The Minster School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by:	David Shannon	**Date:** 06/10/2026
	Chair of Governors	
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Introduction

At The Minster School we aim to provide a supportive, caring, and friendly environment which allows all our students to learn in an atmosphere which is focussed on improving their life chances and helping them to maximise their potential. We expect our students to act safely, and feel safe, in and outside of school – we do not tolerate any form of bullying and we are committed to preventing and tackling it.

We recognise that as children learn and grow together, they may experience fallouts with their peers, but we are committed to supporting our students to resolve these 'relational conflicts' and stop them from progressing to bullying behaviours. If an incident of bullying does occur, we believe our students, parents/carers and staff should feel confident in reporting it and know that that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying will never be tolerated at our school.

We encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and child-on-child abuse, and we are committed to working with families and outside agencies where appropriate. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, change the behaviour of those bullying others, and help build an anti-bullying ethos within our school based on our Christian values.

Some incidents of bullying may also constitute child-on-child abuse or raise wider safeguarding concerns and will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy where appropriate.

Our ethos and The Minster Way set out a clear set of values which we expect all our students to aspire to.

Wisdom: Students respond to clear boundaries learning right from wrong treating each other as equals.
Optimism: Students are praised and recognised for doing the right thing.
Resilience: Students will make mistakes and we will support them to correct their behaviours.
Kindness: Students will be kind to others and will make new members of the school community feel welcome and treat them as we would like to be treated.
Service: Students will respect others, regardless of gender, race, religion, age, culture, disabilities, sexual orientation, background, or outward appearance.



This policy has been developed to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance

This policy is available:

- Online at: The Minster School - Policies and Documents

This policy is reviewed and evaluated throughout the academic year. It is updated annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff at The Minster School are aware that children may bully other children, and that this can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. All staff understand the school's Anti-Bullying strategy and approach and know the important role that they each have in preventing and tackling bullying.

The Head teacher Ben Chaloner has overall responsibility for Anti-Bullying at our school. They are responsible for appointing an Anti-Bullying Lead, liaising with the Governing body, parents/carers, the Local Authority, and outside agencies when appropriate.

The Anti-Bullying Lead – Assistant Head Teacher (Pastoral) - James Edwards - is responsible for:

- Policy development and review
- Implementing the policy and monitoring/assessing its effectiveness
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Coordinating Anti-Bullying training and support for staff, as well as parents/carers where appropriate
- Monitoring the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying behaviour
- Liaising with the Governing body, parents/carers, the Local Authority, and outside agencies when appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead – Laura Goodhead (DSL) - and the Deputies – Rhod Price and James Edwards – along with the designated safeguarding officers are responsible for safeguarding. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all; however, all staff, parents/carers and students need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns.

The nominated Governors with responsibility for Anti-Bullying are David Shannon and Paul Provost.

What is bullying and how does it differ to relational conflict?

At The Minster School we have adopted the definition of bullying provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

"Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online."

We recognise that bullying can take many forms and can affect any child. It 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 actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

However, we also recognise that incidents may occur between students, which may not be deemed as 'bullying' but still require support or intervention from trusted adults. These incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflicts' or falling out.

Relational conflict differs to bullying in the fact that it is usually between individuals or groups who are relatively similar in power and status (a power balance), and the behaviours or incidents occur occasionally (not repetitive) or occur by accident (not intentional). Usually, following a relational conflict incident, students show remorse and there is a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

Not all relational conflict or falling out leads to bullying, but our school is aware occasionally some can, and we are mindful that unresolved bad feelings or relationship problems left unaddressed can be the start of a pattern of behaviour in which the intention becomes to cause harm or distress.

Although bullying and relational conflicts can take place between individuals, we recognise that it often takes place in front of others (either physically or virtually), students who witness these incidents/behaviours are often referred to as 'bystanders'.

Regardless of whether an incident or situation is deemed as 'relational conflict' or 'bullying', our school will address the situation and support the students to resolve any negative feelings. Our school will monitor children following a relational conflict to ensure that the situation has been resolved and does not escalate to bullying. Our school will challenge, address, and monitor any incidents of bullying, to ensure that it does not continue and that all students feel supported (this will include the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders, and the wider school community).

What does bullying behaviour look like?

At The Minster School we consider the context within which incidents and/or behaviours of concern occur. We will consider the motivations behind the behaviours and will take into account the age and stage of development of the students involved. Our focus will always be the safety and welfare of all children involved.

