Northern Arch

LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Schools - Anti Bullying Policy

Approving Body: Board of Directors
Committee: Standards
Review Cycle: 1 year
Last reviewed: December 2025
Date for next review: December 2026

School Policies on Related Issues
(To be read and followed alongside this document)

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Online Safety Policy

1.   Mission Statement

1.1   Every pupil should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported.

1.2   Providing safe and productive learning environments is essential in achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

1.3   Some support and intervention offered may differ depending on the Academy.
The Latest DfE guidelines for behaviour and discipline in school is: Behaviour in Schools – advice for headteachers and school staff (February 2024)
 Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff Feb 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

DfE advice on this subject is expressed within *Preventing and tackling bullying July 2017* – this link will take you to this guidance.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6238 95/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

1.4   Furthermore, separate documents are available for staff:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/3748 50/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf

Keeping children safe in education 2025

Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

1.5   Parents / carers can find advice and support at:

Darlington Safeguarding Board - Parents and Carers Advice and Guidance (darlington-safeguarding-partnership.co.uk)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf

1.6   As the 'preventing and tackling' government advice document states, the definition of bullying is:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, <u>repeated over time</u>, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; <u>teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each</u> <u>specific case.</u>

1.7   Bullying is a problem for everyone. The victims of bullying are not the only ones damaged. Those who watch and are aware of bullying are also damaged. The following policy is based upon five important points:

- We cannot always expect the pupils at our school to draw attention to bullying when it happens. The staff of the school - teaching and non-teaching - must accept responsibility and take the appropriate actions to report and deal with bullying when they are aware it is happening
  - It is up to <u>all</u> of the adults at our school to take bullying seriously and to do something about it
  - As adults, we must act as positive role models in the way we treat pupils and other adults
  - As pupils we must act as positive role models and treat each other with respect and be aware of the signs of bullying
  - All staff encourage pupils to report any concerns of bullying and reassure them that this can be done in a confidential way

1.8   At Northern Arch Learning Partnership we believe that a pupil who is confident within their environment and free from intimidation and threats from others will thrive both academically and socially. We are not naive enough to think that we have no incidents of bullying within school however the following guidelines for all of us within the school will help ensure that any incidents are dealt with consistently and sensitively within a caring environment.

1.9   All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and

online. All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

1.10 When tackling any form of bullying The Equality Act 2010 may need to be taken into consideration, it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

1.11 You're also protected from discrimination if you're associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, e.g. a sibling or friend.

1.12 A person is protected from discrimination in the following areas:

- at work
- in education
- Goods and Servies – i.e. in shops, restaurants, hotels, and other public places
- Housing - When looking for a place to rent or buy.

2. Aims

2.1 We aim to create a climate where all members of the school community feel they are treated fairly and with respect.

2.2 We aspire to create a safe, nurturing, and positive environment. We aim to do this by encouraging our pupils:

- To recognise each child as a unique individual.
- To encourage everyone to treat others, as they would wish to be treated themself.
- To co-operate with each other to create a caring ethos.
- To encourage children to behave in a responsible manner.
- To promote good manners, consideration and respect for others at all times.
- To provide a challenging, stimulating and enjoyable environment where the children feel valued.
- To promote honesty, trust and fairness.
- To promote respect for property, the environment and for themselves.
- To encourage the children to be responsible for their own actions.
- To assist children in developing their understanding of right and wrong.
- To celebrate the success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
- To challenge the practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.

2.3   Positive outcomes rely on effective partnership and communication. The Trust actively encourages stakeholders to discuss issues surrounding bullying and our approach to this area.

3.   Prevention

3.1   The 'preventing and tackling' government advice document instructs us:

A school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. The best schools develop a more sophisticated approach in which school staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

3.2   The Trust actively encourages all staff to challenge and act on incidents of child-on-child abuse or any behaviour which may make another child feel unhappy, uncomfortable or unsafe. We aim to create a culture of mutual respect and tolerance.

3.3   Northern Arch Learning Partnership are no touching schools. This message is communicated consistently through assemblies, personal development time, tutor time daily interaction with pupils and various policies.

3.4   There are also significant events in the secondary school calendar which allow us to raise awareness of all types of bullying including:

- Behaviour support and mediation activities led by the Pastoral Team/student support
- Personal Development Agenda – including Life lessons, PSHE, tutor time/registration, assemblies, enrichment, pledges and student voice
- Counselling support
- Speak out Safely button on the website
- Anonymous Speak out Safely drop off boxes around the academy

4.   Strategies for dealing with bullying

4.1   We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know where and how share worries and concerns about bullying.
- Ensure pupils are aware that there will be sanctions and interventions/support for those who engaging in bullying.
- Take part in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embed messages into the wider school curriculum.

