



Momenta Connect



Part of Outcomes First Group



Acorn  
Digital  
Learning

# ANTI BULLYING POLICY

“Students”

**Note:**

For the avoidance of doubt, ADL is part of Momenta Connect, part of Outcomes First Group. It operates as an “online school” within OFSTED’s OEAS Framework as far as is possible. However, it is not a school nor registered with the DfE for those purposes.

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## Contents:

### [Statement of intent](#)

1. [Legal framework](#)
2. [Definition](#)
3. [Types of bullying](#)
4. [Roles and responsibilities](#)
5. [Statutory implications](#)
6. [Prevention](#)
7. [Signs of bullying](#)
8. [Staff principles](#)
9. [\[Updated\] Preventing peer-on-peer sexual abuse](#)
10. [Cyber bullying](#)
11. [Procedures](#)
12. [Sanctions](#)
13. [Support](#)
14. [Follow-up support](#)
15. [Bullying outside of school](#)
16. [Monitoring and review](#)

### **Appendices**

[Appendix 1 – Bullying Report Form](#)

## Statement of intent

**Acorn Digital Learning (ADL)** believes that all students are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of ADL's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at ADL.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding ADL's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of ADL's **Behaviour Policy**, which is communicated to all students, school staff and parents/ carers/ clients.

All staff, parents/ carers/ clients and students work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at ADL. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at ADL.

Signed by:

_____	Head teacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of management committee	Date: _____

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
Review: September 2024

2/20

## 1. Legal framework

1.1.1. **[Updated]** This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

1.2. This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- **DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'**
- **DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'**
- **DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'**
- **[Updated]** DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (2024)'
- **[Updated]** DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

1.2.1. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- **ADL Behaviour Policy**
- **ADL Cyber Bullying Policy**
- **OFG Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
- **ADL Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy**
- **ADL SRE Policy**
- **ADL Exclusion/ Deactivation Policy**

## 2. Definition

2.1. For the purpose of this policy, “**bullying**” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

2.2. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

- 2.3. Vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.
- 2.4. Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:
  - Students with SEND.
  - Students who are looked after/ previously looked after/ adopted.
  - Students suffering from a health problem.
  - Students with caring responsibilities.

### 3. Types of bullying

- 3.1. Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything.
- 3.2. Teasing another student because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.
- 3.3. Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:
  - **Verbally**
  - **Physically**
  - **Emotionally**
  - **Online (Cyber)**
- 3.4. **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- 3.5. **Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- 3.6. **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- 3.7. **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- 3.8. **Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- 3.9. **Ableist bullying:** Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.
- 3.10. **Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.
- 3.11. **Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
Review: September 2024

4/20

- 3.12. **Socioeconomic bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

#### 4. [Updated] Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1. The **management committee** is responsible for:
- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
  - The overall implementation of this policy.
  - Ensuring that ADL adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
  - Ensuring ADL is inclusive.
  - Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
  - **[New]** Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- 4.2. The head teacher/ head of pastoral is responsible for:
- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
  - Keeping a **Bullying Report Form** of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected. Details to be recorded on to iSAMs.
  - Analysing the data in the bullying record at **termly** intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
  - Arranging appropriate training for staff members.
- 4.3. **Key Teachers** are responsible for:
- Corresponding and meeting with parents/ carers/ clients where necessary.
  - Providing a point of contact for students and parents/ carers/ clients, when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- 4.4. **Teachers** are responsible for:
- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
  - Being available for students who wish to report bullying.
  - Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
  - Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the student's **Key Teachers** of such observations.
  - Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
  - Understanding the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
Review: September 2024

5/20

- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.
- 4.5. The head teacher/ head of pastoral is responsible for:
- Offering emotional support to victims of bullying.
  - Alerting the relevant **Key Teachers** regarding any incidents of bullying.
- 4.6. Parents/ carers/ clients are responsible for:
- Informing their child's **Key Teacher** if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
  - Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.
- 4.7. **Students** are responsible for:
- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
  - Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
  - Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other students in incidents.
  - Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

## 5. Statutory implications

- 5.1. ADL understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 5.2. ADL understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at ADL to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.
- 5.3. The **head teacher** will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the **head teacher** understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.
- 5.4. Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:
- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
  - The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
 December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
 Review: September 2024

