



Anti-bullying policy

Policy Owner	Director of Quality Assurance
Approved by	Education Standards Committee
Last reviewed on	September 2024
Next review date	September 2025

Statement of Intent

- 1) The Creative Education Trust (CET) is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our academies. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a “Telling” community. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it to someone they trust, which can be a member of staff, year leader or buddy. Knowing about incidents of bullying but not reporting them is unacceptable.
- 2) This policy is written from the perspective of pupils being the subject of bullying.

Definition

- 3) ‘Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages 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.’ (*Preventing and tackling bullying*, DfE October 2014)
- 4) Examples of bullying include:
 - a) emotional - being intentionally hostile, unfriendly, excluding, tormenting; emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying
 - b) physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
 - c) racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
 - d) sexual - unwanted physical contact, sexual assault, or sexually abusive comments; frequently linked with cyber-bullying, for example sexting, or the sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery on a non-consensual basis



- e) homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or gender-based bullying focused on sexual orientation, gender identification or inappropriate use of language such as describing actions or objects as 'gay'
 - f) racist, religious, special educational needs or disability – bullying focused on an individual's characteristics
 - g) verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing; discriminatory language of any kind is unacceptable and will be challenged
 - h) cyber – all areas of the internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technologies including camera and video facilities
 - i) artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Creative Education Trust recognises that Ai has many uses to help pupils learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. Creative Education Trust will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with the provisions of this policy.
- 5) Distinguishing between normal social problems and bullying can be challenging but it is essential if we are to address pupils' well-being effectively. Research indicates some key factors that can help staff differentiate between normal social problems and bullying:
- **Repetitive and intentional behaviour:** bullying typically involves repetitive and intentional actions designed to hurt, harm or intimidate another pupil. It goes beyond occasional conflicts or disagreements that are part of normal social interactions
 - **Power imbalance:** bullying often includes a power imbalance, where one pupil has more power or control over the other. The power imbalance can be physical, social, or psychological. In normal social problems, conflicts tend to occur between peers of relatively equal power
 - **Harmful intent:** bullying involves harmful intent. The perpetrator intends to cause distress, harm or fear in the victim. In contrast, normal social problems may result from misunderstandings or disagreements without the intention to hurt
 - **Consistency:** bullying is consistent over time, whereas normal social problems are more likely to be isolated incidents. If a pupil repeatedly targets another pupil with harmful actions or words, it may indicate bullying
 - **Severity:** the severity of the behaviour matters. While normal social problems may involve minor disagreements or conflicts, bullying can include more severe actions, such as physical violence, spreading rumours, or cyberbullying
 - **Emotional impact:** research suggests that bullying often has a more profound emotional impact on the victim. Pupils who are bullied may experience anxiety, depression or fear. In contrast, typical social problems may lead to temporary discomfort but not long-lasting emotional distress.



Objectives

- 5) To develop the skills necessary for pupils and staff to deal effectively with incidents as they arise.
- 6) To instil in all pupils the desire to eliminate any behaviour which can be construed as menacing, threatening or physically damaging.
- 7) To develop in all pupils a confident and sociable manner which enables them to look after their own interests, and those of their fellow pupils.
- 8) To create in parents a feeling of confidence that their children are safe in the academy and an assurance in the academy's ability to deal with any such problems.
- 9) To include pupil voice in making decisions about the academy's position on bullying.
- 10) To notify parents of those pupils involved in incidents of bullying, as perpetrators or victims, and the action taken by the academy.
- 11) To record incidents and action taken where appropriate.

Prevention of bullying

- 12) The Principal/Headteacher will ensure that pupils develop a clear understanding about what bullying is, the impact it can have and how to prevent and report bullying. This will typically be through the PSHE/SRE curriculum and assembly programme.
- 13) All staff must be familiar with the academy's current policies to protect pupils from bullying and other forms of harm, specifically the anti-bullying policy, behaviour for learning policy and the child protection policy. **All** staff must also be aware of the statutory guidance contained or alluded to within, Part 5 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, so that they can adequately safeguard pupils when responding to allegations of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or when pupils report bullying via the non-consensual sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery.
- 14) The Principal/Headteacher will ensure that all staff have a thorough understanding about how to prevent and tackle bullying through the academy's induction and professional development programme.
- 15) CET takes the protection of pupils from radicalisation very seriously. All staff are suitably trained and kept up to date in order that they are equipped to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. The designated safeguarding lead provides guidance to staff to ensure that any concerns that a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation are referred to Channel when appropriate. The school will work closely with parents, unless it has specific reason to think that this would put the child at risk, to identify early signs of radicalisation, keeping them informed about any concerns in school and pointing them towards the right support mechanisms.



