Nelson Academy

Policy: Anti-Bullying (DRAFT)

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Nelson Academy Anti-Bullying Policy 2026-2027

Introduction

The Nelson Academy regards bullying as particularly serious and firm action will always be taken against it. This policy aims to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may take place.

The academy takes very seriously its legal duty to draw up effective procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. The academy will encourage all pupils to report bullying. All teaching and support staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

This policy has regard to the Department for Education guidance 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (current version).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/625ee64cd3bf7f6004339db8/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6aba40e0fceb6fb3a650127d/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2026.pdf

This complies with The Human Rights Act 1998, The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Equality Act 2010 and The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to ensure that all pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Within the curriculum, the academy will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in RSHE/PSHE, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, to eradicate such behaviour. Staff will praise and encourage pupils when they show kindness and consideration to others. The academy will take every opportunity to demonstrate to pupils, through the curriculum and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying, and that it will not tolerate bullying and will seek to deal with it quickly and effectively. We believe all pupils should be able to work in a caring, supportive environment and bullying has no place in this vision.

Bullying Definition of Bullying

- Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on

grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.
(Preventing and Tackling Bulling, Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, DfE, 2017, p.8)

- The academy recognises that any pupil can be bullied but certain factors can make bullying more likely: a lack of close friends in the academy, shyness, race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation or social class; a disability or some other obvious difference.
- Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The main types of bullying are:
    - Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
    - Verbal (name calling, racist remarks, xenophobia)
    - Psychological (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
    - Cyber/Online – (misuse of mobile phones or internet message boards and chat rooms)

- Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy, anxious, withdrawn and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences, lateness or prefers to stay with adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, deterioration in work, lack of concentration or truanting from school. Staff will be vigilant for all signs of bullying

Roles and Responsibilities

Bullying in our academy is everyone's problem. All staff, pupils and parents/carers should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the school environment a happier place for everyone. The responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of all pupils' rests not only on the Principal and Local Governing Body but on every member of the academy community. Everyone has a duty of care to observe, monitor and report any behaviour, conversation or action which they suspect.

While all staff have a legal obligation to ensure that every action, however apparently small or insignificant, is dealt with and reported. The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the overall co-ordination and monitoring of this important policy.

We recognise that parents/carers have a key role to play supporting victims and counselling instigators, and we will work closely with parents/carers to deal with bullying.

The Principal and Local Governing Body will receive periodic reports on bullying incidents, trends and actions taken to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategy. Leaders will monitor bullying incidents for patterns relating to protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups to ensure that all pupils are safe and included.

Preventing Bullying

The academy has a clear strategy, which it shares with all staff through a dedicated professional development programme. This strategy is clearly and comprehensively communicated to every member of our pupil population, their families and where appropriate with the wider academy community. This strategy is based on current best practice.

The academy takes every opportunity to demonstrate to pupils, through the curriculum i.e. RSHE/PSHE and Anti-Bullying Week, pastoral programmes, displays, assemblies and by example, that it is totally opposed to bullying.

Staff will not ignore bullying or suspected bullying. All academy staff will intervene to prevent bullying incidents from taking place. After initial intervention, a referral will be made to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The academy will encourage pupils to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher or other adult. We will ensure that all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the academy's anti-bullying policy.

Staff will praise and encourage pupils when they show kindness and consideration to others.

Staff will be alerted to possible bullying if a pupil presents in the following ways:

- Becomes withdrawn and anxious
- Shows deterioration in their work
- Starts to attend erratically or truants
- Complains of illness frequently
- Persistently arrives late
- Has unexplained injuries
- Shows significant changes in routine and attitudes.

This list is not exhaustive, and staff and parents should be alert and communicate any concerns. Any pupil who has knowledge of an incident of bullying will be encouraged to report to an appropriate adult. Bullying must never be kept a secret.

Prejudice Based Bullying

The academy takes an active approach to tackle all kinds of prejudice based bullying and will follow the guidance of the Department for Education Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and use the Anti-Bullying Alliance resources.