5.   Intervention techniques

5.1   The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach with the hope of getting to the root of the problem for all sides involved.

5.2   The following strategies are an example of procedures which may be followed depending on the situation:

- Discussion at length with victim/ perpetrator/any witnesses or others with involvement.
- Recording of a statement of events.

- Investigation into the root of the problem.
- Discussion around solution to the problem.
- Involvement of other parties: staff/parents/other children/support agencies.
- Sanctions and support for perpetrator of bullying (See below)
- Support for any victims.
- Monitoring of the situation.
- Further intervention if needed.

6.   Support

6.1   Support will be provided to both victim and perpetrator. The below list is not exhaustive. Support may include:

- Counselling – secondary setting
- Mediation
- Parent / carer meeting
- Time to reflect through discussion with others
- Timetable change
- Early time out pass
- Allocated safe / quiet place
- Mentoring / regular meetings with Pastoral/Support Team
- Signpost parents / carers to external support
- Restorative work

7.   Sanctions

7.1   The 'preventing and tackling' government advice document instructs us:

Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

*Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village cent*re.

7.2   At Northern Arch Learning Partnership we define this as any action during the school day, on any form of transport to and from school, on any educational visit or when under the direction of school staff, or still in school uniform in transit to their place of abode within a reasonable duration of time.

7.3   The Head Teacher/Head of School should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

7.4   We work with the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership in order to provide a multi-agency approach to any incidents of bullying in or around school.

7.5   Many incidents of bullying can be dealt with effectively without the use of sanctions. However, the school will apply sanctions to protect the pupil(s) who is / are the victim/s of persistent bullying. The below list is not exhaustive. These sanctions might include: -

- Formal warnings
- Contacting parents / carers
- Removal of privileges
- Reports for monitoring purposes
- Behaviour support plans/Behaviour contracts
- Time in Choices Room – Secondary setting
- Detentions
- External suspension (fixed term and permanent)

8.   Signs of Bullying

8.1   The behaviour of children or young people is not always easily understood. Changes in behaviour may have many causes. Being bullied can be one reason why a pupil's behaviour changes. There is a need to be alert to the possibility that bullying is occurring. There are some signs which need to be investigated sensitively.

8.2   Some signs of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Become withdrawn, clingy, moody, aggressive, uncooperative
- Behave in immature ways, e.g. revert to tantrums
- Have sleep or appetite problems
- Have difficulty concentrating
- Show variation in academic performance
- Have cuts, bruises or aches and pains without adequate explanation
- Request extra money or start stealing
- Have clothes or possessions which are damaged or lost
- Complain of illness more frequently
- Become withdrawn and reluctant to engage with others socially
- Show a marked changed in a well-established pattern or behaviour, e.g.
- Loss of appetite in a previously favoured activity
- Changing times of coming to and going from the house
- A reluctance to leave the house
- A request to change school
- A refusal to return to a place, activity
- Refusal to attend school
- Being frightened of walking to or from school

9.   Guidelines for Pupils, Parents / Carers

9.1   It is essential that incidents of bullying are reported as quickly as possible with full details given in order for proactive measures to be taken.   Where incidents of bullying stem from outside of school for example social media usage it is encouraged that pupils, parents/carers take appropriate steps to prevent further incidents from happening.

We encourage the following:

Pupils to:

a) Not stand by and watch, but report to a member of staff.
b) Show that they and their friends disapprove of bullying.
c) Give sympathy and support to any pupil who may be bullied
d) Be careful not to tease people or make personal remarks.
e) Tell their class teacher or trusted adult if they know of any bullying as the person being bullied may be too scared or lonely to tell.
f) Tell the truth.
g) Help to keep the school a happy and safe place.

Parents/carers to:

a) Work in partnership with the schools to achieve good relationships between pupils.
b) Contact their child's school if they are concerned about their child being unsettled in school or if they suspect that they may be involved in bullying.
c) Support the school in investigating all sides of the incident/s.
d) For all serious cases of bullying, take part in discussions about what strategies should be used and support the action being taken by the schools.

Who to tell?

9.2 We encourage any concerns to be shared with anyone within the school community, be it a teacher, member of staff, parent /carer or another child. Children are then encouraged to share this information with a member of staff who will in turn pass concerns on to the relevant people; be it the Pastoral staff, Designated Safeguarding Lead, or member of the Senior Leadership Team.

