

1. Aims

- 1.1. This is the anti-bullying policy of Great Western Academy.
- 1.2. The aims of this policy are:
 - 1.2.1. to actively promote and safeguard the welfare of students at the Academy;
 - 1.2.2. to maintain and drive a positive and supportive culture among all students and staff throughout the Academy; and
- 1.3. to prevent bullying, detect it when it occurs, and respond to it appropriately on a case-by-case basis.

2. Scope and Application

- 2.1. This policy applies to the whole Academy.
- 2.2. This policy applies at all times when the student is:
 - 2.2.1. in or at the Academy;
 - 2.2.2. representing the Academy or wearing Academy uniform;
 - 2.2.3. travelling to or from the Academy;
 - 2.2.4. on Academy-organised trips;
 - 2.2.5. associated with the Academy at any time;
 - 2.2.6. in the care of the Academy or not and the Academy becomes aware of an incident of bullying.
- 2.3. This policy shall also apply to students at all times and places in circumstances where failing to apply this policy may:
 - 2.3.1. affect the health, safety or well-being of a member of the Academy community or a member of the public;
 - 2.3.2. have repercussions for the orderly running of the Academy; or
 - 2.3.3. bring the Academy into disrepute.

3. Regulatory framework

- 3.1. This policy has been prepared to meet the Academy's responsibilities under:
 - 3.1.1. Education (Independent Academy Standards) Regulations 2014;
 - 3.1.2. Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 3.1.3. Children Act 1989;
 - 3.1.4. Equality Act 2010
- 3.2. This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
 - 3.2.1. [Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies \(DfE, July 2017\)](#);
 - 3.2.2. [Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and Academy staff \(DfE, November 2014\)](#);
 - 3.2.3. [Working together to safeguard children \(DfE, 2018\)](#); and
 - 3.2.4. [Keeping children safe in education \(DfE, September 2021\)](#)

Policy Owner	Mrs A Britton – Vice Principal
Date of Last Review	March 2025
Date of Governor's Meeting	31 March 2025
Date of Next Review	March 2026

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4. Link to other policies

- 4.1. The following Academy policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:
 - 4.1.1. Behaviour policy
 - 4.1.2. Acceptable use policy;
 - 4.1.3. E-safety policy;
 - 4.1.4. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils policy;
 - 4.1.5. Special educational needs
 - 4.1.6. Disability policy

5. Reviewing of policy

- 5.1. This document will be reviewed every year but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary.
- 5.2. It will be approved by the governing board

6. Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

- 6.1. Great Western Academy Trust has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.
- 6.2. To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, Great Western Academy Trust has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Amy Britton	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	Amy Britton	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as students, staff, Parents/Carers) to consider improvements to the Academy's processes under the policy	Amy Britton	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Great Western Academy Trust	Annually

7. Publication and availability

- 7.1. This policy is published on the Academy website.
- 7.2. This policy is available in hard copy on request.
- 7.3. A copy of the policy is available for inspection from Reception during the Academy day.
- 7.4. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

8. Definitions

- 8.1. Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:
 - 8.1.1. References to the **Principal** may include other designated senior leaders.
 - 8.1.2. References to **Parent/Carer** or **Parents/Carers** includes one or both of the parents/carers, or a legal guardian.

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9. Bullying

- 9.1. Staff and Students at GWA will be able to identify bullying behaviour through their knowledge of the acronym STOP – bullying is Several Times On Purpose. This will educate staff and students and help them to distinguish between incidents of bullying behaviour and a pattern of ongoing bullying.
- 9.2. Bullying is always unacceptable and will not be dismissed as being normal or as "banter" or simply "part of growing up". Bullying will not be tolerated by the Academy because:
 - 9.2.1. it is harmful to the person who is bullied, to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them, and can in some cases lead to lasting psychological damage and even suicide;
 - 9.2.2. it interferes with a student's right to enjoy his / her learning and leisure time free from intimidation;
 - 9.2.3. it is contrary to all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the Academy.
- 9.3. Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. Bullying may be:
 - 9.3.1. **Physical:** hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting, or taking, damaging or hiding possessions
 - 9.3.2. **Verbal:** name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting or demanding money
 - 9.3.3. **Exclusionary behaviour:** intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group
 - 9.3.4. **General unkindness:** spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, mobile phone texts or emails;
 - 9.3.5. **Low level disruptive behaviour:** wearing "banter" and "horseplay" over a pro-longed period of time;
 - 9.3.6. **Cyberbullying:** bullying that takes place using technology. This may include bullying through the use of mobile electronic devices, social media or gaming sites. The Academy's separate acceptable use policy for students sets out the Academy rules about the use of technology including mobile electronic devices.
- 9.4. Bullying may also be:
 - 9.4.1. sexual: talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way;
 - 9.4.2. sexist: related to a person's gender or gender reassignment;
 - 9.4.3. racist, or regarding someone's religion, belief or culture;
 - 9.4.4. related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic bullying);
 - 9.4.5. related to pregnancy and maternity;
 - 9.4.6. related to a person's home circumstances; or
 - 9.4.7. related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulty, health or appearance.
- 9.5. Not all individuals recognise their behaviour is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. If left unchallenged or dismissed low level disruption can have a wearing, and significant impact on targeted individuals exposed to such behaviour.
- 9.6. A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence. Bullying may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or email) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.
- 9.7. Bullying behaviour may be of such a nature that safeguarding concerns are raised. Such behaviour may include hazing behaviour, initiation rituals or any form of sexual harassment. See the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedures for the Academy's approach to peer-on-peer abuse. Concerns about a student's welfare because they are the perpetrator or victim of bullying behaviour must be reported in accordance with the safeguarding policy and procedures and appropriate action taken, taking into account the Local Safeguarding Children Board's threshold document.
- 9.8. The Academy will always treat a bullying incident as giving rise to a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

