

Anti-Bullying (Pupils) Policy

Agreed by SLT: January 2021

Review: January 2024

Signed by:





Contents

Core Values **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Definition of bullying..... 5

Aims and Objectives: 5

 Who can be bullied?..... 6

 Identifying and supporting all vulnerable children..... 6

 How bullying differs from ‘falling out’ or an ‘isolated incident’ 7

 Types of Bullying 7

 Bullying on Social Media (National Bullying Helpline 2020) 7

 How can students report being bullied themselves or tell the school about their concerns for another young person? 8

 What about bullying outside of the school premises? 8

Roles and Responsibilities:..... 8

 Principal /Vice Principal responsible for Behaviour 8

 Trustees 9

 Parents..... 9

 Staff Responsibilities 9

 Procedures in dealing with potential / actual bullying issues 9

Effective strategies to prevent and respond to bullying.....11

 Prevention of bullying:.....11

 Examples of strategies used at JBA to prevent bullying:.....11

 Response / Intervention to bullying incidents:12

Monitoring and Evaluation12

Linked documents.....13

Appendices: Further sources of information for staff and parents:.....14

The law and statutory guidance with respect to bullying15

 THE EQUALITY ACT 201015

 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE15

 CRIMINAL LAW15

Our Core Values

T hrive We create a positive environment where we thrive and succeed	H igh aspirations We have high aspirations for ourselves and others	I nclusion We are inclusive in all we do and celebrate our differences	N urture We educate our young people and staff to nurture their emotional health and wellbeing	K eep safe We ensure that keeping safe and the safety of others is paramount
---	--	---	---	---

Differently



Think differently

to inspire young people to overcome all barriers and achieve their dreams.

The Anti-Bullying Policy has been written to help foster an environment that embraces and celebrates difference and ensures that all pupils are safe and embody practice that supports our Vision, Mission and Core Values. Employees at JBA are expected to THINK DIFFERENTLY to inspire young people to overcome all barriers and achieve their dreams.

James Brindley Academy is committed to the principles of ethical leadership in implementing this policy, and this includes all employees respecting the rights of our young people as set out in the UNICEF Charter.

JBA Core Values	How this policy addresses these values
THRIVE – We create a positive environment where we thrive and succeed	We are committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure that all our provisions offer a place where bullying is not tolerated and that everyone is given the best opportunity to be inspired, engaged and successful.
HIGH ASPIRATIONS – We have high aspirations for ourselves and others	We expect all young people to strive towards the highest standards of behaviour which will be supported by our Pastoral systems and Personal Development curriculum, to allow young people to understand the impact of their actions on others, thus developing their empathy and other associated traits.
INCLUSION – We are inclusive in all we do and celebrate our differences	From our core values, and through our everyday practice, our young people are taught to be assertive, resilient, considerate and confident – skills for life which will enable them to take their place as positive members of our local and global community.
NURTURE – We educate our young people and staff to nurture their emotional health and wellbeing	Through our Keyworker system, we have developed a culture of trust where all young people are supported and have access to a member of staff who is there to champion their needs. We encourage all members of JBA to report any bullying or negative behaviour
KEEP SAFE – We ensure that keeping safe and the safety of others is paramount	We are committed to creating a safe and secure environment where all young people are able to reach their full potential, academically and socially, by feeling safe, happy and confident that an adult will listen and offer support when it is needed.





Definition of bullying

James Brindley Academy supports the DfE's definition of bullying as:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'

At JBA we are committed to working with our children and young people, parents/carers, staff and trustees to ensure that our school community is a place where bullying is not tolerated and that each individual is given the best opportunity to overcome barriers and achieve their dreams.

We believe that:

- Bullying is repetitive and persistent and usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern
- The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.
- All bullying is unacceptable irrespective of how it happens and/or what excuses are given in an attempt to justify it.
- We must investigate all incidents of bullying and take action where necessary, supporting both the victim and the bully at all times.
- Children who bully must be held to account for their wrongdoing, but may need support to change their attitudes and behaviour.
- All inappropriate language that perpetuates attitudes underpinning bullying behaviour must be challenged at all times; including derogatory language of a homophobic, racist or xenophobic nature.
- Everyone in our school has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to all instances of bullying.
- We must communicate with parents/carers regarding any concerns about bullying and deal promptly with complaints.
- All our children must feel safe and be confident that any reported incidents will be dealt with effectively by all responsible adults.
- It is important to focus upon preventing bullying behaviours in school.
- Every child has the right to feel safe in school and to feel supported by staff, academically and emotionally; feeling assured that they have a champion - an adult who will never give up on them.

