



SPARKEN HILL
ACADEMY

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by	Head Teacher Signature	Approval date	Review date
FP Committee	R.Lilley	Oct 2022	Sept 2023
FP Committee	R.Lilley	Oct 2023	Oct 2024
FGB	R.Lilley	Oct 2024	Oct 2025
FGB	R.Lilley	Dec 2025	Jan 2027

Introduction and Ethos

At Sparken Hill Academy, we aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our pupils to learn in an atmosphere focused on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. We expect our pupils to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it.

We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our pupils to resolve these ‘relational conflicts’ and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours. If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our pupils, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school.

At Sparken Hill Academy, we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent statutory and non-statutory guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025 – Statutory Guidance, effective 1 September 2025
- DfE Behaviour in Schools (2024) – Non-Statutory Guidance
- DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Statutory Guidance (revised July 2025; in force from September 2026)
- DfE Guidance on Generative AI: Product Safety Expectations (2025)
- DfE Cyber Security Standards for Schools (2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from:

- Members of staff (through staff meetings, consultations, surveys)
- Parents/carers (through written consultations, parents’ evening meetings, focus groups)
- Pupils (through the school council, circle time in class, surveys)
- Governors (through governor meetings and governor training)

This policy is available: online at www.sparkenhillacademy.com/policy; in the school prospectus; from the school office. Child-friendly versions are on display and in welcome packs for new pupils. This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year and updated annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff at our school are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and know the important role they each have in preventing and tackling bullying. As required by KCSiE 2025, all staff are aware of the school's behaviour policy, which includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying – including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying.

The Principal, Mr R. Lilley, has overall responsibility for Anti-Bullying at our school, is responsible for appointing an Anti-Bullying Coordinator and for liaising with the Governing body, parents/carers, the Local Authority, and outside agencies when appropriate.

The Anti-Bullying Coordinator is responsible for:

- Policy development and review
- Implementing the policy and monitoring/assessing its effectiveness
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Coordinating Anti-Bullying training and support for staff and parents/carers
- Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies

- Mr Richard Lilley (Senior DSL)
- Mrs Karen Gardiner
- Mrs Deb White
- Mrs Kate Phoenix

The nominated Governor with responsibility for Anti-Bullying and Behaviour is Mrs Clare Middleton.

What is Bullying and How Does it Differ to Relational Conflict?

At Sparken Hill Academy we have adopted the definition of bullying provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

“Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.” – Anti-Bullying Alliance

For younger pupils, we often refer to bullying by the acronym ‘Several Times On Purpose’, and explain that this can stop when we ‘Start Telling Other People’.



We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups – for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities (including autism), or because a child is adopted, in care, or has caring responsibilities. Bullying can be motivated by actual or perceived differences between children.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between pupils which may not be deemed as ‘bullying’ but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as ‘relational conflicts’. Relational conflict differs from bullying because it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status, and the behaviours occur occasionally or by accident. Usually, following a relational conflict, pupils show remorse and there is a willingness to resolve the issue.

Regardless of whether an incident is deemed ‘relational conflict’ or ‘bullying’, our school will address the situation and support the pupils involved. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure the situation does not escalate to bullying.

What Does Bullying Behaviour Look Like?

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling

- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films/content etc.
- Online/Cyberbullying – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty messages, social exclusion online, creating fake profiles, and sharing or creating harmful AI-generated content or deepfakes (see below)
- Indirect – exploitation including ‘false friendships’, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation
- Prejudice-related – derogatory and discriminatory language or behaviour that is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or disablist in nature

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms are taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Cyberbullying and Online Harms

Cyberbullying takes place online using digital technology, including social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, and websites. It can happen at any time and, unlike face-to-face bullying, can follow a child into their home. Cyberbullying can include:

- Sending offensive, upsetting or threatening messages via any platform
- Sharing private images or videos without consent
- Creating fake profiles or impersonating someone to cause harm
- Excluding someone from an online group
- Using AI tools or ‘deepfake’ technology to create false images or videos with intent to harm
- Spreading misinformation or disinformation about an individual online
- Encouraging others to spread harmful content (e.g. pile-on campaigns)

Where Does Bullying Take Place?

At Sparken Hill Academy we understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school, in the local community, and online. We will offer support and guidance to pupils, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

Legislation and Statutory Framework

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying. These include (but are not limited to):

- Education Act 2002 (as amended by the Education Act 2011)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (head teachers’ powers to regulate off-site behaviour)
- Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty and protected characteristics)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988 and Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986

- Online Safety Act 2023 – duties on platforms to protect users from harmful content; schools have a role in educating pupils about online harms
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 – relevant to data protection and information sharing
- Children Act 1989 and 2004

Although bullying is not in itself a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour could constitute a criminal offence. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the Police.

