

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Effective 1 September 2026 | Next review: September 2027

Organisation	The Community Schools CIC
Policy owner	Claire Meadows-Smith – Principal
Safeguarding leads	DSL: Hayley Coull Deputy DSL: Claire Meadows-Smith
Tutors' Association	Corporate Member CO 306

The Community Schools CIC is committed to providing tutoring in which children and young people feel safe, respected and able to learn. Bullying, discriminatory bullying, sexual harassment and online bullying are not accepted. This policy applies to face-to-face and online tuition and should be read with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Student Behaviour Code, Equality Policy and Online Safety Guide.

1. What we mean by bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over time, that intentionally hurts, intimidates, humiliates or excludes another person. A serious one-off incident may still require action under safeguarding or behaviour procedures even if it does not meet a narrow definition of bullying.

- Verbal bullying: name-calling, threats, insults, discriminatory language or malicious comments.
- Physical bullying: hitting, pushing, damaging possessions or other physical intimidation.
- Social/emotional bullying: exclusion, humiliation, spreading rumours, coercion or undermining someone.
- Online/cyberbullying: abusive messages, impersonation, malicious posts, images or videos, exclusion, harassment or other harmful digital behaviour.
- Prejudice-related bullying, including behaviour connected with disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or another protected characteristic.
- Sexual bullying or harassment, including unwanted sexual comments, behaviour or image-based abuse.

2. Prevention

- Set clear expectations through the Student Behaviour Code and Tutor Code of Conduct.
- Promote respect, inclusion, equality and appropriate online behaviour.
- Ensure tutors know how to recognise, record and report bullying and safeguarding concerns.
- Make reasonable adjustments and consider SEND or communication needs when preventing and responding to incidents.

3. Responding to a concern

Tutors should stop unsafe behaviour where it is safe to do so, listen without prejudging the outcome, record the facts and inform the Principal and/or DSL as appropriate. Tutors must not conduct a safeguarding investigation. Where an incident may involve abuse, sexual harassment/violence, exploitation, discrimination creating a safeguarding risk, or significant harm, the Safeguarding Procedures take priority.

- Consider separately the needs and safety of the child who has experienced the behaviour, the child alleged to have displayed it and any witnesses.
- Listen to the children involved in an age-appropriate way and avoid forcing face-to-face reconciliation or an apology where this could cause further harm.
- Inform parents/carers where appropriate unless doing so could increase risk or conflict with safeguarding advice.
- Agree proportionate support and action, which may include reminders, seating/group changes, closer supervision, restorative work where safe and voluntary, warnings, suspension from a session or ending tuition in serious cases.
- Record action and monitor for recurrence, retaliation or wider patterns.

4. Online bullying

Students should be encouraged not to retaliate online. Evidence should be preserved where safe and appropriate, and harmful content may be reported to the relevant platform. Where content may be illegal or presents an immediate risk, the DSL will consider police or other statutory referral. Staff must not ask children to forward intimate images or unnecessarily view or copy harmful material.

5. Safeguarding and equality

Bullying can be a safeguarding issue and may be linked to child-on-child abuse. It must never be dismissed as banter or an inevitable part of growing up. Responses will be child-centred, proportionate and non-discriminatory, and will take account of disability, SEND, vulnerability and protected characteristics.

6. Reporting

Anti-bullying lead: Claire Meadows-Smith – claire@thecommunityschools.co.uk. Safeguarding concerns should be reported to DSL Hayley Coull or Deputy DSL Claire Meadows-Smith using the secure safeguarding process. Immediate danger requires emergency action under the Safeguarding Procedures.

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