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to provide a working document which gives clear guidance to pupils, staff, parents/carers, and trustees our strategies to prevent and, where necessary, respond to bullying in working with the victims and perpetrators.

Our objective is to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and young people by encouraging high standards of behaviour in conjunction with an active promotion of positive individuality and acceptance towards each other. We are committed to creating a safe and secure environment where all young people are able to reach their full potential, academically and socially, by feeling safe, happy, and confident that an adult will listen and offer support when it is needed.



Who can be bullied?

According to the NSPCC, *'any child can be bullied for any reason. If a child is seen as different in some way or seen as an easy target they can be more at risk.'*

This may be because of their; race, gender, sexual orientation, Special Educational Needs/Disability.

Or it could be because they; appear anxious or have low self-esteem, lack assertiveness, are shy or introverted.

The NSPCC also state that perceived popular or successful children can also be bullied, sometimes because others are jealous of them. Sometimes a child's family circumstance or home life can be a reason for someone bullying them. Disabled children can experience bullying because they seem an easy target and less able to defend themselves.

Bullying can happen anywhere, however, depending on the environment, some vulnerable groups may be at an increased risk. At JBA, we champion every young person in our care whilst acknowledging that some individuals are more vulnerable than others and may be more susceptible to negative or bullying behaviour.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted, their caring responsibilities, special educational needs, or a disability. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Identifying and supporting all vulnerable children

We work closely across our Centres to monitor the relationships between all pupils as we know that by nature of attending our school, they are vulnerable.

We also know that often, our pupils have experienced difficulties with relationships at their previous schools, and therefore are hyper vigilant to being victims of bullying or identifying bullying behaviours in others.

As a school we plan positive action to support these young people through our Pastoral systems, particularly the Key Worker system which ensures every young person has a member of staff as their source of unconditional positive regard.

Where necessary, we will provide young people with additional support, for example; 1-1 interventions with support staff or other agencies, buddying up in class, mentoring with staff and any other additional support which is required and decided upon on an individual basis.

Expectations of appropriate behaviour are made explicit to every pupil, from the point of referral and throughout their time at JBA, focusing on our core values and expectations. We actively promote and encourage celebrating difference, where all members of our community are expected to demonstrate acceptance towards each other and celebrate diversity, which will, in turn, contribute to every young person feeling they are a part of the "JBA family".

Through our Personal Development Curriculum, we foster an academy wide approach which aims to develop a shared awareness and understanding. This ensures that a consistent approach to bullying will be taken; all members of the school community sharing responsibility for preventing and combating bullying. We also reinforce positive reminders during national awareness initiatives, such as anti-bullying week.



How bullying differs from 'falling out' or an 'isolated incident'

It is not classed as bullying when:

- There is no intention to hurt or harm i.e. behaviour is thoughtless or accidental
- There is a one-off fight / argument between pupils of equal stature or strength.
- There is a good reason why a young person cannot be included in a group activity.

If it is determined that there has not been a bullying incident, but a pupil's behaviour has nevertheless been inappropriate, the school's Positive Behaviour policy should be followed with suitable sanctions applied.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can be perpetrated in different ways:

- Emotional; being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical; pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal; name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber; all areas of internet and social media, such as email, chat room misuse and social networking including inappropriate messaging, passing on messages or sharing of personal information
- Mobile; threats by text messaging & calls
- Technology; misuse of equipment i.e. camera & video facilities

Bullying on Social Media (National Bullying Helpline 2020)

With the rise of mobile phones and hand-held devices, social media has become part of everyone's life and the use of social media has seen the growth of online bullying. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat allow people to share photos and video instantly around the world. We communicate with our friends and family through social media and it has become a vital part of business.

Unfortunately, these advancements in technology have also seen advancements in cyberbullying. We have seen an increase in bullying, harassment, or victimisation online. Social media gives bully's a safe environment to say what they want and target whom they please. Forms of cyberbullying via social media can include the following:

- Spreading malicious and abusive rumours
- Harassing you repeatedly
- Intimidation and blackmail
- Stalking you on-line
- Posting embarrassing or humiliating images
- Posting your private details
- Grooming
- Setting up a false profile & Catfishing
- Trolling
- Fraping - Posting on your account

These are just some of the bullying examples used on social media



How can students report being bullied themselves or tell the school about their concerns for another young person?

