Bristol School of Acting

Anti Bullying Policy

Date reviewed: July 2025

Review Date: July 2026

Introduction

This policy reflects current national guidance on anti-bullying. It aligns with the **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (2025 update), the Department for Education's **Preventing and Tackling Bullying**, the **Human Rights Act 1998** (in relation to protected characteristics), and guidance from the **Anti-Bullying Alliance**.

This document outlines the school's approach to bullying. We do not accept bullying in any form. We believe that the best way to prevent it is by promoting a school culture built on respect and equality.

We also recognise that bullying causes harm to both the person being targeted and the person doing the bullying. Our approach includes clear support and management strategies that focus on practical solutions and fair treatment.

Roles

Head of School: Stuart Wood
Head of Diplomas: Sam Bridges
Wellbeing Lead/ Safeguarding Lead: Lisa Wellsford
Safeguarding Team: Lisa Wellsford, Sam Bridges and Lorin Henderson

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Principles

Every student has the right to learn in a safe and secure environment. No one should face harm, humiliation, or abuse from others.

Bullying has no place in this school. There is no excuse for it in any form, including bullying linked to protected characteristics under the **Human Rights Act 1998**.

Bullying affects both the person being targeted and the person carrying out the behaviour. It must be addressed in ways that are fair, practical, and allow for change and development.

Dealing with bullying is a shared responsibility. Staff, students, parents and carers, and other professionals all have a role to play.

The school invests in preventing and managing bullying. Staff and students are given the training, support, and guidance they need to deal with it effectively.

Our behaviour system supports this work by promoting respectful relationships and clear expectations.

Aims and Objectives

- To create a school culture where bullying is recognised as unacceptable.
- To ensure every student feels safe and able to achieve their potential.
- To show parents and carers that the school takes student welfare seriously and does not tolerate bullying.
- To have clear and consistent steps for responding to bullying when it happens.

Strategies

To meet our aims, the school will:

- Take steps to prevent bullying before it happens.
- Make sure staff, students, and parents or carers understand what bullying is and how the school deals with it.
- Record all incidents of bullying clearly and review how well responses are working.
- Make sure everyone knows what to do if bullying happens.
- Support students who have been targeted and take action to help them feel safe.
- Respond to students who have bullied others by making clear that the behaviour is not acceptable, offering support, and helping them to change.

Definition

The Department for Education defines bullying as behaviour by an individual or group that is repeated over time and intended to hurt or harm another person, either physically or emotionally. Bullying often involves a power imbalance. It is frequently directed at specific groups, such as those identified by race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Bullying Behaviour

Bullying can be **direct** or **indirect**.

Direct bullying includes:

- Physical violence or threats

- Verbal abuse or name-calling
- Damaging or stealing property
- Extortion
- Unwanted sexual attention or contact

Indirect bullying includes:

- Ignoring or excluding someone
- Spreading rumours or gossip
- Malicious graffiti
- Abusive online messages or content

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves the use of phones, social media, websites, or other digital platforms to bully someone. This includes sending harmful messages, sharing private images without consent, or excluding others online.

The school treats all incidents of cyberbullying seriously. We involve Community Police Officers where appropriate.

Prejudicial Bullying

Prejudicial bullying targets someone based on a specific part of their identity. It is often rooted in bias or stereotypes and can cause serious emotional harm.

The school records and responds to all incidents of prejudicial bullying, especially those involving racism, sexism, or homophobia.

Examples include:

- **Racial bullying** – slurs, insults, or physical aggression based on race or ethnicity

- **Religious bullying** – mocking or excluding someone because of their beliefs
- **Gender-based bullying** – harassment or exclusion based on gender or gender identity
- **Sexual orientation bullying** – homophobic or transphobic comments or behaviour
- **Disability bullying** – teasing, exclusion, or physical aggression based on a disability

These examples are not exhaustive. The school will take appropriate action in any case where bullying targets a person's identity.

Response and Support

Immediate Action

Staff will respond to any report of prejudicial bullying without delay. The first priority is to ensure the safety of the student who has been targeted.

Support and Education

Where needed, students affected by bullying will be offered support. The student responsible will be expected to take part in an educational process to address the behaviour and understand its impact.

