



LINKS
ACADEMY
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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Anti-Bullying Policy

February 2025

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Anti-Bullying Policy February 2025

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” and ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ guidance. The setting has also read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools”.

Author: [REDACTED]
 Co-ordinator: Assistant Head
 Committee: Academy Academic Improvement Committee (AAIC)
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Amendments

Periodically the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees will add to or revise the content within this policy. Any revision made are noted below.

Edition	Date	Revision made by	Content revised
1.0	28.02.20	[REDACTED]	Updated in relation to KCSIE
2.0	01.03.22	[REDACTED]	No significant changes
3.0	01.12.24	[REDACTED]	Changes highlighted in green –
			Names may be redacted for GDPR and Cyber Security purposes

Please note that for the purpose of this policy, the following terminology will apply:

Headteacher	Head of School, Headteacher, Executive Head
Trust	Links Multi Academy Trust
School	Links Academy St Albans/ Links Academy Hatfield/Cedars

1. Rationale

1.1 This policy outlines what the Trust will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

1.2 The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole trust community.

1.3 The Links Multi Academy Trust is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form. Every member of the trust community has the right to feel safe and valued and not to experience bullying. All bullying will be taken seriously and will be fully investigated.

1.4 It is the responsibility of:

- The Executive Headteacher to communicate this policy to the trust community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Trustees to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including: trustees, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the trust.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

1.5 Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying is recognised by the trust as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

2. Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

2.1 Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying

- Sexual bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics)
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
- Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

Bullying is not when two young people of approximately the same age and strength have fallen out.

3. Aims

3.1 The Links Multi Academy community recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. The trust will not permit or accept any behaviour by staff which amounts to intimidation, such as misuse of power or position. Nor will the trust tolerate such behaviour from students, parents/carers or trustees towards staff. The Trust run anti- bullying programmes to educate students in types and effects of bullying, as a preventative and educational measure. In PSHE students are encouraged to challenge stereotypes, develop empathy, develop resilience and inspire students to work as a team and support others. Assemblies are delivered to challenge racial injustice, homophobia and address bullying, including cyber-bullying.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our trust can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

3.2 Our Community:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the trust to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.

- Will deal promptly with grievances regarding the trust response to bullying in line with our complaints policy
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

4. Bullying Procedures

4.1 If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern. Any incident of bullying is reported immediately to the relevant Pastoral Leader. They will then refer to the appropriate member of SLT and involve any external agency if necessary. Parent/carer will be involved as appropriate.

- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
- If a student is injured, details of the injury are recorded as part of the statement process. If there is a serious injury the Headteacher is informed, and the police contacted.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved alongside a Pastoral Leader with statements written. If more than one person is involved, each student is seen separately.
- After all parties are interviewed, the students are seen and the situation is summarised, if necessary and appropriate. A conclusion to events is discussed to ensure all parties understand what has happened. It should be made clear that there must be no further incidents and that others should not become involved on anyone's behalf.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Appropriate action (in accordance with the school's behaviour policy) is made clear. This may include an opportunity for restoration made available to both parties.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.

- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures on CPOMs. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

5. Cyber Bullying Procedures

5.1 When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - Advise victim to contact the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Work with the police and victim if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

6. Support

6.1 Supporting pupils. Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their mentor, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.

- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.

6.2 Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.

6.3 Supporting adults

Our trust takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable. Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Head Teacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.

6.4 Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

7. Preventing bullying

7.1 Environment. The whole trust community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the trust values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive trust wide ethos.

7.2 Policy and Support. The whole trust community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the schools' attention, which involves or effects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

7.3 Education and Training. The trust community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the student voice, etc.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate.

- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

8. Involvement of pupils

8.1 The Trust will:

- Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil led education and support.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

9. Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

9.1 The Trust will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in developing policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the trust does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the trust website
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the trust to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

Monitoring

- All incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS by the Pastoral Team.
- The trust will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the trust's action planning.
- The Executive Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.

- Incidents are reported annually to trustees, at the Academy Academic Improvement Committee, with appropriate interventions and outcomes discussed
- Students and parents are surveyed annually to gain feedback to develop future interventions
- Evaluations are used to inform school improvement

Linked Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Links to legislation

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-ofpractice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS):
www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBT

- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW)
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk

Note: Additional links can be found in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Policy Review – Anti-Bullying

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Links Multi Academy Trust Trustees on a bi-annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Academy Academic Improvement Committee and the Trustees in February 2025.

It is due for review in February 2026 up to 24 months from the above date.

Signature

Date



Executive Headteacher

Signature

Date



Chair of Trustees