

York High School

Resilience – Aspiration - Success

Anti-bullying policy

Adopted by Governors: December 2024

Review timetable: 1 year

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1. Vision and Values at YHS

Providing safe and happy places to learn is essential to achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community. Our curriculum aims of Resilience, Aspiration, Success are embedded within pastoral care at YHS as we want all of our pupils to be respectful, confident and empowered individuals.

Every child should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported. There is no place for bullying in our school as we recognise the negative impact it has on the educational experiences and wider development of children and young people.

York High School, with the support of parents, the wider community, the local authority and young people themselves, take effective action to prevent bullying happening in the first place. A preventative approach helps to safeguard the well-being of pupils and staff, as well as playing their part in creating a society in which we all treat each other with dignity and respect.

2. Principles of this Policy

York High School is committed to the development of all our pupils, enabling them to become respectful, confident and empowered individuals. We therefore believe that all adults and pupils within school have a responsibility to respect the rights of other people and treat each other with respect.

Any form of bullying, which can include verbal, physical or emotional, and whether undertaken in a direct or indirect manner, is unacceptable. This policy clearly sets out our zero-tolerance approach to bullying, how we work to prevent bullying and outlines the actions that are taken when bullying is reported.

This policy links to other South Bank Multi-Academy Trust and school policies including: Child Protection and Safeguarding, Pupil Well-Being and Positive Behaviour.

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3. General Aims

At York High School, the aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

This policy will:

- Raise awareness across the school that bullying in any form is unacceptable and that everyone has a shared responsibility in promoting a safe and secure environment.
- Promote a positive ethos where respect, relationships and responsibilities are key to developing social and emotional well-being.
- Ensure a consistent response to bullying, with effective support in place for both the person being bullied and the person doing the bullying.

4. Legal Framework

This policy responds to advice provided by the Department for Education (2017) Preventing and tackling bullying and has due regard for:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education Act 2011

‘Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.’ (Preventing and tackling bullying (2017.))

5. Definitions

We accept the Department for Education’s (2017) definition of bullying: ‘Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.’ Experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim and this makes it difficult for the

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victim to defend themselves.

We define bullying as:

- Behaviour deliberately intended to hurt or harm
- Repeated over time
- Contains an imbalance of power

Vulnerable pupils

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example:

- on grounds of race,
- religion,
- gender,
- sexual orientation,
- special educational needs or disabilities,
- or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities.

Bullying can be motivated by an actual difference between children, or a perceived difference. Regardless of this, instances of bullying will be treated with a zero-tolerance approach.

Bullying is not an occasional falling out with friends or a one-off argument. Pupils will have disagreements as part of their social development. If this happens, it is not considered to be bullying and the pupils involved will receive pastoral support to repair the relationship.

6. Types of Bullying

Bullying can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical assault
- Emotional - teasing or ridiculing
- Verbal - making threats, name calling using offensive language
- Cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)
- Sexual bullying (refer to Child on Child Abuse, Appendix b)
- Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) usually through emotional or verbal actions
- Indirect actions – excluding someone from social groups, spreading gossip about them

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- Intolerance of faith

7. Roles and Responsibilities

For the successful implementation of the policy, everyone has a role to fulfil.

Governors

- Evaluate and review this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensure that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensure the school is inclusive.

Principal

- Develop whole-school policies which meet the law and school inspection requirements.
- Promote a school climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish.
- Continually develop best-practice based on knowledge of what works.
- There is a review of the school anti-bullying policy every year and, as a result, the policy and procedures are updated as necessary.
- Arrange appropriate training for staff.

Deputy Principal and Senior Pastoral Leader (Pastoral Care)

- The whole school community is clear about the anti-bullying stance the school takes.
- Pupils, as well as staff and other members of the school, are fully engaged in developing and reviewing anti-bullying work in the school.
- Anti-bullying work is celebrated.
- All pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of bystanders.
- Support Pastoral Leaders in resolving reported incidents of bullying.
- Analyse data on reported bullying and take action to promote a zero tolerance approach to bullying.

Progress Leaders

- Communication and meetings with parents where necessary.

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- Provide a point of contact for pupils and parents, when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- Ensuring all reports of bullying are investigated and logged on CPOMS.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Implement Safety Plus Protocols following an incident of unprovoked assault.

School Staff

- Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying.
- Supervise social times as per the duty rota.
- All staff take part in relevant professional development.
- All staff are aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships.
- All staff spot the signs of potential bullying.
- All staff report incidents of bullying using CPOMS.

Parents

- They are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying.
- They are watchful of their child's behaviour and attitude and report any changes to school.
- They are aware of procedures to use if they are concerned their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, including the school's complaints procedure.
- They are clear about ways in which they can complement the school on the anti-bullying policy or procedures.
- They can share their views through parent voice opportunities.

Pupils

- Inform a member of staff if they are a victim of bullying or have witnessed bullying.
- Remove themselves from potential bullying situations.
- Do not encourage or condone bullying involving other pupils.
- Work with adults in school to resolve bullying.
- Regularly share their views in pupil voice opportunities.