We encourage all members of our school to fulfil our approach of being a 'telling school'. If we are not aware of any issues then we are powerless to challenge any negative behaviour. Through our Key Worker system, we have developed a culture of trust where all young people are supported and have access to a member of staff who is there to champion their needs.

We encourage all members of JBA to report any bullying or negative behaviour, whether directly involved or as a witness to a bullying incident, by the following means;

1. Telling a member of staff with whom the young person feels comfortable to make a disclosure.
2. Telling a parent who should contact the relevant Key Worker/ Centre Leader as a matter of urgency.

We ask parents / carers to share any concerns with us as part of our duty of care for their child and, likewise, we will share our concerns with them to support all members of our community as effectively as possible. This may mean that we as a school may need to help a child become aware of the impact of their behaviour/ attitudes or language on others and work with them over time to change.

What about bullying outside of the school premises?

Highlighted from the DFE guidance on 'Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies' (July 2017);

'Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any 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 should be investigated and acted on. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.'

Roles and Responsibilities:

As members of the James Brindley Academy community, we all have a responsibility to ensure that any bullying type behaviour is reported and tackled appropriately. We are committed to working together with our pupils, parents/carers, staff, and trustees to ensure that our school community is a place where bullying is not tolerated.

Principal /Vice Principal responsible for Behaviour

- Dissemination of policy to whole school community
- Effective implementation of policy
- Staff training and awareness raising
- To ensure all adults who work with pupils are aware of school policy and work within its framework
- To monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy
- Report to Trustees on request
- Liaise with the LA to ensure the best practice
- Monitor types and categories of bullying
- Liaising with the LA to ensure the best advice available and ensuring that the school policy is in line with



National and Local guidelines

Trustees

Support Principal/ SLT in following guidelines

- Trustee Board will review the Anti-bullying policy on a regular basis, as highlighted on the cover of this document.
- They also review the impact of the Academy's anti-bullying work by reviewing the number and type of bullying incidents reported through SLT reports.
- This will allow for the Designated Safeguarding Governor to work closely with the Safeguarding /Pastoral teams to highlight targeted anti-bullying work / areas which need to be addressed.

Parents

If parents are concerned that their child is being bullied, or is bullying other pupils, they should let the school know of these concerns as appropriate. Parents also have a responsibility to support our school community in the following:

- Supporting key messages being given to pupils and where appropriate attend meetings and contribute in a positive way to actions aimed at solving any problems- including taking part in consultations about the policy
- Being aware of materials/resources used
- Being aware that the primary role in pupil awareness of bullying is a shared responsibility between home and school.
- Reinforcement of the value of good behaviour and acceptance at home.

Staff Responsibilities

- To model our core values as part of their everyday practice
- To be aware of the content of this policy and act vigilantly in recognising the signs / symptoms of potential bullying.
- To challenge bullying behaviour of any nature if recognised.
- To listen to all parties involved in any incidents of negative / bullying type behaviour
- To investigate incidents promptly and as fully as possible and take appropriate action or to refer to Key Worker/Centre Leader/SLT as appropriate
- To promote the use of a range of learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behaviour
- To promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive and most effective.
- To deliver and support curriculum / pastoral initiatives to promote positive behaviour / anti-bullying at JBA.

Procedures in dealing with potential / actual bullying issues

All pupils, from the day of their admission, will be made aware of our core values, highlighting our 'Inclusion: we are inclusive in all we do and celebrate our differences' value which supports our approach to all forms of bullying, and the concept of our being a "Telling School".

All staff are also aware of the above expectation alongside our Safeguarding / Positive Behaviour policies and are vigilant in recognising the signs / symptoms of potential bullying.

To uphold our value of 'Keep Safe: we ensure that keeping safe and the safety of others is paramount', we expect all pupils to always demonstrate positive behaviour and, through our Pastoral support and Personal Development



curriculum, for pupils to understand the impact of their actions on other people; developing their empathy and other associated traits.

We encourage all pupils to inform us if they, or others, are being bullied. Through our core values across the whole academy, our Pastoral support and our Personal Development curriculum, we actively promote to our pupils the importance of feeling safe in school and how they can ensure others around them also feel safe.

