



Anti-bullying Policy

2026-2027

Ratified by Governors	September 2026
Due for review	September 2027

This policy is based on DfE guidance [“Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017](#) and supporting documents. It also considers the [DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024”](#)

1. Policy objectives This policy outlines what Downham Market Academy will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole Academy community. Downham Market Academy is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

2. Links with other Academy policies and practices This policy links with several other Academy policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- E-safety policy (ELA Trust)
- Curriculum policies, such as: PSHE, citizenship and computing

3. Links to Legislation There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for Academies in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The Deputy Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead to communicate this policy to the Academy community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly and consistently, and, that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Academy Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the Academy.

- Students to abide by the policy.

5. Definition of bullying

Bullying is "behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally." (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying," July 2017)

- Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying.
- This can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying can be a form of child-on child abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

6. Forms of bullying covered by this policy

- Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying.
- Bullying related to race, religion, nationality, or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation, (homophobic bullying or transphobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist and sexual bullying, either in person or online
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying

7. Academy ethos

The Downham Market Academy community recognises, that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have profound consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our Academy can help to create safe, disciplined environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential. Our community:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships, to help prevent bullying.
- Recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop

effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.

- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the Academy to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns about bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

8. Reporting bullying

It is important that all incidents of bullying are reported to Academy staff with as much detail as possible and to include:

- Name(s) of the bully(ies) and victim(s).
- What form the bullying took.
- When the bullying took place and over what time scale.
- Where the bullying took place
- Name(s) of any other witness(es).
- Details of what has been happening.

We appreciate that it can be difficult for victims of bullying to feel confident enough to report the issues that they face and so we have several mechanisms for students, parents and staff to report instances of bullying:

- Speaking to the Personal Tutor, Head of Year, Safeguarding Team, or other trusted member of staff.
- Emailing the Personal Tutor, Head of Year, Safeguarding Team, or any trusted member of staff.
- Speaking to members of a peer support group who can then act as a conduit of information to staff.
- Accessing the "bully button" that is available on all students school iPad devices. This information goes directly to our safeguarding team.
- Emailing worried@dma.tela.org.uk to share any concerns. This information goes directly to our safeguarding team.

- All instances of bullying will be recorded on our safeguarding platform, MyConcern. An investigation will be completed and follow up actions will be taken in line with our behaviour and safeguarding policies.

We encourage all students to act responsibly and not be a “passive bystander.” If they see any bullying taking place, they have a responsibility to report it to a member of staff so that appropriate action can be taken.

9. Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the Academy:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the allegation.
- The Academy will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- Academy staff will collect information from all parties involved.
- The safeguarding team will be informed of all bullying allegations and these will be recorded on MyConcern.
- The Academy will inform other staff members, and parents/ carers, where appropriate.
- Sanctions (as identified within the Academy behaviour policy) and support for individuals will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including early help or children’s social care (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm).
- Where the bullying takes place off the Academy site or outside of normal Academy hours (including cyberbullying), the Academy will ensure that the allegation is fully investigated. Appropriate action will be taken which may include providing support and implementing sanctions in Academy in accordance with the Academy’s behaviour policy or signposting to services and support agencies to resolve the matter outside of school. A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the Academy in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- The academy will follow a robust follow up process that includes regular check-ins with the victim following the alleged bullying, this will be recorded by the safeguarding team.

10. Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the Academy will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the Academy systems.
 - identifying and interviewing witnesses.
 - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
 - Work with individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation.
 - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the Academy searching and confiscation process
 - Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for cyberbullying; the Academy will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
 - Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
 - Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online.

11. Supporting students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- The academy appoints a member of staff as an anti-bullying champion, who will speak to victims of alleged bullying/bullying. Following investigation and the investigation outcome, the Anti-bullying champion meets with the alleged victim/victim 2 weeks after the allegation, then 4 weeks and 6 weeks to monitor whether there have been any further incidents and to ensure all support has been put in place.

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with staff, a member of the safeguarding team, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of bullying as evidence and discuss how we respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Students who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change. Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child. Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with the Academy's behaviour policy; this may include warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and suspensions or Permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as appropriate.

12. Supporting adults

The Academy takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by students, parents, or other staff members, is unacceptable. Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the allegation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head of the School, advising them to keep a record of bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to allegations and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where bullying takes place off Academy site or outside of normal Academy hours (including online), the Academy will still investigate the allegation and ensure

that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the Academy's behaviour policy.

- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations, to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head of the School to establish the allegation. Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or allegation has been raised and signposting to the Academy's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil, or legal action as appropriate or required

13. Preventing bullying

The whole Academy community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration, and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Learning about different types of bullying (including online) through our RSHE/PSHE curriculum which includes the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- Education of positive relationships through the PSHE curriculum and
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child-on-child abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the 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-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people. o Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive Academy ethos.

14. Policy and Support

The whole Academy community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff, and parents/carers to access support and report allegations.
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate, and reasonable action, in line with existing Academy policies, for any bullying brought to the Academy's attention, which involves or effects students, even when they are not on Academy premises; for example, when using Academy transport or online, etc.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

15. Education and Training

The Academy community will:

- Train all staff, including teaching staff, support staff and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the Academy's policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the Academy/student council, etc.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

16. Involvement of students

We will

- Involve students in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the Academy's approach and are clear about the part they must play to prevent bullying.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.

- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in the Academy and embedded messages in the wider Academy curriculum.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

17. Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Ensure they are aware that the Academy does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the Academy gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the Academy to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

18. Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The Academy will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the Academy's action planning.
- The Head of the School will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Governor for safeguarding will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

14) Useful links and supporting organisations

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- 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
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- 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
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-Academys

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk • Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk • UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-forchild-internet-safety

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

LGBT

- Barnardo's LGBT Hub: [www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/our work/lgbtq.htm](http://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
- Academy's Out: www.Academys-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW)
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- A Guide Academy's
www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW
- Coalition-Academys-Guide.pdf Disrespect No Body:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters