# Anti-Bullying Policy

## The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust

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| **Approved by:** | Chief Executive Officer | **Date:** | October 2026 |
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## Statement of Intent

At the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust our vision is to provide a perfect balance between excellent education, uncompromising pastoral care, and the development of every child's ability, no matter their background. We are committed to providing a caring, respectful and safe environment for all our pupils to enable them to learn. Within the Trust, bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, pupils should be able to tell a member of staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

## Aims

Our aim is to create an environment where every pupil can learn, flourish and feel a sense of belonging in a safe, inclusive community free from bullying and intimidation.
To achieve this, each school in the Diamond Learning Partnership will:

- Promote a culture where bullying of any kind is not tolerated.
- Ensure that all members of the Trust community, including trustees, governors, staff, pupils and parents/carers, understand what constitutes bullying.
- Ensure that all staff, trustees and governors understand their responsibilities in preventing, identifying, reporting and responding to bullying in line with this policy.
- Ensure that pupils and parents/carers are aware of the Trust's approach to bullying and know how to seek help or report concerns.
- Ensure that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously and addressed promptly, consistently and effectively.
- Provide appropriate support for pupils and families affected by bullying and to foster a safe, inclusive environment where everyone can learn, flourish and belong.

## Roles and responsibilities

## Staff

All staff have a responsibility to help prevent, identify and respond to bullying behaviour. Staff should:

- Be alert to early signs of distress in pupils (see Appendix 1).
- Recognise that changes in behaviour may be an indication of bullying or other underlying concerns.
- Listen carefully to pupils and record all incidents in accordance with the school's procedures.
- Provide appropriate support to all pupils involved and follow the Trust's anti-bullying procedures.
- Report any welfare or safeguarding concerns immediately to a member of the school's Safeguarding Team in line with safeguarding procedures.

## Pupils

As a pupil within the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust, you are encouraged to help create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for everyone. Pupils should:

- Work with staff and other pupils to prevent and challenge bullying behaviour.
- Report any bullying or concerns about another pupil's wellbeing to a trusted adult as soon as possible.
- Understand that remaining silent when bullying occurs can allow the behaviour to continue.
- Avoid supporting, encouraging or participating in bullying behaviour.
- Treat others with kindness and respect and promote positive friendships and inclusion.
- Recognise that reporting concerns about bullying is responsible and helps to keep everyone safe.

## Parents and carers

Parents and carers play an important role in supporting their child's wellbeing and helping schools address bullying effectively. Parents and carers should:

- Be aware of the signs that their child may be experiencing difficulties or bullying (see Appendix 1).
- Contact the school promptly if they have any concerns about their child's wellbeing or experiences.
- Support the school's efforts to investigate and resolve concerns, including attending meetings where appropriate.
- Work in partnership with the school and, where appropriate, the wider community to address issues beyond the school gates that may contribute to bullying behaviour.
- Model and promote positive, respectful behaviour for children and young people, both online and offline, and support the school's expectations regarding conduct and relationships.
- Understand that each school takes all reports of bullying seriously and will respond in accordance with its policies and procedures.
- Be familiar with the expectations set out by the school regarding parental responsibilities and partnership working.

## Trustees and Governors

Trustees and governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring each school complies with its legal duties relating to safeguarding, equality and behaviour.
- Monitoring bullying trends and the effectiveness of anti-bullying measures.
- Holding school leaders to account for implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring appropriate resources and training are available.

## Definition of bullying

At the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust, we have adopted the Anti-Bullying Alliance's definition of bullying:
**The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.**

This imbalance of power may be physical, psychological (such as knowing what upsets someone), intellectual, or social—such as having the support of a group or the ability to isolate someone. It makes it difficult for those targeted to defend themselves and can be used to intimidate, exclude, or control others.

We recognise that bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse and will never be tolerated, minimised or dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". Bullying can have a serious and lasting impact on a child's mental health, emotional wellbeing, attendance, engagement and academic achievement. We recognise that bullying can be emotionally abusive and may cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

We also recognise that low-level disruption, unkind behaviour, prejudicial language and offensive comments can have a significant impact on individuals and the wider school culture. If such behaviour is left unchallenged, it can escalate into more serious incidents and may discourage pupils from reporting concerns.

We acknowledge that the absence of reported incidents does not necessarily mean that bullying is not taking place. Some children may be reluctant or unable to report their experiences. Therefore, we are committed to creating a culture in which all concerns are taken seriously, pupils feel safe to speak out, and all reports are investigated appropriately.

## Behaviours and locations covered by this policy

This policy primarily addresses pupil-on-pupil bullying. Allegations involving staff, volunteers, parents/carers, contractors or other adults will be managed through the appropriate staff conduct, grievance, complaints, safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

Bullying behaviour can be:

| Type | Examples |
|---|---|
| Physical | • Pushing<br>• Poking<br>• Kicking<br>• Hitting<br>• Biting<br>• Pinching<br>• Tripping<br>• Spitting<br>• Damaging belongings |
| Verbal | • Name calling<br>• Insults<br>• Sarcasm<br>• Spreading rumours<br>• Threats<br>• Teasing<br>• Belittling<br>• Derogatory language linked to race, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation |
| Emotional | • Isolating others<br>• Tormenting<br>• Hiding belongings<br>• Threatening gestures<br>• Ridicule<br>• Humiliation<br>• Intimidation |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Excluding someone from activities of groups<br>• Manipulation and coercion<br>• Spreading rumours |
| Sexual | • Sexual comments or gestures<br>• Unwanted physical contact<br>• Inappropriate touching<br>• Abusive sexualised comments<br>• Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic abuse<br>• Exposure to inappropriate photographs/films<br>• Sharing sexual images without consent (including AI-generated) |
| Online or cyber | • Sending unkind or nasty messages<br>• Abusive or threatening messages via social media, gaming or group chats<br>• Posting/sharing humiliating images or videos<br>• AI-generated deepfakes<br>• Impersonation or making and using fake accounts<br>• Image-based abuse<br>• Doxxing (the malicious practice of researching and publicly releasing someone's private or personally identifiable information online without their consent)<br>• Exclusion from online groups |
| Indirect | • Deliberately excluding someone from friendships, groups, activities or games.<br>• Spreading rumours or gossip about someone.<br>• Encouraging others not to be friends with a person.<br>• Manipulating friendships or social groups to isolate someone.<br>• Sharing embarrassing information about someone without their consent.<br>• Deliberately leaving someone out of conversations, events or online groups.<br>• Humiliating or mocking someone behind their back.<br>• Using social media or messaging platforms to exclude, undermine or damage someone's reputation. |
| Prejudice-based and discriminatory | Against pupils with protected characteristics which may include:<br>• Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith<br>• Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture<br>• Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)<br>• Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)<br>• Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying<br>• Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act). |

The Anti-Bullying Alliance states that bullying tends to be group behaviour and that others can have a significant influence on the outcomes of behaviours, intentionally or otherwise. Pupils will be encouraged to act as positive bystanders by safely challenging bullying behaviour, supporting those affected and reporting concerns to staff.

Bullying is not:

- Infrequent episodes of social rejection or dislike.
- Infrequent acts of nastiness and or spite.
- Random acts of aggression or intimidation.

- Mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

These acts can cause distress however they do not fit the definition of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them.
Bullying behaviour that takes place outside school, including online, may be addressed and sanctioned by the pupils' school where it affects members of the school community or brings about disruption within the school environment.

## Safeguarding links

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff will discuss the incident with the school's designated safeguarding lead, who will ensure that appropriate action is taken.
Bullying incidents involving sexually harmful behaviour will be managed in accordance with our behaviour and safeguarding policies. We recognise that modern technologies have created new forms of harm, including deepfakes, AI-generated manipulation, image-sharing apps, encrypted group chats, and voice cloning. These emerging risks are addressed through our safeguarding procedures, preventative education, and support systems to help protect and promote the wellbeing of all pupils. Where concerns meet safeguarding thresholds or indicate that a child may be at risk of harm, referrals will be made to Children's Services and/or the police, as appropriate.