If a report of bullying is made, the following procedure should be adhered to:

- We must be as receptive as possible to all such reports, however trivial they may at first appear. All staff must be vigilant and sympathetic to any situations which may indicate that a pupil is being bullied.
- When a potential case of bullying is disclosed, it must be reported through our CPOMS Safeguarding system or reported directly to a Centre Leader/member of Centre Management Team. Any disclosure by a pupil must be taken seriously. It is not for that member of staff to decide if the disclosure is worth passing on.
- In the first instance, unless there are particular, more serious factors involved, a case of bullying should be dealt with using the 'no blame' approach and as discretely and sensitively as possible.
- Staff members should listen carefully and avoid interrupting or asking leading questions. In the case of a pupil telling a staff member that they are telling them in confidence, it should be explained that you want to help and may have to pass on information to key members of staff in order to do this
- Where there is alleged bullying and a possible threat to the young person the member of staff must first ensure the physical safety of the child.
- The Centre Leader / Deputy DSL should speak to the victim to establish what the problem is, and the procedures should be explained quietly and calmly to the child, including that evidence / information will be kept on file.
- The pupil can write down their account with dates, times, places, and names, if possible. The pupil should also be asked what they would like to happen next in order that their wishes can inform the decision-making process.
- The investigation should then take place, with witnesses and alleged aggressors being interviewed and statements taken. Based on the severity of the issue and if/when appropriate, discuss with the victim and aggressor to establish how the issue could be resolved
- In the case of serious incidents, advice should be sought from the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team. However, where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' the school's Senior DSL should be informed as a matter of urgency and JBA Safeguarding procedures followed.
- If allegations are sufficiently supported by the evidence, contact should be made with the parents of all involved including the victim. Parents should be advised how their actions might help the situation.
- If it is established that bullying has occurred, a school sanction should apply at the discretion of the Centre Leader/ SLT as per the Positive Behaviour policy, with appropriate parents being informed. The level of sanction should be proportionate to the act and should take into account any previous behaviour of a similar nature. This will help to demonstrate the academy's commitment to tackling bullying.
- The details should then be logged on our CPOMS Safeguarding system detailing actions against the aggressor and victim support. Any sanctions imposed should be recorded on the aggressors Arbor Behaviour record.
- Where vulnerable groups have been identified as being at increased risk of being bullied, these cases will be discussed at Centre briefings/meetings as well as Centre Management Team meetings.
- In the great majority of cases, when the matter is dealt with openly and fairly, the aggressor will recognise and acknowledge that they are at fault. The victim, too, may also be able to learn from the problem and be able to adopt preventative strategies which will be beneficial for the future.



- Having satisfactorily resolved the matter, the Centre Leader/ Centre Management Team should ensure that the situation is monitored closely. The victim and the perpetrator should be spoken to at regular intervals and given feedback to ensure that the matter is resolved fully.
- Information may be shared with subject teachers / associated staff to be extra vigilant / aware of group dynamics until it is clear that the matter is indeed permanently resolved.
- If the problem does persist, or if the Centre Leader feels that the matter is so serious as to warrant alternative strategies / sanctions, it should be referred to the SLT Lead for action.
- In all cases, parents of both the aggressor and the victim should be kept informed of any problems and the strategies adopted to endeavour to solve them. However, sanctions applied will only be discussed with the parent / carer of the child who is receiving the sanction.

Effective strategies to prevent and respond to bullying

Prevention of bullying:

Our school ethos is built upon our core vision and values, which are highlighted at the start of this policy and modelled by all staff, and these are shared with our pupils and upheld throughout our everyday practice. We have high standards of positive behaviour and expect all pupils to treat each member of the school community with respect, whilst behaving in a way which demonstrates an understanding of the value of education and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others.

As part of our transition programme and through liaison with parents and other agencies, we proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which may provoke any conflict and implement strategies / interventions to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

Our curriculum, Key Worker system and Personal Development curriculum, offers a variety of activities to promote respect, positive behaviour and acceptance across our community. We have embedded a range of anti-bullying initiatives as a part of our curriculum for all years, alongside the national initiatives such as anti-bullying week.

Where appropriate, our staff actively encourage discussion, group work and co-operative learning as a vehicle to promote and practice inclusion and respect for peers, whether it is a curriculum topic or a specific antibullying activity. From our core values, and through our everyday practice, our pupils are taught to be assertive, resilient, considerate and confident – skills for life which will enable them to take their place as positive members of our local and global community.

Bullying must never be kept a secret. Our Personal Development curriculum, including PSHE & SMSC, alongside our values-based assemblies, deal with the issues surrounding bullying and incorporates bullying and its negative effects. Our form time programmes also deal with the issues surrounding bullying and pupils are made aware of the places they can go to seek help and support should they need to.