Bullying behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books/belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Racist – Racist taunts, graffiti and gestures.
- Online / Cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos or videos, sending abusive messages, exclusion from online groups, impersonation, harassment, threats, sharing edited images, misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and the creation or sharing of manipulated, synthetic or deepfake content intended to embarrass, intimidate, harm or humiliate another person.
- Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals such as 'false friendships', criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation
- Prejudice-related – derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, because they have a learning or physical disability or because of their home circumstances, or who are looked after. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

The school recognises that some discriminatory incidents, including those related to race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, sex or gender reassignment, may also constitute safeguarding concerns. Such incidents will be recorded, referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate, and managed in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

There is no hierarchy of bullying, all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Our school understands that banter is an increasingly relevant part of discussions relating to bullying; however, it is important to acknowledge that banter is not inherently bullying, and it can be an important part of social bonding and friendships. At the same time, we know that some bullying in society is passed off as 'just banter', and we know that banter can quickly escalate to inappropriate or harmful exchanges and bullying. Our school defines 'prosocial banter' as 'playful, typically funny, teasing between friends'. Prosocial banter can occur both online and offline and includes a range of behaviours that may be verbal, physical, or information/message sharing (online). Banter can include some of the bullying behaviours set out in this policy document, so it is important to distinguish between shared positive social bonding and inappropriate banter and bullying. School staff will distinguish between banter and bullying by taking careful consideration of the intention, content and topic of reported incidents.

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Where does bullying take place?

At The Minster School we understand that bullying is not confined to the school premises. Bullying can take place outside of school, on the journey to and from school and in the local community. Bullying may also take place online (this is sometimes referred to as cyberbullying). Bullying may also occur through social media platforms, group messaging services, online gaming platforms and emerging technologies. The school will take action where such behaviour impacts the wellbeing, safety or education of members of the school community.

We will offer support and guidance to students, parents/carers and families who have experienced any type of bullying whether this has taken place inside school, outside of school or online. We are committed to working with outside agencies where appropriate to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.

How to report bullying concerns

We want students, parents/carers, staff, and visitors to confidently report bullying and know that their concerns will be taken seriously. We remain committed to supporting and safeguarding all children involved including the target, the alleged perpetrator, any bystanders/witnesses to the bullying behaviour and the wider school community.

We have clear reporting systems for our school community, the effectiveness of these reporting systems is reviewed throughout the academic year and may be expanded to meet the needs of all members of our community.

We ask all members of the school community to use our **CALL IT OUT** mechanisms for reporting bullying, however staff can also report concerns on MyConcern (the schools internal recording system).

This can be via –

Email - callitout@minsterschool.org.uk

Website - The Minster School - Call It Out

Or our student mailbox at student services.

Students, including bystanders/witnesses

We ask that all students report concerns of bullying or bullying behaviour via the CALL IT OUT mechanisms or to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff. We talk about trusted adults and remind our students of who they can report concerns to in weekly student notices.

The member of staff will listen to the student and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. The member of staff will make a formal record of the bullying report on MyConcern and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a student is considered at risk.

Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict', school staff will still support the students involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

Parents/carers

We understand that it can be very difficult for a parent/carer to be concerned or hear that their child has been the target of bullying, has experienced bullying behaviour or is an alleged perpetrator of bullying.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or perpetrating bullying, that they contact a member of school staff. Initially we ask parents/carers to contact their child's form tutor or year leader via email to explain their concerns. Following the report, the teacher or year leader will make a formal record of the bullying report on MyConcern the school's recording system and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a student is considered at risk.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the school with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the school community in person or online. We also encourage parents/carers to take responsibility for their child's internet usage. This includes their child's use of all social media platforms and how their child interacts online with other members of the Minster School community. This will not only help protect their child online but also other members of the school community. Further safeguarding guidance and advice can be found in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Our school remains committed to supporting students and their families in all instances of bullying and relational conflict and will respond to reports promptly. Even if the behaviour/incident which has been reported is deemed 'not bullying' and is thought to be 'relational conflict,' school staff will still support the students involved and help them to resolve any concerns.

We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.

School staff

Our staff work closely with our students and therefore may notice a change in a student's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a student or a member of the school community. If staff have any concerns about a student's welfare or are concerned that a student is displaying behaviours that may show they are the target of bullying or perhaps perpetrating bullying, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

We ask that staff report their concerns via MyConcern, the school's internal recording system alerting the Year Leader, Head of Key Stage, Designated Safeguarding Lead. The member of staff must directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a student is considered at risk.

