Anti-Bullying Policy

(Pupils)

Updated for:	September 2026
Next review:	September 2027

James Montgomery Academy Trust

Anti-Bullying Policy (Pupils)

1. Statement of intent

The James Montgomery Academy Trust (thereafter referred to as JMAT) believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying both within and outside of school.

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

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

JMAT will ensure that all staff, parents/carers and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance approach for bullying in **all schools in JMAT.**

See Appendix 1 for Statutory Implications

2. Legislation

This policy has consideration for, and is compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Communications Act 2003

3. Statutory guidance

- The DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE) current statutory edition (March 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE) current statutory edition
- DfE Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021).

The school will update this policy immediately in response to any change in statutory guidance.

Non-statutory guidance and resources

- DfE Preventing and tackling bullying (2017) Where appropriate the school will use current DfE and sector guidance and online safety resources to support prevention work.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
For any concern that bullying indicates a safeguarding issue, staff must follow the Safeguarding Policy and report immediately to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Claire Hill.
Deputy DSL(s): Mrs Janine Sanderson-Brown and Miss Hannah Lawery.

Contact details and out-of-hours reporting arrangements are kept in the Safeguarding Policy and can be gained from our admin team in school.

5. Aims and objectives

JMAT recognises that bullying is wrong and that there is a need to safeguard the welfare of all those within the school community by encouraging a culture of co-operation, acceptance and harmony both within and outside of the school.

JMAT aims for each school to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur both within and outside of school. 'Preventing and tackling bullying', DfE Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies states:

School staff members have 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 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 child. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always 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 child is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

More detailed advice on teachers' powers to discipline, including their power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour that occurs outside school, is included in 'Behaviour and discipline in schools – advice for headteachers and school staff.'

Pupils, staff and parents should strive to create a school community in which all pupils can fulfil their potential. JMAT aims to make all those connected with each school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our schools.

6. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. It can be physical or emotional and it can take many forms (e.g. cyber-bullying). Bullying can also occur

because of prejudice against particular groups. Bullying, is recognised as a safeguarding concern where it may cause significant harm. All staff must consider whether bullying incidents indicate wider safeguarding risks. JMAT schools will distinguish between bullying and isolated conflict or friendship issues. Bullying involves repeated, intentional harm and a power imbalance.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

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

7. Types of bullying

Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything, for example; teasing another child because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, race, sex, gender reassignment, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs and can be acted out through the following mediums:

- Written (ridicule through drawings and writing).
- Incitement (encouraging others to bully).
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing).
- Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or any use of violence).
- Emotional (being unfriendly, excluding, isolating, tormenting, threatening behaviour.
- Online (cyber) — inappropriate texting/emailing, misuse of social media, messaging platforms, gaming environments and emerging technologies, including the sharing of manipulated, AI-generated images or deepfakes. Online incidents will be handled in line with the school's Online Safety Policy and reported to the DSL.

8. Child on Child Abuse

Bullying may overlap with child-on-child abuse (including sexual harassment, sexual violence or abusive behaviour within relationships) has been addressed in a separate policy which clearly states the procedure to follow in those specific circumstances in line with safeguarding procedures following KCSIE guidance.

9. Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying (HBT)

Defined as behaviour or language which makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It affects:

- Pupils who are (or thought to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and questioning (or queer).
- Pupils whose parents/carers are LGBTQ+.
- Teachers who are (or thought to be) LGBTQ+.

- Pupils who do not fit a perceived gender stereotype or seem different.

10. Prevention

JMAT will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole of the schools in JMAT. Anti-bullying education is embedded within the RSHE curriculum, teaching pupils about respectful relationships, online behaviour, consent, diversity and how to seek help.

All reported or witnessed instances of bullying both within and reported outside of school will be challenged by a member of staff and each school will have a safe, supervised place available for pupils to go to at lunch if they are involved in conflict with their peers or wish to avoid a bully.

JMAT will ensure its school staff encourage co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work and all types of bullying is to be discussed as part of the curriculum; diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

All members of the school community will be made aware of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and the procedures in place for recording incidents. All staff members will receive regular training on recognising bullying, unconscious bias, protected characteristics, online harms and safeguarding responses.

11. Procedures

When a bullying incident is raised (either by the victim or other party) all parties (the victim, alleged bully and any witnesses) are all interviewed separately. Members of staff will ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils interviewed. Pupils can report bullying through multiple routes including speaking to a trusted adult and designated safeguarding staff.

All parties are asked to write down details of the incident. This may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture, no premature assumptions are made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage. Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete.

All concerned pupils are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils.

Recording, analysis and PSED

All bullying incidents will be recorded centrally, categorised (for example: racist, homophobic, SEND-related, online) and logged in the school's secure safeguarding/behaviour system. Records will be held in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy. The school will analyse bullying data termly, disaggregated by protected characteristic where relevant, and use that analysis to inform the school's Public Sector Equality Duty objectives and targeted actions. The DSL will present an anonymised summary to the Local Advisory Board each term. Effectiveness of reviewing and monitoring will be evaluated through; incident data analysis, pupil/parent surveys, safeguarding reviews and Ofsted framework expectations.