8. Possible Signs of Bullying

All staff in school are alert to the possible signs of bullying and report these using CPOMS. These can include:

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- Items of clothing and property may be damaged or lost more often than normal
- Frequent injuries
- Student may become withdrawn but reluctant to say why
- Educational progress may be slowly or suddenly reduced
- The student may always be hungry
- Reluctance to attend school
- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

9. How the School Prevents Bullying

York High School adopts a range of strategies to prevent bullying and to tackle it effectively when it does occur.

- Promote an open and honest anti-bullying culture which secures whole-school community support for the anti-bullying policy.
- Staff actively demonstrate positive behaviour and set a positive context for anti-bullying work in the school.
- A preventative curriculum including RAS lessons and creative learning opportunities (e.g. music, drama, poetry) to develop pupils' social and

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emotional skills.

- Anti-bullying ambassadors raise awareness of the issue and ‘signpost’ help to students who may be victims/protagonists of bullying.
- Anti-Bullying Week is celebrated in November each year.
- Targeted small group or individual learning (restorative practice) can be used for those who display bullying behaviour as well as those who experience bullying.

- Whole-school assemblies are used to raise awareness of the school's anti-bullying policy and develop pupils' emotional literacy.
- YHS Thinks encourages discussion and deeper thought about topical issues linked to SMSC.
- Pupil voice is obtained three times per year to further understand pupil perspectives about bullying and evaluate our anti-bullying work.
- Parent voice is obtained three times per year to further understand the perspectives of parents and evaluate our anti-bullying work.
- Staff are proactive on duty, both inside the school building and in outdoor spaces, at social times.
- Staff undertake professional development relating to anti-bullying.
- Leaders in school work with the local authority specialist services who can offer anti-bullying advice.
- Use of rewards system to recognise positive attitudes and behaviours.
- A range of ways to report bullying to the pastoral team including the Report It Now QR code.
- Regular delivery of the YHS Way - Behaviour for Learning curriculum which highlights the importance of Respect for one another, looking out for each other and keeping our hands to ourselves.

10. Procedures for Investigating Reports of Bullying

Bullying can be reported through a number of ways including:

- Telling any adult in school
- Using the link on the school's website (Report It Now)
- Messaging the school using Facebook
- Talking to an Anti-bullying Ambassador who will report to staff

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Reports of bullying are promptly investigated by the Victim's Progress Leader.

- If a pupil is physically injured, they are taken for medical treatment.
- The victim, alleged bully and any witnesses are interviewed separately and written statements are taken.
- Investigating staff listen impartially and ask questions relevant to the investigation. All pupils are supported throughout the investigation.
- All interviewed pupils are informed they are not to discuss the incident with others.
- When the evidence has been collated, a decision is taken as to whether this is an isolated incident or a repeated behaviour.
- All evidence is logged on CPOMS, including the initial conversation with pupils which may result in a verbal warning, (even though this does not meet our definition of bullying, it is part of our preventative and zero-tolerance approach to bullying.)
- Consideration is given to safeguarding procedures.
- The bullying log is updated by the Aspiring Leader for Deep Support.
- An assessment is made regarding the severity of the reported behaviour. For instances of unprovoked assault, the Safety Plus Protocols are followed.
- The Progress Leaders/Senior Pastoral Leader determine the sanction if relevant. ● Consideration is given to making a referral to additional support services such as the Youth Justice Service (triage and diversion.)
- Parents / carers are informed.

11. Sanctions

We will act promptly to use disciplinary action where any form bullying has taken place. This response will be fair, consistent and in line with the school

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behavioural system. Sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any SEN or disabilities that pupils may have, and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other children, and it should be made clear that their actions are wrong and appropriate sanctions imposed.

The following disciplinary steps will be taken where bullying has occurred: Verbal warning, detention, internal exclusion, fixed term exclusion (3 days), fixed term exclusion (5 days), a second period of fixed term exclusion (5 days), a final period of fixed term exclusion (5 days), a meeting with the Principal or Deputy Principal. Permanent exclusion may be justified in the most serious and persistent cases, particularly where violence is involved.

12. Support and Intervention

For pupils who experience bullying:

- they are heard
- they know how to report bullying and get help
- they are confident in the school's ability to deal with the bullying
- their pastoral leader helps them feel safe again
- they are helped to rebuild confidence and resilience for example by being offered enhanced pastoral support or lunchtime clubs
- they are encouraged to report any further incidents of bullying
- they know how they can get support from others
- in the most severe cases, pastoral leaders will support parents if they want to transfer their child to another mainstream school.

For pupils who engage in bullying behaviour:

- support is offered to help them understand the consequences of their actions
- consideration is given to a referral for external support such as the Youth Justice Service
- sanctions hold them to account for their behaviour, encourage them to

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modify their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused.

The bullying log is reviewed on a fortnightly basis by the Senior Pastoral Leader and Deputy Principal to ensure bullying has stopped.