6/20

- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

## 6. Prevention

- 6.1. ADL clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole school.
- 6.2. All members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- 6.3. All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.
- 6.4. Staff will encourage student cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work.
- 6.5. All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum.
- 6.6. Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- 6.7. Class structures may be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying ( including the use of break out rooms on Zoom).
- 6.8. Potential victims of bullying are placed in working groups with other students who do not abuse or take advantage of others.
- 6.9. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drop down days/ stop, drop, do events.
- 6.10. All members of ADL are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- 6.11. All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- 6.12. Key Teachers will be alert to any student feeling that they are being bullied or who wish to discuss their experiences during the Personal Learning Meetings or at any other time as raised by the student.
- 6.13. Students deemed vulnerable, as defined in [section two](#), will meet with their **Key Teacher** per **fortnight (or earlier by agreement)** to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.
- 6.14. **Key Teachers** will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing students to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
 December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
 Review: September 2024

7/20



- 6.15. Before a vulnerable student joins ADL, the student's **Key Teacher** and the **DSL** will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include giving the student support to help integrate them into ADL.
- 6.16. ADL will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst students, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- 6.17. ADL will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

## 7. Signs of bullying

- 7.1. Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a victim of bullying:
  - Being frightened to travel to or from home school/ alternative education venues/ login sites
  - Asking to be driven to home school/ alternative education venues/ login sites
  - Unwillingness to attend home school/ alternative education venues/ login sites/ ADL
  - Truancy
  - Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
  - Saying that they feel ill in the morning
  - Decreased involvement in school work
  - Mentioning that they are returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
  - Mentioning that they are missing possessions
  - Mentioning that they are missing dinner money
  - Mentioning that they are asking for / needing extra money or stealing
  - Mentioning Cuts or bruises
  - Mentioning Lack of appetite
  - Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
  - Mentioning that they are becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
  - Lack of eye contact/ use of webcam if this is common for that student
  - Becoming short tempered
  - Change in behaviour and attitude in class or discussing changes at home
- 7.2. Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating.
- 7.3. Students who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff, to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.
- 7.4. In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

Eileen Field/Helen Walker

8/20

December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023

Review: September 2024

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the student becoming aggravated
  - They have been the victim of domestic abuse
  - Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed
- 7.5. If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the student's **Key Teacher**, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

## 8. Staff principles

- 8.1. ADL will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.
- 8.2. Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- 8.3. Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored and are reported through as a behaviour concern to SLT for tracking purposes.
- 8.4. Staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.
- 8.5. Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- 8.6. If a member of staff believes a student is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the **DSL** immediately.
- 8.7. Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

## 9. [Updated] Peer-on-peer sexual abuse

- 9.1. ADL has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- 9.2. Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline.
- 9.3. Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence.
- 9.4. Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:
- **Rape**: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
  - **Assault by Penetration**: A person (A) commits an offence if s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body

or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

- **Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- 9.5. OFG’s **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** outlines our stance on addressing peer-on-peer sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.
- 9.6. To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, ADL will endeavour to educate students about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies, SMSC Stop and do, TALK TO US campaigns, drop down days and PSHE lessons <sup>1</sup>.
- 9.7. ADL will endeavour to ensure that students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, RSE and group sessions, through the curriculum, assemblies, SMSC stop, drop days and drop down days. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as the following:
- **Healthy relationships**
  - **Respectful behaviour**
  - **Gender roles, stereotyping and equality**
  - **Body confidence and self-esteem**
  - **Prejudiced behaviour**
  - **That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong**
  - **Addressing cultures of sexual harassment**
- 9.8. All staff will be aware that students of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers and will never tolerate abuse as “**banter**” or “**part of growing up**”.
- 9.9. All staff will be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including **sexting** and **gender issues**, Staff will also be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing-/initiation-type violence.
- 9.10. Where a pupil is found to have been involved in harmful sexual behaviour, ADL will help the pupil to move forward from the incident by supporting them in adopting more positive behaviour patterns and attitudes.
- 9.11. All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of students with SEND, who are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.
- 9.12. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the student’s SEND and will always explore indicators further.

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<sup>1</sup> PSHE is an elective course offered at ADL.

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
Review: September 2024

10/20

- 9.13. LGBTQ+ children can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ children.
- 9.14. ADL's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between pupils of the opposite sex.
- 9.15. Students will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.
- 9.16. If a child has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care services (CSCS).
- 9.17. [OFG's Peer-on-peer Abuse Policy](#) outlines ADL's stance on addressing peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school's approach to preventing and managing instances of peer-on-peer abuse can be found within this policy and the [OFG's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#).

