

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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<b>Issue Number</b>	006	<b>Author</b>	James Madine
<b>School</b>	Northbridge Enterprise College	<b>Approver</b>	Jo Sharpe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steve Richardson	<b>Regional Executive Headteacher/ Regional Director</b>	Nicola Kelly James Madine

### 1. Introduction

Keys Group recognises the serious impact bullying can have on pupils, particularly those with complex needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties, or those who have experienced exclusion from mainstream education. Every pupil has the right to learn and thrive in a safe, supportive environment free from bullying. Our schools are committed to challenging all forms of bullying and creating a culture of respect, empathy, and inclusion.

### 2. Aim and Scope

**This policy aims to:-**

- Prevent, de-escalate, and stop bullying behaviours.
- Support and safeguard victims of bullying.
- Address bullying behaviours with appropriate, restorative, and educational responses.
- Enable consistent recording, monitoring, and evaluation of bullying incidents across Keys Group.
- Ensure all staff, pupils, and stakeholders understand their roles in preventing and responding to bullying.

### 3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the intentional and repetitive misuse of power by an individual or group to hurt, threaten, or intimidate others. It can be:-

- Physical: hitting, kicking, pushing.
- Verbal: name-calling, insults, threats.
- Emotional: exclusion, humiliation, spreading rumours.
- Cyberbullying: online abuse via social media, messaging, or other digital platforms.
- Prejudice-based: related to race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristics.
- Child-on-child abuse: including sexual violence, harassment, sexting, and other harmful behaviours.

#### **4. Context in Special Schools**

Many pupils in Keys Group schools have experienced trauma, exclusion, or challenging behaviours. Bullying can exacerbate their vulnerabilities. Staff are trained to identify subtle signs of bullying and to intervene promptly and sensitively, using trauma-informed and restorative approaches.

#### **5. Signs of Bullying**

Staff should be alert to signs such as:-

- Withdrawal or anxiety.
- Changes in behaviour or mood.
- Physical signs like unexplained injuries.
- Decline in attendance or academic performance.
- Self-harm or talk of suicide.
- Aggression or bullying others.

#### **6. Prevention Strategies**

- Foster a school culture of respect, inclusion, and positive relationships.
- Encourage pupils and staff to speak out about bullying.
- Use PSHE, therapeutic interventions, and group work to build empathy and social skills.
- Identify and supervise high-risk times and areas.
- Provide training for staff on trauma-informed and restorative practises.
- Engage parents, carers, and external agencies as partners.

#### **7. Responding to Bullying**

- Take all reports seriously and act swiftly.
- Support the victim with reassurance and practical help.
- Address the bully's behaviour through restorative conversations and sanctions where necessary.
- Record all incidents on CPOMS or equivalent systems.
- Monitor for recurrence and follow up with all parties.
- Involve senior leaders and external agencies if bullying persists or escalates.

- The school will provide safe and accessible channels for pupils to report bullying anonymously, such as digital reporting tools or pupil forums, ensuring their perspectives contribute to policy development and school culture.

## **8. Sanctions and Support**

Sanctions will be proportionate and aim to change behaviour, including:

- Restorative meetings.
- Loss of privileges.
- Increased supervision.
- Parental involvement.
- Fixed-term suspensions as a last resort.
- Multi-agency support and safeguarding referrals when needed.

## **9. Bullying Outside School Premises**

Bullying occurring off-site, including online, will be treated with the same seriousness. Schools will investigate and take appropriate action, liaising with parents and authorities as necessary.

## **10. Bullying as a Safeguarding Concern**

All bullying incidents with safeguarding implications will be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), recorded in safeguarding logs, and risk assessments will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

## **11. Responsibilities**

- All Staff: Vigilance, intervention, and reporting.
- DSL: Oversight and safeguarding action.
- Senior Leaders: Policy implementation, monitoring, and training.
- Pupils: Encouraged to speak out and support peers.

## **12. Training**

All staff will receive annual training on bullying prevention, trauma-informed approaches, and safeguarding, supplemented by refresher sessions and updates in response to emerging issues such as cyberbullying and child-on-child abuse.

## **13. Equality and Inclusion**

This policy promotes equality and respects diversity in race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and faith. Discrimination or bullying based on protected characteristics will be robustly challenged.

#### **14. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Senior leaders will regularly analyse bullying incident data recorded on CPOMS, focusing on trends across pupil groups such as pupils with SEND, vulnerable pupils. This analysis will inform targeted preventative strategies and ongoing policy refinement.