10. Staff Actions

10.1 The following actions are appropriate for use with individuals who are bullied and those who are involved in bullying: -

- Ensure the immediate safety and well-being of the pupil (pupil/s may need to be separated from one another whilst investigations are ongoing)
- Respond calmly and consistently with respect to all parties
- Listen to the pupils involved sympathetically and take their concerns seriously
- Ensure that the pupils clearly understand what action will be taken
- Inform all parents / carers where appropriate
- Consider a range of strategies to ensure that bullying does not occur again and action these (see support)
- Record incident/s and action taken in CPOMS.
- Inform the pupils (victim and alleged perpetrator) Head of Year/Phase Lead, through normal pastoral lines of communication and any other relevant members of staff
- Update and share any relevant Risk Assessments and safety plans

11.   Monitoring of Bullying Incidents

11.1   At the end of each term the number and nature of bullying incidents in school will be analysed to determine if specific action is required. This data will be reported to governors. If a trend is identified the Academy will coordinate specific support and intervention.

11.2   Interventions are swift and recorded on school databases (e.g. CPOMS/ClassCharts/Arbor) system and in individual pupil logs. They are communicated to staff through conversation and email.

12.   Online Bullying

12.1   This section should be read in conjunction with the Online Safety policy.

12.2   With the growth of social networking and the accessibility of communication technology, bullying can occur at all times of the day and be prevalent in all areas of society.

12.3   This is a fast-moving element of modern society and whilst jurisdiction for the policing and management of social media, text messaging and the internet as a whole lies outside of the school, Northern Arch Learning Partnership can signpost you towards support. We also ensure welfare and sanction packages for incidents which then result in actions inside the school day.

12.4   Online bullying such as written threats via a social networking site, text or email do occur. However, at Northern Arch Learning Partnership we actively ban the use of any mobile phone in school and pupils therefore should not have access to any social networking site whilst in school.

12.5   With any potential hate crime, the Police are the ultimate body responsible for any action they deem appropriate; in terms of Online-safety behaviour this is partially devolved to other trusted organisations.

12.6   In terms of the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, sexting, sextortion, coercion or anything which you feel puts a young person at risk of being exploited via the Internet - this is the domain of CEOPS. Northern Arch Learning Partnership would strongly recommend that any pupil or parent / carer who feels at risk in this regard, contacts the Safeguarding Team as we may need to make additional referrals to Darlington Safeguarding Partnership.

12.7   Trolling, cyber-bullying and anything which makes young people feel afraid or upset is the domain of Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation. There is also a Childline chat room for impartial advice open to parents / carers and children – we offer links to these websites.

12.8   The school's jurisdiction for taking disciplinary action extends to offences which take place on the school site during the school day, during lunchtimes, when pupils are travelling to and from school, whilst pupils are in school uniform or wearing the school dress code, and while pupils are at an official school activity, or on an official school journey, visit or activity off the school site. This jurisdiction can also extend to situations where the event or actions cause the school to be held in disrepute.

12.9   Online Safety or bullying concerns are given priority for positive outcomes. Online safety is monitored through the use of our filtering and monitoring system, and every breach is sent to the Safeguarding Team. Parents / carers are informed by regular communication of the school's policy towards Online safety.

13.   Training

      Staff

13.1   Staff will have access to Pastoral support training through the schools Continuing Professional Development Programme (See Training / CPD Policy). They will also participate in regular whole staff training and any amendments to policy will be discussed within this.

      Pupils

13.2   Pupils will receive guidance on how to deal with issues relating to bullying through the social skills curriculum, assemblies, annual Anti-bullying week initiatives and the school's ethos.

      Governors

13.3   Governors will have Local Authority training available to them and will have knowledge of any adopted policy.

14.   Further Guidance and Support Available to School

14.1   In addition to the whole school procedures outlined above, Northern Arch Learning Partnership actively engages with the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership and as a result follows specific advice detailed in the link below.

      [Darlington Safeguarding Board - Safeguarding Advice and Guidance](#)

15.   Statement from the Board of Directors.

15.1   Bullying is unacceptable, and we support the Head Teacher/Heads of School in eradicating bullying from Northern Arch Learning Partnership. Bullying can happen in many ways, and it is the duty of all adults in school to support all anti-bullying measures.

15.2   There is a comprehensive antibullying policy that sets out in detail all practices and procedures in place to meet all pupils' needs.

15.3   The Board of Directors, in cooperation with the Head Teacher/Head of School, will monitor the number of bullying incidents per academic year and support the implementation of any future area specific anti-bullying strategies.