#### Managing disclosures

- 9.18. Victims will always be taken seriously, reassured, supported and kept safe.
- 9.19. Victims will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem or made to feel ashamed.
- 9.20. If a friend of a victim makes a report or a member of staff overhears a conversation, staff will act – they will never assume that someone else will deal with it. The basic principles remain the same as when a victim reports an incident; however, staff will consider why the victim has not chosen to make a report themselves and the discussion will be handled sensitively and with the help of CSCS where necessary. Staff will report all allegations of abuse against pupils to the [DSL](#). If staff are in any doubt, they will speak to the [DSL](#).
- 9.21. The [DSL](#) will be informed of any allegations of abuse against students with SEND. They will record the incident in writing and, working with the [SENCO/ head teacher](#), decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the student in mind at all times.

#### Confidentiality

- 9.22. ADL will only engage with staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation.
- 9.23. If a victim asks ADL not to tell anyone about the disclosure, ADL will not make this promise.
- 9.24. Even without the victim's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm.
- 9.25. The [DSL](#) will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:
  - Parents/ carers/ clients will be informed unless it will place the victim at greater risk.

- If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to CSCS.
  - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes – reports containing any such crimes will be passed to the police.
- 9.26. More information regarding ADL’s stance on preventing peer-on-peer sexual abuse is available in [OFG’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#).

## 10. Cyber bullying

- 10.1. ADL has a [Cyber Bullying Policy](#) in place, which outlines ADL’s zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying.
- 10.2. Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.
- 10.3. Cyberbullying can include the following:
- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
  - Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
  - Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
  - Silent or abusive phone calls
  - Using the victim’s phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
  - Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name
  - Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
  - Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
  - Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook
- NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.
- 10.4. ADL views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in [section 12](#) this policy if they become aware of any incidents.
- 10.5. All members of staff will receive training on an [annual basis](#) on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.
- 10.6. Parents/ Carers/ Clients will also be offered advice on cyberbullying in order to educate them on the signs and symptoms, and will be advised to report to the headteacher if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.
- 10.7. Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:
- [Possible extensive scale and scope](#) – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
 December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
 Review: September 2024

12/20

- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
  - **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
  - **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising
  - **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator
- 10.8. ADL will support students who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the student about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with [section 13](#) and [section 14](#) of this policy.
- 10.9. **ADL will inform all commissioning clients of their rights:** In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the “home school” has the right to examine and delete files from students’ personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parents/ carers/ client consent to search through a young person’s mobile phone.
- 10.10. If an electronic device is suspected by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device will be reported to the police/ commissioning client and it will be advised that this device should be confiscated and should be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

## 11. Procedures

- 11.1. Minor incidents are reported to the victim’s **Key Teacher**, who investigates the incident, sets appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and informs the **SLT** in **writing** of the incident and outcome.
- 11.2. When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:
- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately
  - Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the students being interviewed, including electronic communication. **ADL platform logins may be modified to prevent communications.**
  - If a student is injured or there is a suggestion that a student has been injured, members of staff will report immediately to the **DSL** who will make a safeguarding referral with immediate effect.
  - A separate classroom is used that allows for privacy during interviews and ensures all conversations are fully recorded
  - A witness is used for serious incidents
  - If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
 December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
 Review: September 2024

13/20

- The headteacher will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim
  - Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
  - Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete
  - All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students
- 11.3. Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic, sexual, etc bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

## 12. [Updated] Sanctions

- 12.1. If the **head teacher** is satisfied that bullying did take place, the student will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.
- 12.2. The **head teacher** informs the student of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (exclusion [deactivation], course withdrawal, course change and classroom change, etc.) and future sanctions if the bullying continues.
- 12.3. If possible, the **head teacher** will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face in an online classroom, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into an online face-to-face meeting with the bully.
- 12.4. The perpetrator is made to realise, by speaking **once per week** with their **Key Teacher**, that some students do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour.
- 12.5. Parents/ carers/ clients are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- 12.6. All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions, and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.
- 12.7. ADL will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. ADL's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.
- 12.8. The **Key Teacher** formally monitors the students involved over the next **half-term, reporting any incidents into Wellbeing Manager in iSAMS.**

- 12.9. ADL will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour, and will not exclude pupils unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with its [Exclusion/ Deactivation Policy](#).