## Bullying and discrimination

The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust recognises that bullying can be motivated by prejudice or discrimination. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment in our schools where all members of the school community are treated with dignity, respect and equality. Any bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour related to a person's protected characteristic will not be tolerated, will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and addressed in line with the school's behaviour, safeguarding and equality policies.

## Prevention

## Environment

Each school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, and which will encourage pupils, parents and staff to report bullying concerns.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse).
- Recognise the potential for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Recognise that bullying may be affected and influenced by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as children with different family situations, 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 school 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-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

## Education and training

Each school 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 educating pupils about bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as through displays, assemblies, PSHE, RSE, peer support, and student leadership.
- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week, safer internet day, race equality week, and schools' diversity week.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building self-esteem.

## Reporting and responding to bullying

Bullying can be reported by pupils, parents/carers, staff or members of the wider community. Reports may be made to any member of staff, who will take all concerns seriously and act promptly. Pupils are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they experience or witness bullying. Many of our schools now offer other ways of reporting bullying such as worry boxes or online reporting forms.

Where bullying is suspected, witnessed or reported, the member of staff receiving the concern will take immediate action to ensure that any child involved is safe and supported. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed of all bullying concerns, particularly where there may be safeguarding implications.

An appropriate member of the staff in the school will investigate the incident by gathering information and speaking to all parties involved. The school will ensure that the pupil experiencing bullying is listened to and involved in decisions about support and next steps, where appropriate. Parents/carers will be informed and kept updated in line with safeguarding, child protection and confidentiality requirements.

A clear and accurate record of all bullying concerns, investigations, decisions and actions taken will be maintained in accordance with school procedures and data protection requirements.

Relevant staff will be informed on a need-to-know basis to ensure appropriate support and monitoring.

Following investigation, the school will seek to understand the underlying causes of bullying behaviour and provide appropriate support, education and intervention to pupils displaying bullying behaviour, alongside any sanctions. Responses may include restorative approaches, educational interventions, pastoral support, sanctions or other measures designed to prevent further bullying and promote positive behaviour. In repeated or serious cases, suspension / permanent exclusion will be considered.

Where necessary, the school will work with external agencies to safeguard children and address concerns. This may include referrals to Early Help, Children's Services, CAMHS or other specialist services. Where a criminal offence may have occurred, or where a child is at risk of significant harm, the school will make referrals to Children's Services and/or the police as appropriate.

The school recognises that bullying can occur outside school, including online. Bullying that takes place off-site, outside school hours or through electronic devices will be investigated and addressed where it impacts the wellbeing, safety or education of pupils. Such concerns will be managed in accordance with this policy, the Behaviour Policy and the Online Safety Policy. Where appropriate, the DSL will liaise with DSLs from other educational settings.

The school will monitor all incidents following intervention and maintain contact with those involved to ensure that bullying has ceased, support remains effective and any further concerns are addressed promptly.

## Cyberbullying

The school recognises that cyberbullying can occur at any time and may involve social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms, image-sharing applications, artificial intelligence technologies and other online services. Cyberbullying concerns will be responded to quickly and proportionately.

Where cyberbullying is reported or identified, the school will:

- Provide immediate support for the pupil affected.
- Encourage the preservation of evidence, such as screenshots, messages, images or recordings.
- Investigate the concern and take reasonable steps to identify those responsible.
- Review the use of school systems where appropriate and lawful.
- Speak with potential witnesses and relevant parties.
- Work with online service providers to report and remove harmful content where possible.
- Require pupils to delete content that breaches school expectations, where this can lawfully be requested.
- Use powers to search and confiscate electronic devices proportionately and lawfully, in accordance with statutory guidance and the DLPT's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.
- Inform parents/carers and involve them in resolving concerns.

- Implement appropriate educational and disciplinary responses.
- Refer concerns to Children's Services and/or the police where safeguarding thresholds are met, or a criminal offence may have occurred.

