respectful communication.
- Online safety arrangements, including filtering and monitoring, will be maintained in line with current DfE expectations and the school's safeguarding arrangements.

7. Recognising impact and indicators

7.1 Possible indicators include, but are not limited to:

- changes in attendance, punctuality, engagement or attainment;
- changes in friendships or social withdrawal;
- anxiety, distress, low confidence, sleep or somatic complaints;
- avoidance of particular places, people, lessons, journeys or online platforms;
- loss of or damage to belongings, unexplained injuries or changes in presentation;
- changes in digital behaviour, including withdrawal from or increased secrecy about devices or accounts; and
- behavioural changes in a student who may be displaying harmful behaviour, including increased conflict, intimidation or social control.

7.2 These indicators are not proof of bullying. Staff should remain curious, listen to the student and consider safeguarding, SEND, mental health, attendance and other contextual factors.

8. Responding to a concern

8.1 All staff and adults should:

- listen calmly and take the report seriously;
- reassure the student that they have done the right thing by speaking to an adult, without promising absolute confidentiality;
- establish immediate safety needs and take urgent action where necessary;
- record the concern promptly and accurately in ClearCare under the appropriate category, including the concern, actions, decisions, rationale and outcome;
- notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy without delay where the concern may constitute a safeguarding matter or where the threshold for safeguarding support may be met;
- consider whether the behaviour may amount to a criminal offence, hate crime, sexual harassment/abuse, serious violence, coercive or controlling behaviour, or another form of significant harm, and seek advice/referral as required;
- avoid confrontation, blame or mediation where there is a significant power imbalance, safeguarding concern or risk of further harm; and
- ensure both the student experiencing bullying and the student alleged to be displaying bullying behaviour are treated fairly and receive appropriate support.

9. Investigation and action

9.1 The response will be proportionate to nature, severity, frequency, impact and context of the behaviour. There is no requirement to follow a fixed three-step escalation where immediate or significant action is needed.

9.2 **Actions**

Immediate or serious concerns: secure safety, inform the DSL/senior leader as appropriate, preserve relevant evidence, contact parents/carers where appropriate, and consider police or other agency involvement. The following actions to be taken:

- A verbal reminder of expectations and school values from a member of staff may deter further inappropriate behaviour. The member of staff will assure those involved that the matter is being dealt with. All the information is to be recorded on Clear Care under Bullying for both student experiencing and student displaying.
- If further incidents occur, then the school management is informed. They will talk to the students as well as inviting parents / carers to become involved. At that meeting further strategies will be agreed and parents / carers will be kept informed of progress. Further professional advice from outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service or The Hub may be sought on behalf of the 'victim' or 'bully'. All information is to be recorded on Clearcare.
- If the incidents of bullying are immediately judged to be serious (e.g. a very aggressive act) the schools SLT team and DSL will respond in an appropriate manner which could be 1 or a combination of the following:
- Report to the police
- Invite parents/carers in for a formal meeting
- Exclusion
- Placement jeopardy
- Proportionate intervention plan
- Any step taken or concerns raised are discussed at Debrief.

10. Support for students

10.1 Support for students includes:

- Students experiencing bullying will receive support based on their individual needs and wishes, subject to safeguarding requirements.
- Support may include a trusted adult, pastoral support, safety planning, adjustments to routines via intervention plans , peer support where appropriate, curriculum support, counselling/therapeutic input where available, and referral to specialist services.

- Students displaying bullying behaviour will also receive proportionate support to understand impact, take responsibility, develop safer behaviour and address any underlying needs or vulnerabilities.
- Where both students remain in the same setting, the school will put reasonable safeguards in place to reduce the risk of further harm and will review them.

11. Sanctions and restorative approaches

11.1 Bullying is unacceptable and may result in sanctions under the school's behaviour policy. Sanctions must be lawful, reasonable, proportionate, consistent and responsive to individual circumstances, including SEND and safeguarding needs.

11.2 Restorative approaches may be used where safe and appropriate, but participation must not be required where it could increase risk, pressure a student to disclose, or create an unsafe power dynamic. Restorative work does not replace safeguarding action or appropriate sanctions.

12. Online bullying and digital evidence

12.1 Online Bulling and digital evidence actions includes:

- Online bullying will be addressed using the same safeguarding and behaviour principles as face-to-face bullying.
- Staff should advise students not to retaliate and, where safe, to retain relevant evidence such as messages, usernames, URLs, screenshots and dates.
- The school may use its filtering, monitoring and safeguarding systems to identify and manage online risks in accordance with its policies and legal duties.
- Where harmful content may constitute a criminal offence or serious safeguarding risk, staff should seek DSL/police advice before taking action that could affect evidence.
- The school's mobile phone arrangements and online behaviour expectations must be followed; online behaviour that threatens, harms or materially affects the school environment may be addressed under the behaviour policy.

13. Bullying outside school and on school-related activities

13.1 The school will investigate reports of bullying occurring outside the school premises where there is a sufficient connection to the school or where school action is lawful and reasonable. This includes behaviour on the journey to or from school, school trips and activities, and online behaviour that affects the school community.

13.2 Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and applicable law. Staff should consider safeguarding, equality and criminal-law implications and consult senior leaders/DSLs where appropriate.

14. Bullying and harassment of staff

14.1 Fair Ways Education expects students, parents/carers and other members of the school community to communicate with staff respectfully. Bullying, harassment, discriminatory abuse, threats or harmful online activity directed at staff will be addressed through the appropriate behaviour, staff, complaints, safeguarding and employer procedures.

14.2 Staff should report concerns promptly and will be supported in accordance with the school's staff behaviour/code of conduct, safeguarding and employer arrangements. Serious threats, discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment or potentially criminal conduct should be escalated to senior leaders and, where appropriate, the police.

15. Parents and carers

15.1 Parents and carers expectations:

- Parents/carers are encouraged to report concerns promptly and provide relevant information or evidence.
- The school will communicate with parents/carers as appropriate, taking account of confidentiality, safeguarding, ongoing investigations and the rights and welfare of other students.

- Parents/carers are expected to communicate respectfully with staff and to use the school's complaints or other formal routes where they disagree with a decision.
- The school may take proportionate action where a parent/carer engages in bullying, harassment, threats or abusive online behaviour towards staff or students.

16. Recording, monitoring and review

16.1 Recording, monitoring and review includes:

- All bullying concerns and actions will be recorded on ClearCare under the appropriate category, in accordance with the school's recordkeeping and data protection arrangements.
- Records should capture the concern, actions taken, decisions, rationale, support offered, outcome and review date where appropriate.
- Leaders should review patterns and trends, including protected-characteristic dimensions, repeat incidents, locations, times and online contexts, while handling personal data lawfully and proportionately.
- The policy will be reviewed at least every two years and sooner when legislation, statutory guidance, organisational arrangements or emerging risks make this necessary.

17. Related policies and procedures

- Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy (formerly E-safety Policy)
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion arrangements
- Complaints Policy
- Attendance Policy
- RSHE / PSHE policy and curriculum
- Mobile Phone Policy / arrangements
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion procedures

18. Legislative and guidance framework – 2026

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (DfE, in force from 1 September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (DfE)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, updated 9 July 2026)
- Preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff (DfE, 9 July 2026)
- Equality Act 2010
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (DfE, revised guidance in force 1 September 2026)
- Behaviour in Schools (DfE)
- School suspensions and permanent exclusions (DfE, effective 26 July 2026)
- Mobile Phones in Schools (DfE, statutory from 29 June 2026; implementation from 1 September 2026)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026