### 13.Support

13.1. In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from the school counsellor
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken
- Liaison with their parents/ carers/ clients to ensure a continuous dialogue of support
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parents/ carers/ client or a member of staff
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents/ carers/ client to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online
- Discussion with their parents/ carers/ client on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents)

13.2. The headteacher will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Victims will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school clubs or activities.

13.3. Staff, particularly the DSL, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend a mandatory counselling session to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. ADL will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

### 14.Follow-up support

14.1. For a month after the initial complaint of bullying, the [Key Teacher](#) will hold an informal discussion, on a [weekly](#) basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped.

14.2. The [Key Teacher](#) will hold a formal meeting/ explicit intent as agenda item, during the [fortnightly](#) cycle for key teacher meetings, to check whether the bullying has stopped – these formal meetings/ formal agenda item will continue to take place until the [Key Teacher](#) and victim are confident the bullying has stopped.

14.3. If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning different places in classes.

14.4. The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
Review: September 2024

15/20



- 14.5. The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by within their online classes and are introduced to any **peer mentors'/ ADL buddies**.
- 14.6. ADL, particularly the **DSL with the Key Teacher**, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.
- 14.7. ADL realises that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. It will be recommended that perpetrators attend a mandatory counselling session with the head teacher, to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues or that a referral will be made to the perpetrators home school/ commissioning client.
- 14.8. ADL will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.
- 14.9. The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by their **Key Teachers**.
- 14.10. One-on-one sessions to discuss how the victim and bully are progressing may be appropriate.
- 14.11. The progress of both students will be itemised within ADL Friday Reflection Meetings.
- 14.12. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents/ carers/ clients **one month** after the incident.
- 14.13. Students who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:
  - Being listened to
  - Having an immediate opportunity to meet with their **Key Teacher** or a member of staff of their choice
  - Being reassured
  - Being offered continued support
  - Being offered counselling, where appropriate
- 14.14. Students who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:
  - Receiving a consequence for their actions
  - Being able to discuss what happened
  - Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
  - Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
  - Appropriate assistance from parents/ carers/ clients
- 14.15. Students who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the **DSL** will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHS.
- 14.16. In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the student cannot successfully reintegrate back into ADL, the **head teacher** and **DSL** will look to offer support to the home school/ commissioning client to support a transfer to an alternative education provision/ new mainstream school etc.
- 14.17. Where a child has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the student who has been the victim of bullying, their parents/ carers/ clients, the **head teacher** and **DSL** will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

## 15. Bullying outside of school

- 15.1. Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the [OFG Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#) and the [Peer-on-peer Abuse Policy](#).
- 15.2. The [head teacher](#) has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of ADL. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the [head teacher](#) the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member. [ADL will support home school head teachers/ commissioning clients with all information from bullying reports to support any interventions as decided by home school head teachers/ commissioning clients.](#)
- 15.3. Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of ADL premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off ADL premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.
- 15.4. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on [and shared onwards as a safeguarding concern to home school/ commissioning clients.](#)
- 15.5. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the student on "school premises", or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.
- 15.6. The [head teacher](#) is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police, or the anti-social behaviour coordinator, of the action taken against a student.
- 15.7. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

## 16. [\[New\]](#) Record keeping

- 16.1. The [DSL](#) will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions. This will be recorded into iSAMS and monitored.
- 16.2. The headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:
  - Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain students that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
  - Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.

- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within ADL, e.g. whether ADL culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.

## 17. Monitoring and review

- 17.1. This policy is reviewed every **two** years by the **head teacher** and the **DSL** and **the management committee**.
- 17.2. The scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2025**.

Eileen Field/Helen Walker  
December 2019/ April 2021/ August 2021/Sept 2023  
Review: September 2024

18/20

## Bullying Report Form

This form will be sent to the head teacher upon completion.

Personal details	
Name of person reporting incident:	
Name of student(s) being bullied:	
Gender:	
Year group:	
Form group:	
How may we contact you (please circle)?	
At school	At home
Home address:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

Incident details
What happened?
Where did the incident take place?

When did the incident occur?
Who has been suspected of bullying?
Did anyone else see the incident?
According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?
According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?