A range of supportive intervention strategies can be explored on a case by case basis. This may include:

- Signposting to external support services such as Kooth and Shout
- Sessions with a Restorative Practitioner
- Support from our Pastoral Mentor
- Referral to the Youth Justice Service (triage and diversion)
- Referral to the Wellbeing in Mind Practitioner
- Referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

13. Bullying Outside of School

The Headteacher has the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Sections 90 and 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 say that a school's disciplinary powers can be used to address pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff, but only if it would be reasonable for the school to regulate pupils' behaviour in those circumstances. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and may be acted on. The headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

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14. Working with Parents

We believe it is important for our school to work with parents/carers to help them to understand our approach with regards to bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the pupil being bullied or the one doing the bullying. We will ensure parents/carers are made aware of how to work with us on bullying and how they can seek help if a problem is not resolved.

We have a well defined complaints procedure and we make our parents aware of this in line with our statutory duties.

Parents can report bullying to school by:

- Phoning the school reception and asking to speak to the Progress Leader for your child
- Sending an email to the Form Tutor or Progress Leader
- Talking to staff at Parents' Evening.

Parents can also request help with specific support in managing their child's behaviour. This can be done by contacting the Pupil Welfare Officer or Progress Leader at school.

Particularly during a lengthy investigation, a victim's parents may feel very anxious. It is very important that the investigator and the parents keep in contact but parents must understand that Pastoral Staff and the Senior Leadership Team do have other demands on their time. We will always endeavour to ring parents on the same day that the incident occurred; however, phone calls may not always be able to be made as soon or as frequently as the parent would ideally like.

Further support is available to parents who can contact the York Family Information Service at: 01904 554444 or by email to fis@york.gov.uk

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Appendix a)

Safety Plus Protocols for Victims of Unprovoked Assault

1. Investigate matter – statements from both students involved and witnesses
2. Phone Police 101 and report if injury requires hospitalisation
3. Attacker to receive immediate 5 day exclusion

During 5 Day Exclusion

Victim:

1. Immediate phone call to parents
 - Enquire as to mental and physical health
 - Set up meeting in school to discuss safety plus protocols
 - Discuss the situation that only if the injuries require hospital treatment do the school inform the police

Safety Plus Meeting

1. Timetable implications – Attacker to be removed from lessons if the victim wishes for 2 week period
2. Update on sanction for attacker
3. Mentor agreed
4. Immediate referral system to report future incidents
5. Phone number and email of Progress Leader for immediate parental contact
6. Counselling offered – Victim support – YJS Triage
7. Parents told all staff will be informed to watch for further incidents (added to ClassCharts)
8. Any further incidents to be fully investigated by victim's Head of House

Attacker Follow-Up

Readmission with Parents

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1. Informed of consequences of repeat action
2. Counselling offered – YJS Triage and Diversion
3. Mentor assigned
4. Meeting with Police about future consequences
5. Timetable implications discussed
6. Community Service
7. Contract signed by parents and students

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Appendix B

Child on Child Abuse

Child on child abuse is when children abuse other children. *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)* outlines the forms of abuse which are most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

At York High School, child on child abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils. We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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Please refer to the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#) for information about minimizing the risk of child on child abuse.

Preventing Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline. 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.

Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:

- Rape
- Assault by Penetration
- Sexual Assault whereby 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.

The school's [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#) outlines our stance on addressing child-on-child sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence are uncovered.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies, YHS Thinks and RAS lessons.

The school will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in RAS lessons, RSE and group sessions where appropriate. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as the following:

- Healthy relationships

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- 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

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and sex are capable of abusing other children and will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”. All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting and gender issues, such as girls being sexually touched or assaulted, and boys being subjected to hazing/initiation type of violence which aims to cause physical, emotional or psychological harm. All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who are three times more likely to be abused than other children. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil’s SEND and will always explore indicators further.

LGBT children can be targeted by other children. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBT, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBT children.

The school’s response to incidents will not be influenced by the child’s gender.

Reporting Abuse

Children can report abuse through the following ways:

- Telling any member of staff in school
- Using the QR codes displayed around school (Report it Now)
- A family member may report abuse to a member of staff in school
- A pupil may make a disclosure concerning a child at school

Investigations of Alleged Child on Child Abuse

Allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded as outlined in the school’s procedures within the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**. All members of staff in school use CPOMs as a way to report concerns; this system records details of the concern, along with the staff member’s name, date and time.

Where child on child abuse has been perpetrated, action will be taken in line

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with the school's **Positive Behaviour Policy**.

If a child has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH.)

Victims will always be taken seriously, reassured, supported and kept safe. It is also noted that children may not feel ready or able to make a disclosure; they will be supported during this time and process.

Victims will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem or made to feel ashamed. 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. This may require the help of the MASH where necessary. If staff are in any doubt, they will speak to the DSL.

The DSL will be informed of any allegations of abuse against pupils with SEND. The DSL may liaise with the SENCo if required. They will record the incident in writing and determine what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the pupil in mind at all times.

Confidentiality

The school will only engage with staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation.

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the disclosure, the school will not make this promise. 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.

The DSL will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:

- Parents 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 the MASH.
- Incidents of sexual violence (rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults) are crimes – reports containing any such crimes will be passed to the police.