Anti-Bullying Procedures

- 16) It is the responsibility of the Principal/Head to share the specifics of this policy with staff, students and parents/carers.
- 17) If parents or pupils have any concerns that bullying may be occurring, they should speak immediately with the child's class teacher. If a parent or child does not feel comfortable to do this, they should speak with any other member of staff.
- 18) It is the responsibility of every member of staff to ensure that any allegations or concerns reported to them are properly investigated. If they are unable to do this themselves, they must pass the case on to a member of the pastoral team or a senior leader. Pupils must be confident that incidents will be investigated fully and fairly.
- 19) Although most incidents of bullying will come to the attention of staff directly from pupils or parents, all staff must be vigilant in watching for activity both inside and outside lessons which might be evidence of bullying. They should look particularly for early signs of distress in pupils and follow this up to find out the cause. Any serious matters should be referred on to the Principal/Headteacher or a delegated senior member of staff.
- 20) Pastoral staff will make it clear that pupils may confide in them if they are experiencing problems of any kind. Pastoral staff also need to say that, if for any reason pupils are unhappy to talk to them, then other members of staff are available. The atmosphere should be receptive and sympathetic.
- 21) When a concern arises, the facts will be established, usually by asking any pupils concerned to write accounts of what has happened. In some cases, false and exaggerated allegations will be made, whilst in others, witnesses will give conflicting evidence. A judicious balance between the accounts of the alleged bully, the pupil being bullied and reliable witnesses will need to be kept, taking account of personal knowledge of the children concerned.
- 22) Serious allegations of bullying should be dealt with by a member of the pastoral staff or a senior leader in the first instance, who will ensure that the Principal/Headteacher is made aware of the situation. The Principal/Headteacher will ensure that those members of staff investigating an allegation or concern are fully supported with expertise both within school and from external agencies as required.
- 23) Once the matter has been investigated, the unacceptable nature of any behaviour will be made clear to the bully and his or her parents. Any pupils whose behaviour is found to be unacceptable will be punished in line with the CET behaviour policy and academy's behaviour management procedures. The consequences of any repetition must be emphasised.
- 24) Parents of perpetrators and victims will be contacted by the academy and offered guidance, including signposting to external agencies, to support their children.



- 25) Both the bully and the pupil being bullied will be advised and counselled about their future behaviour. In most cases pastoral staff are best placed to offer this and they will ensure that parents are aware of this process and are supportive of it.
- 26) The Principal/Headteacher will ensure that, following an incident, the perpetrators and victims are monitored and that any recurrence is dealt with swiftly and victims are supported to enable them to partake fully in normal academy life.
- 27) All CET academies must keep written records of all bullying incidents and the action taken. All must be able to supply Ofsted with an analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, sexist, disability and homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying, the use of derogatory language and racist incidents as required. A summary of these records must be reported to the AC/AIB in the Academy Report at each AC/AIB meeting.
- 28) There will be occasions where, despite all efforts, problems continue. It is particularly difficult to deal with bullying or harassment that takes place outside an academy, and, in these cases, the academy will advise parents to make contact with the police if they feel that this is appropriate or other supportive agencies. There are other circumstances, for example where the academy may be unable to achieve the desired result. In such cases it is sometimes necessary to persuade pupils and parents that they need to change their aspirations and build up relationships with other pupils.
- 29) Leaders are mindful that sometimes pupils do not report incidents of bullying that they either witness or experience directly. At least annually, leaders at the academy will make use of an anonymised questionnaire, pupil discussions or some combination thereof to sample the views of at least 10% of the pupils on roll about bullying. Leaders will ask questions to determine pupils' perceptions of the extent to which bullying happens; where bullying takes place; whether they would report bullying; and how effectively they think that reported cases are dealt with.
- 30) Leaders will ensure that pupils take part in CET anonymised surveys that include questions relating to bullying that may take place from time to time.