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10. Anti-bullying culture and systems

- 10.1. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no-one becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of his / her age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, culture or learning difficulty, disability, home circumstances or because he / she is new in the Academy, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. He / She may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.
- 10.2. Our expectation of all members of the Academy community is that:
 - 10.2.1. everyone will uphold the Academy rules;
 - 10.2.2. a student or a member of staff or volunteer who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it in accordance with the terms of this policy;
 - 10.2.3. a complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously;
 - 10.2.4. no-one will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.
- 10.3. In the Academy and in every year group:
 - 10.3.1. discriminatory and offensive words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable;
 - 10.3.2. positive attitudes are fostered towards people who are disabled and towards ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic groups within and outside the Academy; and
 - 10.3.3. positive attitudes are fostered towards gender and sexuality differences through the curriculum and tutorials.
- 10.4. **GWA Trust:** Great Western Academy Trust has overall responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of students at the Academy, ensuring that those in leadership and management positions actively promote student well-being. This includes ensuring that policies and procedures are in place and implemented effectively to:
 - 10.4.1. minimise the risk of bullying at the Academy so that students and staff feel safe and secure;
 - 10.4.2. intervene early in low-level disruption to prevent negative behaviours escalating;
 - 10.4.3. deal swiftly with allegations and incidents of bullying at the Academy so that students and staff feel confident that all incidents will be dealt with appropriately.
- 10.5. **Staff:** Through their training and experience, members of staff and volunteers are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:
 - 10.5.1. celebrating achievement;
 - 10.5.2. anticipating problems and providing support;
 - 10.5.3. adopting a proactive interactive approach to bullying by gathering intelligence about issues between students which might provoke conflict and developing strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place;
 - 10.5.4. disciplining perpetrators fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities of the student, taking into account the motivations and any underlying safety concerns of the perpetrator and providing support as appropriate;
 - 10.5.5. making opportunities to listen to students;
 - 10.5.6. acting as advocates of students.
- 10.6. Members of staff and volunteers are vigilant at all times but particularly:
 - 10.6.1. at the start and end of the Academy day when students arrive and leave the site;
 - 10.6.2. before lessons;
 - 10.6.3. in the queue for the dining hall and in the dining hall itself;
 - 10.6.4. in Academy corridors;
 - 10.6.5. on Academy transport / Academy trips.

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- 10.7. Bullying is regularly discussed in staff meetings. The result of these meetings is to feedback information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any student who seems to be isolated, any growing "power base" and any known conflict between students so that strategies can be developed to prevent bullying incidents.
- 10.8. **Students:** Through the Academy's pastoral care systems, students are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the Academy. They are encouraged:
- 10.8.1. to celebrate the effort and achievements of others;
 - 10.8.2. to hold and promote positive attitudes;
 - 10.8.3. to feel able to share problems with staff;
 - 10.8.4. to turn to someone they trust, if they have a problem;
 - 10.8.5. not to feel guilty about airing complaints;
 - 10.8.6. to be kind, considerate and tolerant towards others;
 - 10.8.7. to be aware of the impact their behaviour can have on others;
 - 10.8.8. to challenge their peers if they are unkind to others;
 - 10.8.9. to use technology safely and securely and to be aware of the risks and impact of the use of technology on themselves and others.
- 10.9. Measures are taken throughout each year to educate students about bullying and this policy. These measures include:
- 10.9.1. the PSHE curriculum includes lessons on bullying;
 - 10.9.2. anti-bullying posters placed around the Academy;
 - 10.9.3. anti-bullying messages are given in assemblies;
 - 10.9.4. online safety is a key aspect of all areas of the curriculum. Parents/Carers are informed about online safety issues and the Academy's strategies to safeguard students through correspondence. See the Academy's online safety policy for further information about the Academy's online safety strategy
 - 10.9.5. creation of the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to provide peer to peer support
- 10.10. **Parents/Carers:** The Academy will take active measures to promote an anti-bullying culture and message to parents/carers that bullying amongst students or towards staff will not be tolerated by the Academy.