Homophobic Bullying

Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) people and can be experienced by;

- Young people who are, or who are thought to be, LGBT
- Young people who are different in some way and who may not act like others
- Young people who have gay friends or family or their parents/carers are gay
- Teachers who may or may not be LGBT

The academy recognises that homophobic bullying looks like other bullying but may include;

- Verbal abuse – including spreading rumours that someone is gay
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault and threatening behaviour
- Cyber-bullying – using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them (This can include text messaging including picture and video messaging)
- Staff will also challenge casual homophobic language and will ensure anyone who makes persistent remarks is removed from the classroom and made to understand the consequences of their behaviour in terms of sanctions.

Transphobic Bullying

Transphobic bullying stems from a hatred or fear of people who are transgender. 'Transgender' is an umbrella term that describes people whose sense of their gender or gender identity is seen as being different to typical gender norms. Transgender people commonly feel that their biological body is not aligned with their inner sense of gender identity. This leads some people to live in the gender role in which they feel more comfortable and which relates to their own sense of their gender identity rather than to their biological body. Where children and young people are perceived not to be conforming to the dominant gender roles that may be widely expected of them, staff will be alert for signs of bullying. Transphobic bullying is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes. Boys and girls may be equally affected. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of perceptions that a parent, relative or other significant figure displays gender 'variance' or is transgender.

The need to address sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying will be viewed in the wider context of the academy's duty to promote pupil well-being and to promote community cohesion.

We understand that sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying is fundamentally an issue of equality. Although girls are most frequently harmed by sexist and sexual bullying, both sexual and transphobic bullying may affect boys and girls. We consider all pupils as potentially at risk of such bullying, particularly where they are perceived by others not to conform to dominant or stereotypical gender roles.

Sexist bullying

This is bullying based on sexist attitudes that, when expressed, demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. These attitudes are commonly based around the assumption that women are subordinate to men, or are inferior. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual Bullying

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

intimidate. It is also commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes. Sexual bullying can be seen as sexual harassment in schools. Both sexual and transphobic bullying may affect boys and girls.

Bullying around Race, Religion, Nationality and Culture

The academy recognises the need to have a tolerant and diverse community where racism and bullying have no place. Every pupil deserves respect and a safe learning environment whatever their racial, religious background, nationality or culture, and every pupil needs to learn in a modern British society which values diversity and mutual respect. We also know that racist bullying is an aspect of bullying that schools and academies find particularly challenging. The law recognises the seriousness of abuse and attacks that are motivated by racism. The academy has a duty at law to promote equality. Creating an ethos where racist bullying rarely happens, and is dealt with convincingly when it does, is one way in which we can fulfil that duty, and one aspect of the Trust's Equality Policy.

Cyberbullying – Online and Social Media Bullying

The academy provides guidance on safe internet use and ensures all pupils are taught how to protect themselves online. This is linked to:

- Mobile phones
- Text messages
- E mails
- Social media
- Online gaming
- Livestreaming
- Image sharing apps
- Group messaging platforms
- Gaming

Staff promote and develop a culture of confident technology users, to support innovation, e-safety and digital literacy skills. To raise awareness of and tackle cyberbullying staff will;

- Ensure the whole academy community understands and talks about cyberbullying and online safety
- Ensure all policies and practices, including ICT acceptable use policies, are shared with all staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Make reporting cyberbullying easier by providing and publicising different ways of reporting it
- Promote the positive use of technology including e-safety and digital literacy
- Evaluate the impact of preventative initiatives by using surveys etc. to collect feedback
- A record will be kept of the date and time of any offensive messages
- Pupils will be encouraged to show the messages to a member of academy staff
- Pupils who report bullying by text message will be taken seriously

- The pupil's family may need to contact the police if the cyberbullying is serious and if a potential criminal offence has been committed
- If such bullying is carried out on a persistent basis or if there is threat of violence, it will be treated as any other serious bullying incident
- Malicious e-mails will be dealt with in the same manner
- Pupils who take photographs or videos on their phones with malicious intent will be dealt with in the same manner

Dealing with Bullying Incidents

Any incidents of bullying are taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible. Staff will do all they can to support the victims of bullying and make it clear to the bully that this behaviour is not acceptable.