Reporting

All incidents of prejudicial bullying will be recorded separately in the school's bullying tracker and logged on CPOMS.

Parental Involvement

Parents or carers will be involved in discussions about any incidents of prejudicial bullying. The school will work with families to agree on next steps.

Sanctions

Prejudicial bullying will result in appropriate disciplinary action. This may include removal from the school site. If the behaviour continues or is serious in nature, permanent exclusion may be considered. This reflects the school's duty to maintain a safe environment for all students.

Bullying Outside School

Staff have the authority to take action when bullying happens outside of school. This includes online behaviour.

The school may respond to incidents that occur:

- during any school activity
- when students travel to or from school
- when students are in uniform or otherwise identifiable as BSA students
- when the behaviour affects the running of the school
- when it threatens another student
- when it harms the reputation of the school

Examples include bullying on public transport, in local shops, or in the wider community.

All reports of off-site bullying will be investigated. If needed, the school will inform the police. While staff can only apply sanctions on school grounds or when students are under school supervision (e.g. on a trip), the school will use its disciplinary powers where it is reasonable to do so.

Bristol School of Acting will take proportionate action to respond to bullying, wherever it happens.

Scope

This policy covers bullying that takes place on school grounds and beyond. While the school is not legally responsible for incidents that happen off-site, we take student wellbeing seriously and will respond to reports of bullying outside of school when it affects a student's safety or ability to learn.

If a student is at risk outside of school, parents or carers should contact the police. For concerns involving school-organised transport or trips, the school will speak to the transport provider and ask for their help in resolving the issue. If students from another school are involved, the Head and pastoral lead of that school will be contacted so that we can work together to manage the situation.

Prevention

All staff involved in teaching or supervising students will follow the school's zero-tolerance policy on bullying. Staff are expected to challenge bullying behaviour and reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable.

We address bullying in the following ways:

Whole-School Level

During PSHE lessons and student induction, students will be told about the school's

zero-tolerance stance and the steps staff will take to prevent and respond to bul

Individual Level

Students who may be at risk, or who have experienced bullying in the past, will receive extra support from the pastoral team. Students who have bullied others will be supported to change their behaviour through clear advice, monitoring, and education.

All students are encouraged to speak to staff if they are being bullied or see someone else being bullied. Staff will listen, take concerns seriously, and carry out a full investigation.

Parents who think their child is being bullied should contact the school as soon as possible. We ask that parents work with us to help protect their child. Reports of bullying will always be taken seriously and followed up. If a parent believes their child may be bullying others, we ask that they also share this with the school so that a clear plan can be put in place to stop the behaviour and support change.

Escalation of Sanctions for Suspected Bullying

Some bullying is hard to detect, particularly when it takes subtle forms. The school takes this seriously and includes support and monitoring as part of its response. If a subtle bullying incident is suspected, the pastoral team will review the case and take action according to the school's post-incident procedures.

Movement through the stages of response will be decided by the pastoral team, taking into account all available evidence.

Parent Involvement

We work in partnership with parents and carers to respond to bullying. The best outcomes happen when families and staff work together. We understand the influence parents have on their children and welcome their input—whether a student has been harmed by bullying or is responsible for it.

Responding to Bullying Incidents

The school is committed to maintaining a bully-free environment. All reported or identified incidents of bullying will be investigated. If bullying is confirmed, appropriate sanctions and support will be put in place. All staff who teach or supervise students are responsible for taking action and ensuring the victim receives support. The student who has bullied will be clearly told that their behaviour is not acceptable, and a written record will be made. Sanctions and support will also be applied to help them change their behaviour.

Students are regularly reminded that they should report bullying to a member of staff. When bullying is reported, staff will act.

Post-Incident Response: Support for the Victim

If a member of staff is informed—either directly or indirectly—that a student may have been bullied, they will take the report seriously and investigate it.

Support for victims will reflect their individual needs and the nature of the incident. It may include:

- Acknowledging that reporting the incident was the right step
- Reassuring the student that they are not responsible for the bully's behaviour
- Involving the student in planning how to move forward
- Taking action to stop the bullying and ensure their safety
- Contacting parents or carers
- Facilitating a meeting between those involved (where appropriate and safe)
- Offering support from external professionals
- Setting up peer support through befriending or mentoring
- Creating a small support group
- Increasing staff supervision where needed
- Reviewing progress over time with the student

All responses will aim to help the student feel safe and supported while preventing further harm.