11. Reporting concerns

- 11.1. **Students:** A student who is being bullied, or who is worried about another student being bullied, should tell someone without delay and can do so in several ways. He / She can:
- 11.1.1. tell his / her Form Tutor or any member of staff or volunteer at the Academy or responsible older student;
 - 11.1.2. speak to an Anti-Bullying Ambassador who will support them to contact a teacher
 - 11.1.3. tell his / her parent/carers;
 - 11.1.4. contact Childline (0800 1111)
- 11.2. **Parents/Carers :** Parents or Carers who are concerned that their child is being bullied should inform their child's Form Tutor without delay.
- 11.3. **Staff:** This policy focuses mainly on the bullying of students by students although it is recognised that a staff member could be a victim and on occasion may be perceived to be guilty of bullying. The Academy has a zero tolerance of the bullying of staff, whether by students, parents/carers or other colleagues. Staff members who are concerned about being bullied or harassed should refer to the Academy's Staff Handbook. Students and parents/carers who feel that a member of staff is bullying should report this in accordance with the procedures set out above.
- 11.4. A member of staff or volunteer who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:
- 11.4.1. respond quickly and sensitively by offering advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim;
 - 11.4.2. listen carefully and keep an open mind;
 - 11.4.3. not ask leading questions;

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- 11.4.4. reassure the child but not give a guarantee of confidentiality;
- 11.4.5. report the allegation to the relevant pastoral lead as soon as possible;
- 11.5. The relevant pastoral lead must inform the Assistant Principal and contact the relevant Form Tutor to agree on a strategy for dealing with the matter.
- 11.6. If the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the matter should be reported in accordance with the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedures before further investigation is carried out.

12. Why incidents might not be reported

- 12.1. **Victim:** There are many reasons why a student who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. He / She may become demoralised and may think, for example:
 - 12.1.1. it is telling tales;
 - 12.1.2. they won't believe me because the person I am complaining about is popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular;
 - 12.1.3. the things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult;
 - 12.1.4. it is all my fault anyway for being overweight / too studious etc;
 - 12.1.5. there are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do;
 - 12.1.6. it will get back to my parents/carers and they will think less of me;
 - 12.1.7. I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin;
 - 12.1.8. I will lie low and not draw attention to myself;
 - 12.1.9. this is a normal part of growing up and going to Academy.
- 12.2. **Witnesses:** There are also reasons why a student who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. He / She may think:
 - 12.2.1. it is "grassing" and I will become unpopular;
 - 12.2.2. it is not my concern anyway;
 - 12.2.3. I don't like the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him / her.
- 12.3. Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at the Academy. When we implement this policy we encourage every student (and their parents/carers) to understand that:
 - 12.3.1. every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously;
 - 12.3.2. members of staff and volunteers will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received;
 - 12.3.3. there is a solution to nearly every problem of bullying;
 - 12.3.4. a student who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with on a no-names basis;
 - 12.3.5. the primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless this is necessary;
 - 12.3.6. we may need to support the bully as well so we can address the causes of bullying behaviour.

13. Assessment of concerns

- 13.1. The Form Tutor or relevant pastoral lead will normally see the victim and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses without delay and form an initial view of the allegation. The assessment will consider:
 - 13.1.1. the nature of the incident(s): physical? verbal? exclusionary? etc.
 - 13.1.2. is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group?
 - 13.1.3. is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?
 - 13.1.4. has physical injury been caused?
 - 13.1.5. who should be informed: Principal? Parents/Carers? the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead? children's social care? the police?
 - 13.1.6. can the alleged bully be questioned without disclosing the victim's identity?

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- 13.1.7. what is the likely outcome if the allegation proves to be correct?
- 13.2. At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:
- 13.2.1. there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully; or
 - 13.2.2. the complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed.
- 13.3. If at any stage the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedures should be followed before further investigation is carried out.
- 13.4. Otherwise, in cases where the pastoral lead believes that serious bullying behaviour has occurred involving a student or has recurred after warnings have been given to the "bully" he / she will refer the matter to the Assistant Principal.
- 13.5. The Assistant Principal will:
- 13.5.1. interview the alleged victim, alleged bully and any witnesses separately, in order to establish the facts of the case. He / she may decide to ask another senior member of staff to be present; and
 - 13.5.2. send a summary of his / her findings to the Principal and other relevant staff.
- 13.6. Together with the Principal, the Assistant Principal will decide on the action to be taken in accordance with this policy.
- 13.7. The Assistant Principal will ensure the parents/carers of the victim and bully are notified giving them details of the case and the action being taken. Such action may include further investigation in accordance with the Academy's behaviour policy.