Information sharing and referrals

Where an incident meets the threshold for a safeguarding referral, the DSL will act in line with

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) and local authority referral pathways. Where there is a risk of significant harm the DSL will make a referral to pupils social care and will consider contacting the police in line with local protocols. Staff must follow the school's information sharing and data-protection procedures when recording and sharing safeguarding information.

All reported incidents will be acknowledged within 1 working day and investigated promptly.

12. Sanctions

If the headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, the child will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions. Headteacher's responses will balance sanctions with educational and restorative approaches to promote understanding, repair harm and prevent recurrence.

The parents/carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

13. Follow up support

JMAT will ensure that the progress of all individuals involved are monitored by their class teachers and if appropriate may offer one-on-one sessions with the pastoral staff to discuss how they are progressing.

Pupils who have been bullied will be listened to and have an immediate opportunity to meet with a member of staff who they have a trusting relationship with; they will be re-assured and offered continued support.

Pupils who have bullied others will receive consequences for their actions but will also be able to discuss what happened and reflect on why they became involved. They will learn to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour and will receive appropriate assistance from parents/carers.

The class teacher will informally monitor the pupils involved over the next half-term.

14. The role of the Local Advisory Board (LAB)

The LAB supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from school. They will not condone any bullying at all in school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

15. The role of the headteacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher is to report to the Local Advisory Board (LAB) about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The headteacher ensures that all pupils know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour; they will draw the attention of pupils to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the headteacher may decide to use collective worship as the forum in which to discuss with other pupils why this behaviour was wrong.

They ensure that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying and set the school climate of mutual support and praise

for success, so making bullying less likely. When pupils feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

16. **The role of teaching and support staff**

Staff in our schools take all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place.

If an adult in school witnesses an act of potential bullying, they will either investigate it themselves (dependent on their role) or refer it to the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team. Parents / carers will be informed accordingly by the headteacher or member of the senior leadership team investigating the incident.

When an incident of bullying has been identified, an appropriate adult in school will address the issue. This may involve counselling and support for the victim(s) of the bullying, and sanctions as well as guidance for the individuals who have carried out the bullying. Time is spent talking to the individuals who have bullied: explaining why their actions were wrong, and that the individuals are encouraged to change their behaviour in future. The headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as social services to provide guidance and advice as necessary.

Schools will use a range of methods across the curriculum to educate pupils, to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They may use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils build understanding and empathy, along with their PSHE curriculum.

17. The role of parents / carers

Parents / carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's Complaints Policy and Procedure, as detailed on the school website.

Parents / carers have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-bullying Policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school community.

18. The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged and taught to tell a trusted adult if they are being bullied. Pupils have regular opportunities to share their feelings and have their voice heard using various methods including pupil voice questionnaires.

19. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed at least annually and in July by the Trust Strategic Lead for SEND and Inclusion (or earlier if statutory guidance changes). The school will also review this policy immediately if Working Together or Keeping Children Safe in Education is updated. Any changes will be communicated to all staff, published on the JMAT website and included in staff induction. The DSL will ensure incident records are kept, analysed and used to inform practice**.**

20. Document history

Previous versions archived in accordance with document retention requirements.

Issue	Author/ Owner	Date Reviewed	Reviewed by	Approved by A&R Committee (date)	Comments/ Changes

V1	JMAT	July 2025	PRG	08/07/25	• Removal of governor responsibilities / references. • Section 14 Updated terminology – Local Advisory Board and Advisory Board Members.
V2	JMAT	July 2026	PRG	09/07/26	• Statutory references updated to reflect DfE publications: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) and a requirement to follow the current statutory edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education; policy now states it will be reviewed immediately if statutory guidance changes • Named safeguarding arrangements added: placeholder lines for Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL(s) with cross-reference to the Safeguarding Policy. • Updated information-sharing and referral wording to align with Working Together 2026 and local authority referral pathways (including guidance on referrals to children's social care and the police where there is risk of significant harm). • Recording and monitoring: centralised logging of incidents, categorisation by protected characteristic, secure storage in line with Data Protection Policy, and termly analysis to inform PSED objectives and LAB reporting. • Online harms section tightened to explicitly include manipulated/AI-generated images and deepfakes and cross-reference to the Online Safety Policy. • Timescales made explicit: acknowledgement of reports within 1 working day.

Key:
PRG – Policy Review Group
A & R Committee – Audit and Risk Committee

Appendix 1

Statutory implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school understands that it has a responsibility to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, the school understands that it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The National Association of Headteachers has guidelines that headteachers must 'satisfy themselves' that their school's Anti-Bullying Policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences.

Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or 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.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Online Safety Policy