Examples of strategies used at JBA to prevent bullying:

- Upholding our core values as an academy and through our Key Worker System system. Our values are embedded in all we do, modelled by staff and adhered to by pupils, and promoted through our approach to challenging bullying behaviour.



- Our Personal Development curriculum, incorporating PSHE, Citizenship activities and other programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, alongside core Religious Studies lessons across KS2 and KS3.
- Partnerships with other agencies who deliver 'Relationships' advice as part of our RSE curriculum.
- Effective reporting systems – pupils are aware via, signposting in school, assemblies and PSHE work how and who to report bullying behaviour to.
- Involvement in Anti-Bullying week annually in November and specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and internet safety
- Stonewall provider – GSHS acts as a trainer / provider of Stonewall training, with curriculum work provided through PSHE and assemblies.
- Group work in PSHE and other curriculum-based subjects – developing tolerance and understanding of differences
- Parent information events/information and parent focus groups
- Staff training and development for all staff
- Restorative Approaches, Counselling and/or Mediation schemes – developing empathy, ability to work through differences and reduce escalation of issues
- Celebrating success is a fundamental part of our practice and contributes to our positive and inclusive school ethos.

Response / Intervention to bullying incidents:

- We are clear that we will not tolerate any forms of bullying and any proven cases of bullying are dealt with in accordance with our Positive Behaviour policy to demonstrate that this behaviour is unacceptable.
- Sanctions/disciplinary measures for pupils found to have bullied another young person are applied fairly, consistently and proportionately, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the young person may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.
- We also consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need additional support or intervention themselves.
- Interventions including self-esteem work for victims of bullying – where appropriate, a range of internal and external services will be offered to those affected by bullying.
- Support / intervention for perpetrators to help modify attitudes/ behaviour and reduce the likelihood of repeat behaviour.
- Accurate recording which then informs future policy – each bullying incident will be recorded via our CPOMS Safeguarding system and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Communication with parents is paramount to tackling negative behaviour and we will discuss concerns with the parents of the victim and perpetrator to reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SLT members with responsibility for Safeguarding & Inclusion and Behaviour will monitor the number, type and results of incident, in liaison with Centre Leaders and can be consulted for advice. This information is shared with the Principal, Trustees, and the Local Authority/other agencies (if appropriate) through the half termly reports on Behaviour & Welfare.

We also check the effectiveness of our systems and support through a range of pupil voice activities to gauge how our pupils feel in:



- being heard
- being able to report bullying and get help
- being confident in the school's ability to deal with the bullying
- being aware that steps are taken to help them feel safe again
- being supported to rebuild confidence and resilience
- being aware of how they can get support from others

Linked documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Positive Behaviour policy
- Personal Development policy
- RSE policy



Appendices: Further sources of information for staff and parents:

Whilst a wealth of general information can be found via www.nspcc.co.uk or www.childline.org.uk the following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues and the social, mental or emotional affects caused by bullying.

- [The Anti-Bullying Alliance \(ABA\)](#): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Antibullying Alliance ABA brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.
The ABA has also put together an interactive anti-bullying information tool for parents and carers. The tool can be found here <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/course/147/information-tool-parents-and-carers>
- [Kidscape](#): Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals, and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

Cyber-bullying

- [ChildNet International](#): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves
- [Think U Know](#): resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.
- [Digizen](#): provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#): online safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe online.

LGBT

- [Birmingham LGBT](#): the city's leading charity advocating for and supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities in Birmingham and beyond.
- [EACH: \(Educational Action Challenging Homophobia\)](#): provides a national free phone action line for targets of homophobic or transphobic bullying and training to schools on sexual orientation, gender identity matters and cyberhomophobia.
- [Schools Out](#): Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.
- [Stonewall](#): An LGBT equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGBT bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

SEND

- [Mencap](#): Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.
- [Changing Faces](#): Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.
- [Anti-bullying Alliance](#): SEND programme of resources. Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.

RACISM

- [Show Racism the Red Card](#): Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.
- [Kick it Out](#): Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.
- [Anne Frank Trust](#): Runs a school's project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust



The law and statutory guidance with respect to bullying

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, new duties on schools and other public bodies came into force from April 2011. The Act strengthens and simplifies existing equality legislation. The Act brings together existing duties not to discriminate on grounds of race, disability and gender which schools are already bound to comply with, and it extends these to include duties not to discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or gender re-assignment. It places a requirement on governing bodies and proprietors of schools to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

CRIMINAL LAW

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. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.