In dealing with bullying, academy staff will:

- Not ignore it
- Not make premature assumptions
- Listen to all accounts of the incidents
- Adopt a problem-solving approach that encourages pupils to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves
- Make regular follow-up checks to ensure that bullying has not resumed

The following steps are taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Senior Leadership Team
- The member of the Senior Leadership Team will interview all concerned and will formally record the incident
- Class teachers will be kept informed
- Parents/Carers will be kept informed at all times
- If preventative measures and peer support strategies fail, serious bullying will be dealt with under the academy's behaviour policy.

Some bullying behaviours may constitute child-on-child abuse. Where bullying behaviours cause significant harm, involve sexual harassment, sexual violence, discriminatory abuse, online abuse or a potential criminal offence, they will be managed in accordance with the academy's safeguarding procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

If a Pupil is Bullied

Staff who receive a report of bullying from a pupil will:

- Listen to the pupil's account of the incident
- Reassure the pupil that reporting the bullying incident was the right thing to do
- Make it clear to the pupil that he or she is not to blame for what has happened
- Make a note of what the pupil says
- Explain that the pupil should report any further incidents to a teacher or other member of staff immediately

Staff will ask the pupil:

- What has happened
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved; where it happened
- Who saw what happened
- What he or she has done about it already

This information will be referred as soon as possible to the Class Teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

Advice and Support to Pupils

The academy staff will advise pupils who are caught up in bullying incidents to:

- Stay calm and look as confident as possible
- Try to be firm and clear and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Immediately tell an adult what has happened

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher or member of staff of their choice
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Staff will spend time to help pupils who have bullied others to change their behaviour. If a pupil is bullying others, staff will:

- Talk to the pupil and explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy
- Discuss with the pupil how to join in with others without bullying
- Talk to the pupil about how things are going at school, his or her progress and friends
- Give the pupil lots of praise and encouragement when he or she is being kind and considerate to others
- Involve parents/carers when appropriate

Dealing with Serious Bullying

If the preventative measures and peer support strategies fail, serious bullying will be dealt with under the academy's behaviour policy.

The bully may be:

- Removed from the group
- Receive a sanction in accordance with the academy's behaviour policy
- Be banned from a school trip or other events where these are not an essential part of the curriculum
- Given an official warning, be reported for anti-social behaviour to the police,
- Receive a suspension

In most serious cases, permanent exclusion may be considered if the bullying involves serious actual or threatened violent against another pupil (and if amounts to persistent and defiant behaviour).

Recording Incidents

All incidents of bullying and discussions with the pupils involved are recorded, along with the academy's response to the incident. All bullying concerns, whether substantiated or not, will be recorded and monitored to identify emerging patterns or concerns.

Co-operating with Parents and Carers

The academy works with parents/carers in dealing with bullying. Bullying in our academy is everyone's problem. All staff, pupils and parents/carers should be aware that bullying can exist and share a commitment to combat it and to make school a happier place for everyone.

The academy ensures that parents/carers are aware of the academy's anti-bullying policy. Parents, carers and families are often the first to detect signs of bullying. Common physical symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. The academy encourages parents who suspect that a pupil is bullying or being bullied to immediately contact the academy and make an appointment to see the pupil's class teacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible. Parents and carers will be informed of incidents and involved in discussions. The academy will discuss with parents/carers how they can work together to stop the bullying.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The academy will analyse bullying incidents, including any patterns relating to protected characteristics, year groups, locations or types of bullying, to inform preventative work and staff training.

Reviewed by Sarah Wilson (Principal) September 2026

To be reviewed September 2027

This policy links to the following:

Nelson Academy Behaviour Policy
EMAT Safeguarding Policy Revised July 2026 inc. Nelson Local Arrangements 2026-2027
Online Safety Policy
Equality Information and Objectives
SEND Policy
RSHE Policy