Visitors

We ensure that all visitors to our school are aware of which staff member they should report any concerns to. We ask that if a visitor to our school has any concerns about bullying behaviour that they have witnessed, or been told about, that they report their concerns at the earliest opportunity in person to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead/the Head teacher/a member of the Senior Leadership Team or use the CALL IT OUT mechanisms which are visible on posters throughout the school building.

We ask that visitors report their concerns in person by the end of the school day. For example, it would not be appropriate to wait until the following day or leave a written note with concerns. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the bullying report on MyConcern, the school's recording system and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if the report is deemed urgent or if a student is considered at risk.

How our school will respond to reports of bullying

At The Minster School all reports of bullying or reported concerns of bullying behaviours will be taken seriously and investigated. Even if an incident is deemed 'not bullying' or a 'relational conflict', our school remains committed to supporting all students who have been involved and effected.

Our school keeps records of all reports of bullying, this information is stored on MyConcern, our school's recording system. These records are used to identify trends and inform our school's preventative work. Information from these records is discussed regularly at staff meetings to ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date and are alert to any ongoing concerns.

Our staff use a contextual approach to safeguarding and each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Some of our school's responses may include, but may not be limited to:

- Talk to all students involved in the reported incident and take statements – this may include the target, the alleged perpetrator, and any bystanders/witnesses
- Talk to the parents/carers (of the target and/or the alleged perpetrator)
- Implement appropriate sanctions in accordance with our school's Positive Student Management (behaviour) policy. These sanctions will be graded according to the seriousness of the incident, but will send out a message that bullying is unacceptable
- Discuss the report/incident/case with other agencies and organisations when appropriate and make referrals to those organisations when appropriate
- Liaise with the wider community if the bullying is taking place off the school premises (e.g., the Police, District Council etc.)
- Keep in touch with the person who reported the incident/behaviour to inform them that action has been taken – this may include a student, a parent/carer/guardian, a member of staff or visitor, or another member of the school community. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR. This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates.
- Implement a range of follow-up support/interventions appropriate to the situation (this may include informal or formal restorative work with the target and alleged perpetrator, solution-focused meetings, individual or group work with the target, individual or group work with the alleged perpetrator, individual or group work with any witnesses/bystanders, group work with the wider-school community etc.)

- Monitor the effectiveness of actions taken and reassess/take more actions if appropriate
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding issues or concerns – We may then refer to the Nottinghamshire MASH
- Refer to the Nottinghamshire County Council 'Pathways to Provision' document and complete an EHAF if appropriate.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website and on request from the school office.

Strategies for preventing bullying

At The Minster School, we are committed to the safety and welfare of our students, and therefore we have developed the following strategies to promote friendly and positive behaviours and discourage bullying behaviours. Throughout the academic year, the effectiveness of these strategies is reviewed, and the variety of strategies may be expanded to address specific concerns or meet the needs of all members of our community.

The strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Active student representatives from each year groups
- Student mentoring schemes
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying week annually (November)
- Taking part in Safer Internet Day annually (February)
- Robust R(S)HE curriculum for all year groups
- Specific curriculum inputs for online safety and cyberbullying
- Themed weeks to promote equality and tackle prejudice
- Opportunities for students to share their voice and opinions – through surveys, student councils etc.
- Inclusive displays throughout the school with a diverse range of work, photographs etc.
- Inclusive books throughout the school raising awareness of and celebrating differences
- ELSA support and counselling for identified students
- Specific initiatives for identified individuals or groups
- Regular staff training and development for all staff
- All staff model expected behaviour

Breaches / Complaints

Breaches to this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head teacher and Governing Body.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with our school's actions, we ask that they follow our school's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from our school website, and on request from the school office.

Links with other policies

You may find it helpful to read this Anti-Bullying policy alongside the other following school policies: The Minster School - Policies and Documents

Policy	How it may link
Child-on-child Abuse Policy	Includes links to bullying – specifically sexualised bullying and exploitation

Positive Student Management (Behaviour) Policy	Includes details about the rewards and sanctions for students
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	Includes information about child protection procedures and contextualised safeguarding
Equalities Policy	Includes information about our school's approach to tackling prejudice and celebrating differences. Links to prejudice-related language and crime and the protected characteristics
RSHE / PSHE Policy	Includes information about our school's RSHE programme and how we teach about relationships, friendships, and bullying
Complaints Policy	Includes information about how to make a complaint if you are not satisfied with the school's response