How to Report Bullying Concerns

At Sparken Hill Academy we want pupils, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying, knowing that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting all children involved – including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses, and the wider school community.

Pupils, including bystanders/witnesses

We ask all pupils to report concerns to any member of school staff – a class teacher, TA, the Principal, a lunchtime supervisor, or a member of the office team. We talk about trusted adults regularly in class and in assemblies. The member of staff will listen to the pupil, make an initial note, discuss next steps, and provide reassurance. A formal record will be made on CPOMs and relevant staff alerted. The DSL will be alerted directly if the report is urgent or a pupil is at risk.

Additional reporting mechanisms include: worry boxes in each corridor; the ability to speak confidentially to any trusted adult; and access to our Community Team (who hold Mental Health First Aid and LGBT+ training).

Parents/Carers

We ask that parents/carers contact their child's class teacher in the first instance (in person, via telephone, email, or Dojo). A formal record will be made on CPOMs following the report. We ask parents/carers to come directly to the school rather than discussing concerns online. We will keep all parties informed with due regard to GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

School Staff

Staff are expected to act on concerns immediately rather than wait, as required by KCSiE 2025 Part One. Staff should report to the DSL / Headteacher / Anti-Bullying Coordinator. All reports will be recorded formally on CPOMs. The DSL must be alerted directly if urgent or if a pupil is at risk. Specific referrals may be made to organisations such as Mermaids for gender-diverse children and their families.

Visitors

Visitors are asked to report concerns about bullying behaviour to the DSL / Headteacher / a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible – no later than the end of the school day.

How Our School Will Respond to Reports of Bullying

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. Records are kept on CPOMs, used to identify trends and inform preventative work, and discussed regularly at staff meetings. Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding; each incident is dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Responses may include, but are not limited to:

- Talking to all pupils involved – the target, alleged perpetrator, and bystanders/witnesses
- Talking to parents of those involved

- Implementing appropriate sanctions in line with our Relationships and Behaviour Regulation Policy
- Discussing the incident with other agencies and making referrals (e.g. Anti-Bullying Alliance, NSPCC, Internet Matters, Kidscape, Mermaids, Stonewall, CAMHS)
- Liaising with the wider community where bullying occurs off school premises
- Keeping the person who reported the incident informed of actions taken
- Implementing follow-up support/interventions – restorative work, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work
- Monitoring the effectiveness of actions taken and reassessing if appropriate
- Liaising with the DSL where safeguarding concerns arise – the DSL may refer to the Nottinghamshire MASH
- Referring to the Nottinghamshire County Council ‘Pathways to Provision’ document and completing an EHAF if appropriate
- Contacting the police where a criminal offence may have been committed

If a parent/carers is not satisfied with the school’s response, they should follow the school’s Complaints Policy (available on the school website and from the office).

Pupils with SEND and Other Vulnerabilities

Our school recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact. This includes:

- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including those with autism (KCSiE 2025 uses ‘autism’ rather than ‘autism spectrum disorder’ in line with the SEND Code of Practice)
- Children who are Looked After, in kinship care, or have a social worker
- Children who are adopted or have caring responsibilities
- Children who are EAL learners
- Children who identify as, or are perceived to be, LGBTQ+
- Children experiencing difficulties at home

Our school will always take particular care to consider the needs and circumstances of vulnerable pupils when investigating and responding to bullying.

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

At Sparken Hill Academy, we are committed to the safety and welfare of our pupils and have developed a range of strategies to promote positive behaviours and discourage bullying. These are reviewed throughout the academic year.

Our strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Active school council with representatives from each KS2 year group
- Anti-Bullying ambassadors / play leaders – peer-mentoring schemes
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week (November) annually
- Participation in Safer Internet Day (February) annually
- Participation in Pride Month (June) annually
- Robust RSHE curriculum for all year groups – including teaching about stereotyping, prejudice, equality, types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, and how to get help. From September 2026, curriculum delivery will align with the revised DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance (July 2025)
- Specific curriculum inputs on online safety and cyberbullying, including age-appropriate content on generative AI risks, deepfakes, and how to critically evaluate online content
- Education about misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories as online harms, as highlighted in KCSiE 2025
- Drop-down days and themed days to promote equality and tackle prejudice
- Opportunities for pupils to share their voice through surveys
- Inclusive displays, toys, and books throughout school, celebrating diversity
- Positive Play / ELSA support / Lego therapy / counselling for identified pupils
- Parent information board, school website resources, and parent events
- Worry boxes for pupils in each corridor
- Full-time Pastoral support with welcoming spaces for pupils with any worry
- Regular staff training (including lunchtime supervisors and before/after-school club staff) covering online safety, generative AI risks, cyberbullying, racism and LGBTQ+ inclusion
- All staff modelling expected behaviour