The school will also provide guidance to pupils and staff on staying safe online, including reporting concerns, blocking users, protecting personal information and avoiding retaliation to online abuse.

## Monitoring arrangements

Each school monitors all bullying incidents to ensure that bullying does not persist and that interventions are effective. This includes reviewing actions taken, checking in regularly with those involved, maintaining accurate records, identifying patterns and trends, and analysing incident data. Attention is given to the experiences of vulnerable pupils and groups with protected characteristics to ensure that any emerging concerns are addressed through targeted local or whole-school interventions. Pupil and parent/carer feedback is regularly sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's response, and success is measured through indicators such as a reduction in repeat incidents, increased confidence in reporting concerns, and improved perceptions of safety and wellbeing among pupils.

Each school also supports staff to identify and respond to bullying effectively, ensures that pupils understand that all concerns will be taken seriously and addressed sensitively, and the Trust seeks to continually improve practice by learning from national guidance, research and recognised anti-bullying organisations.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner in response to legislative changes, safeguarding updates, or identified need.

## Links with other legislation, documents and policies

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 2011
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Review 2014
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017
- Keeping Children safe in Education 2026
- DLPT ICT and Internet Acceptable Use policy
- School Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- School Behaviour policy

## Appendix One: Possible signs of bullying.

- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus.
- Begs to be driven to school.
- Is frightened of walking to and from school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic).
- Begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide, runs away or self-harms.
- Cries themself to sleep at night, has nightmares and or any change of sleep patterns.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to perform poorly in schoolwork.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- Asks for money or starts stealing money.
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen).
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet, mobile phone or suddenly stops social gaming.
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.
- Exhibits any change in behaviour/characteristics.

## Appendix Two: Useful links and supporting organisations

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.
Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance At-risk groups
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

**Cyberbullying**

Childnet: www.childnet.com
Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
Report Harmful Content: https://reportharmfulcontent.com/
UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety
DfE 'Bullying: 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

**SEND**

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

**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

**LGBTQ+**

Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
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**

NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk
Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: Sexual and sexist bullying
Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying): www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame

# Appendix Three: Approach to repeated reports of bullying by the same pupil

This approach is based on a 4-point scale, as follows:

1. If repetitive, targeted, negative behaviour towards another pupil is identified, a resolution agreement will be completed and filed on the pupil's record. Parents/carers will be made aware of possible sanctions put in place for the pupil exhibiting bullying behaviour and support for the victim. Parents/carers will also be advised that if bullying behaviour continues, their child will progress to the next point on the 4-point scale.
2. If bullying behaviour continues, the incident is fully investigated to establish the circumstances. The matter is discussed with the pupil(s) involved and they are warned that this cannot continue and will not be tolerated. Parents/carers are informed of the incident and of any sanctions which are imposed – these may be any that are considered appropriate from the school's Behaviour policy, depending on the severity of the incident. The Anti-Bullying Policy will be referred to and the next point on this 4-point scale will be explained if the bullying should continue. The behaviour of the pupil who has bullied will be monitored and particularly their relationship with any other pupils involved. The pupil who has been bullied will be offered support, including a discussion of strategies to help them to stay safe.
3. On the second continuation of bullying behaviour by the same pupil, the pupil's parents/carers will be contacted and requested to meet with school leaders. It is likely that pupils who reach this stage will be considered for fixed-term internal or external exclusion, and they may be advised to attend counselling or other intervention. A clear warning will be issued, and a copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy will be given to the pupil and to parents/carers. The next point on this 4-point scale will be explained if the bullying should continue.
4. In subsequent cases where bullying behaviour persists or is repeated, the Headteacher may escalate the matter in accordance with the school's behaviour and DLPT's exclusion procedures. This may include meetings with parents/carers. When determining any sanction, the school will consider the nature and severity of the behaviour, the impact on others, the pupil's individual circumstances, and the effectiveness of previous interventions and support. In the most serious cases, or where there has been a continued pattern of bullying despite support and intervention, the Headteacher may consider permanent exclusion in line with statutory guidance and the DLPT's exclusion procedures.