14. Response to concerns

- 14.1. When a complaint of bullying behaviour is upheld, the range of responses may include one or more of the following:
- 14.1.1. consideration as to whether the bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern and if so, the Academy's safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed;
 - 14.1.2. advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim, including support from external services where appropriate;
 - 14.1.3. advice and support to the bully in trying to change his / her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning;
 - 14.1.4. consideration of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully which contributed to the bullying behaviour. If these considerations give rise to safeguarding concerns relating to the bullying, the Academy's child protection procedures will be followed;
 - 14.1.5. a supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict (only with the victim's express agreement), we call this restorative justice;
 - 14.1.6. a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with the Academy's behaviour and discipline policy. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a student may be permanently excluded in accordance with the Academy's behaviour policy. Any disciplinary action will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any special educational needs or disabilities and the needs of vulnerable students;
 - 14.1.7. action to break up a "power base";
 - 14.1.8. confiscation of mobile electronic devices, increased monitoring procedures or limiting access to the Academy's internet and email facilities if cyberbullying (see also the Academy's acceptable use policy for students);
 - 14.1.9. moving either the bully or victim to another form group after consultation with the student, his / her parents/carers and the relevant staff;
 - 14.1.10. involving children's social care or the police;

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- 14.1.11. notifying the parents/carers of one or both students about the case and the action which has been taken;
- 14.1.12. such other action as may appear to the Principal to be appropriate.

14.2. The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:

- 14.2.1. sharing information with some or all colleagues and with relevant students so that they may be alert to the need to monitor certain students closely;
- 14.2.2. ongoing counselling and support;
- 14.2.3. vigilance;
- 14.2.4. mentioning the incident at meetings of staff;
- 14.2.5. reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the Academy.

15. Supporting those severely impacted by bullying

- 15.1. The Academy recognises that removing bullied students from the Academy is disruptive and can make it difficult to reintegrate. The Academy understands in some circumstances however, the consequences of being bullied may have had a severe impact on a student's social, emotional or mental health and may have impacted seriously on a student's ability to learn.
- 15.2. The Academy will do all that is reasonably possible to ensure bullied students continue to attend the Academy and maintain their educational progression by putting in place proportionate short term alternative on-site provision plans where necessary.
- 15.3. If the student is considered to have significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of those the same age, because of the impact of the bullying the Academy will consider whether the student will benefit from being assessed for special educational needs (**SEN**).

16. Training

- 16.1. **Staff:** The Academy ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles especially:
 - 16.1.1. have an understanding of the groups who may be more vulnerable to bullying;
 - 16.1.2. awareness of the risk and indications of bullying, and how to deal with cases;
 - 16.1.3. counselling skills (including bereavement);
 - 16.1.4. awareness of the risks of peer-on-peer abuse and how bullying may give rise to safeguarding concerns.
- 16.2. The level and frequency of training depends on role of the individual member of staff.
- 16.3. The Academy maintains written records of all staff training.
- 16.4. **Students:** We emphasise with older students the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger students and each other. Older students receive advice on recognising bullying behaviour and how to report it.

17. Record keeping

- 17.1. All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the Academy's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- 17.2. Academy staff maintain records of the welfare and development of individual students. Every complaint or report of bullying is recorded centrally and monitored to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual students and across the Academy as a whole and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Academy's approach.
- 17.3. The Assistant Principal will maintain a centralised record of all allegations or reports of bullying, including details of those involved and the action taken.
- 17.4. The Assistant Principal will monitor the centralised record of bullying incidents on a regular basis to identify patterns in behaviour and the effectiveness of the Academy's anti-bullying procedures.

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Appendix 1

- 1 Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology.
- 2 Pupils should remember the following:
 - 2.1 use the security settings;
 - 2.2 regularly change your password and keep it private;
 - 2.3 always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send;
 - 2.4 think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever;
 - 2.5 if you or someone you know are being cyberbullied, **tell someone**. You have the right not to be harassed or bullied online. Tell an adult you trust - your parents or carers, any member of staff or volunteer, [• include contact details]] or a helpline such as ChildLine on 0800 1111;
 - 2.6 don't retaliate or reply online;
 - 2.7 save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. Ask someone if you are unsure how to do this. This will help to show what is happening and can be used by the Academy to investigate the matter;
 - 2.8 block the bully. Most social media websites and online or mobile services allow you block someone who is behaving badly;
 - 2.9 don't do nothing - if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.
- 3 You may find the following websites helpful:
 - 3.1 <http://www.childnet.com/young-people>
 - 3.2 <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>
 - 3.3 <https://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/online-bullying.aspx>.
- 4 Please see the Academy's E-safety Policy which sets out the Academy rules about the use of technology including mobile electronic devices.