For the Bully

There is a clear graduated response to address bullying, when it is proven that bullying has occurred (repeated, targeted, and with an imbalance of power). The graduation is outlined in the disciplinary matrix below:

Behaviour Management/Disciplinary Matrix

	Student Behaviour	Action	Who	Evidence
Cause for Concern	Initial concerns about: • Effort and/or engagement in learning • Attendance/punctuality • Missed deadlines/homework • Low level poor behaviour	Concerns logged on SIMS under 'BEHAVIOUR' against a student profile. Teacher interventions likely to include: • having constructive 1-1 conversations with student • refining classroom practice to encourage improvements & providing extra support materials etc. • issuing extra study time • contacting a parent/carer	Teacher	SIMSbehaviourlog to evidence intervention. *Cause for Concern* Letter given to student with targets, agreed actions. Logged on Class Profile by LF
Stage 1	Multiple and continued concerns around: • Effort and/or engagement in learning • Attendance • 85-90%/punctuality • Missed deadlines/homework • Low level poor behaviour	Behaviour logged on SIMS under 'BEHAVIOUR' - Teacher/Subject Leader intervention. • discussion and mentoring meeting with student. • communication of concerns to appropriate staff. • contacting a parent/carer conforming concerns. •	Teacher	SIMSbehaviourlog to evidence intervention. *Stage 1* Letter sent via JG. E-mail and Letter Logged on Class Profile by LF
Stage 2	Continued concerns or unsatisfactory improvement following Stage 1 including persistent poor attendance. **Minor incident – see below*	Behaviour logged on SIMS: • meeting with student, parents, teacher/ curriculum lead. • Target and intervention contract. • letter home to parent/carer confirming concerns.	Teacher/ Curriculum Lead	SIMSbehaviourlog to evidence intervention. *Stage 2* Letter sent via JG. E-mail and Letter Logged on Class Profile by LF
Stage 3	Continued concerns or unsatisfactory improvement following Stage 2 including persistent poor attendance. **Major incident – see below*	Behaviour logged on SIMS: • Meeting with student, parents, curriculum lead and Creative Director to issue stage 3 target and intervention contact (four weeks). • Communication of concerns to appropriate staff • Letter home to parent/carer confirming concerns.	Teacher/ Curriculum Lead/ Creative Director	SIMSbehaviourlog to evidence intervention. *Stage 3* Letter sent via JG. E-mail and Letter Logged on Class Profile by LF
Stage 4	Continued concerns or unsatisfactory improvement following Stage 3 • Attendance below80%	Final meeting with student, parent (and other staff as necessary) to determine support plan for alternative provision.	Creative Director and other staff as necessary	Letter home summarising outcome.

	*Major incident – see below		
*** Stage 2 - Minor incidents**		*** Stage 3 - Major incidents**	*** Stage 4 - Major incidents**
• Refusal to follow staff instruction • Undermining the ethos and values of the course • Wilfulandsignificantdisruption tothelearning environment • Use of offensive language • Truancy • Repeated non-submission of work		• Dangerous or unsafe behaviour • Bullying of other students (physical, verbal, sexual,online via social media) • Deliberately bringing the name of the course/ provider into disrepute • Use of offensive language directed at any member of staff • Vandalism	• Alcohol or drug abuse • Violent/aggressive/sexualised behaviour • Theft • Possession of a weapon • Major concern to community including actions that seriously impinge the health and safety of others

Once an incident or suspect incident of bullying has occurred and a student has been placed on the matrix they will be monitored for a period of 3 months. If no further incidents or suspected incidents occur they will then move down to the step below and a further 3 month monitoring period will be started.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All confirmed or suspected incidents of bullying will be recorded on CPOMS. Where a racist, sexist, or homophobic element is present, this will be noted in the record.

The school will prepare a termly and annual report for the Academy Council to highlight any patterns or concerns.

Senior staff and council members will review these reports and assess how well the policy is working. If changes are needed, they will be agreed and shared with staff, students, and parents or carers.