Online Safety and Filtering and Monitoring

In line with KCSiE 2025, our school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to reduce the risk of children accessing or being exposed to harmful online content. These are reviewed annually. Our Data Protection Officer (DPO) is embedded in the oversight of filtering and monitoring, AI risk management, and cyber governance, including the completion of Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) where appropriate.

The school's filtering and monitoring provision considers the following risk categories:

- Content risks: harmful and illegal content, and – in line with KCSiE 2025 – misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories
- Contact risks: grooming, exploitation, radicalisation
- Conduct risks: cyberbullying, sexting, sharing of harmful content
- Commerce risks: gambling, scams, and inappropriate commercial content

Breaches and Complaints

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same way as breaches of other school policies, as determined by the Principal and Governing Body. If a parent/carers is not satisfied with the school's actions, they should follow the school's Complaints Policy, available on the school website and from the school office.

Links with Other Policies

This Anti-Bullying Policy should be read alongside the following school policies:

Policy	How it may link
Child-on-Child Abuse Policy	Links to bullying – specifically sexualised bullying and exploitation
Relationships and Behaviour Regulation Policy	Details of rewards and sanctions for pupils
Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy	Academy's procedures for suspensions
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	Child protection procedures and contextualised safeguarding; references KCSiE 2025
Online Safety / E-Safety / AUP	Online behaviour, cyberbullying, AI-generated content, misinformation; references Online Safety Act 2023 and KCSiE 2025
Equalities Policy	Approach to tackling prejudice; Public Sector Equality Duty
RSHE / PSHE Policy	RSHE programme, healthy relationships, bullying; references revised RSHE guidance (July 2025, in force September 2026)
Complaints Policy	How to make a complaint if not satisfied with the school's response
Data Protection / GDPR Policy	Data handling, CCTV; Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year and updated annually to reflect changes to statutory guidance, legislation, and best practice. Monitoring activities include: regular review of CPOMs data; pupil surveys and voice activities; staff training records; annual review of filtering and monitoring systems; annual review of online safety curriculum provision; and Governor oversight and reporting.

The next review date for this policy is January 2027.

Appendix A: Bullying / Prejudice-Based Incident Report Form



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BULLYING/ PREJUDICE –BASED INCIDENT REPORT FORM

TYPE OF REPORT: (Circle as appropriate)	
BULLYING	PREJUDICE-BASED INCIDENT – Racial/Homophobic/Bi-Phobic/Trans-Phobic
DATE OF INCIDENT: REPORTED BY:	

PERPETRATOR/S DETAILS	
NAME :	
YEAR GROUP:	
GENDER:	
ETHNIC ORIGIN:	
RELIGION:	
HOME LANGUAGE:	
HOME DISTRICT (POST CODE)	
REPEAT PERPETRATOR? YES/NO	

TARGET/S* DETAILS *Some incidents may not have a target	Is the target vulnerable or especially distressed? Is the target safe (Consider arrangements travelling To/From school)? Has the target experienced this prejudice- based incident/bullying before?
NAME:	
YEAR GROUP	
GENDER :	
ETHNIC ORIGIN :	
RELIGION :	
HOME LANAGUAGE:	
HOME DISTRICT (POST CODE):	

REPEAT TARGET?	YES	NO
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Have the parents/carers of both parties been informed? YES/NO

Type of Bullying/Incident

Race/Ethnicity	Religion/Belief	Disability/SEND	Teasing	Physical harm
Name Calling	Gender	Gender Reassignment	Sexual Orientation	Threats
Other (please specify)				

Where did the incident/bullying take place?

Bus	Outside school premises	Toilets/changing rooms	Classroom	Other (please specify)
To or from school	School grounds	Dining Hall	Corridor	

PLEASE GIVE A DESCRIPTION OF THE BULLYING/INCIDENT REPORTED

WHAT ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN:-

a. TO SUPPORT THE TARGET?

b. TO SANCTION/EDUCATE THE PERPETRATOR?

Has the incident been reported to the police? YES/NO