A safe community for everyone.
Kind. Respectful. Together.

BRIGHTFIELD ACADEMY

Inclusion. Choice. Growth.

ANTI-BULLYING

(including online bullying)

POLICY

At Brightfield Academy, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where everyone feels valued and empowered.
Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

RESPECT
We treat each other with respect

SAFE ONLINE
We use technology kindly and responsibly

SUPPORT
We support each other and speak up

INCLUSION
We celebrate our differences and belong

RESPONSIBILITY
We all have a role in keeping our community safe

POLICY VERSION
1.0

LAST UPDATED
JULY 2026

NEXT REVIEW DATE
JULY 2027

INCLUSION | CHOICE | GROWTH

Anti-Bullying Policy

ANTI-BULLYING AND ONLINE BULLYING POLICY

1. Policy Introduction

Purpose and Aim

Brightfield Academy is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which every child and young person is able to learn, participate and develop without fear of bullying, intimidation, harassment or discrimination.

Bullying, including bullying that takes place online, is unacceptable and will not be dismissed as "banter", "falling out", "just a joke" or an inevitable part of growing up.

Brightfield Academy recognises that bullying can have a significant impact on a young person's wellbeing, attendance, engagement with education, relationships and sense of safety. For some children, particularly those who have previously experienced exclusion, trauma, discrimination, social isolation or difficulties within education, the impact may be especially significant.

We therefore seek not only to respond effectively when bullying occurs, but to create a culture in which bullying is less likely to occur in the first place.

The aims of this policy are to:

prevent bullying wherever reasonably possible;
establish a clear and shared understanding of what bullying is;
ensure children and young people know how and where to seek help;
ensure all reports of bullying are taken seriously and responded to appropriately;
identify and address bullying at the earliest opportunity;
protect children who experience bullying from further harm;
address the behaviour and underlying needs of children who engage in bullying;
recognise when bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern;
address prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying appropriately;
recognise and respond to online bullying, including incidents occurring outside Academy hours where these affect learners at Brightfield;
involve parents/carers and relevant professionals where appropriate;
maintain clear records and monitor patterns of behaviour;
promote positive relationships, empathy, respect and inclusion throughout the Academy.

2. Policy Statement

Brightfield Academy believes that every learner has the right to feel:

safe
respected
included
heard

Bullying in any form is inconsistent with our values of:
Inclusion. Choice. Growth.
We will challenge bullying behaviour while recognising that children who bully others may themselves require education, support, boundaries or safeguarding intervention.
Our response will therefore seek to:
protect the child experiencing bullying;
stop the behaviour;
understand what has happened;
address harm;
reduce the likelihood of recurrence;
support everyone involved appropriately.
The safety and welfare of children will remain the primary consideration in all decisions.

3. Scope
This policy applies to all learners attending Brightfield Academy and to all adults working with or on behalf of the Academy, including staff, Directors, volunteers, contractors, placement students and partner professionals.
It applies to bullying occurring:
on Brightfield Academy premises;
during lessons and activities;
during break and social times;
on educational visits and trips;
during work experience or off-site provision;
while travelling to or from the Academy where there is a connection to Academy relationships;
through social media, messaging applications, gaming platforms or other digital environments;
outside Academy hours where behaviour affects the safety, wellbeing or education of a Brightfield learner.
Brightfield Academy cannot control every interaction occurring outside its provision. However, where an incident outside the Academy has an impact within the Academy, creates a safeguarding concern or affects the welfare of a learner, we will take appropriate action.

4. What Is Bullying?
Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally and is often repeated over time.
It may involve a real or perceived imbalance of power, making it difficult for the person experiencing the behaviour to defend themselves or make it stop.
Bullying can be:
physical;
verbal;
emotional or psychological;
social or relational;
discriminatory or prejudice-based;
sexual;
online or technology-assisted.

Bullying may be carried out by an individual or a group and may be directed towards an individual or group.
A single serious incident may not meet a conventional definition of repeated bullying, but this does **not** mean that it will be ignored. It may constitute harassment, harmful behaviour, discrimination, violence, sexual harassment or a safeguarding concern and will be responded to accordingly.

4.1 Examples of Bullying
Bullying behaviour may include:
hitting, kicking, pushing or deliberately hurting someone;
threats or intimidation;
name-calling, insults or humiliation;
repeated teasing intended to cause distress;
spreading rumours;
deliberately excluding someone;
manipulating friendships;
taking, hiding or damaging possessions;
demanding money or belongings;
mocking someone's appearance, abilities, communication or circumstances;
deliberately exploiting another learner's vulnerabilities;
unwanted sexual comments or behaviour;
discriminatory language;
encouraging other people to target or exclude someone;
recording or sharing humiliating incidents;
using digital technology to harass, intimidate, embarrass or exclude another person.
This list is not exhaustive.

5. Prejudice-Based and Discriminatory Bullying
Brightfield Academy will challenge bullying or harassment relating to actual or perceived differences, including behaviour connected to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

This may include bullying relating to:
age;
disability;
gender reassignment;
marriage or civil partnership;
pregnancy or maternity;
race, ethnicity, nationality or culture;
religion or belief;
sex;
sexual orientation.
We also recognise that children may be targeted because of other aspects of their identity, circumstances or perceived difference, including:
SEND or additional needs;
communication differences;
appearance;
family circumstances;
being in care or previously looked after;

being a young carer;
socio-economic circumstances;
health needs;
educational history or attainment.
Discriminatory language will be challenged even where the person using it claims that no offence or harm was intended.
Incidents involving discrimination, harassment or hate-related behaviour will be recorded and addressed appropriately and may also be managed under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Behaviour Policy or Safeguarding Policy.

6. Online Bullying
Online bullying, sometimes referred to as cyberbullying, is bullying or harmful behaviour carried out using digital technology. It may occur through:

social media;
messaging applications;
group chats;
text messages;
email;
gaming platforms;
forums;
video-sharing platforms;
photographs or videos;
fake or impersonation accounts;
any other digital communication technology.

Examples include:
sending threatening, abusive or humiliating messages;
repeatedly targeting someone in group chats;
deliberately excluding someone from online groups;
spreading rumours online;
sharing embarrassing photographs or videos;
posting or forwarding discriminatory material;
impersonating another person;
creating accounts or content intended to ridicule someone;
sharing private information without permission;
encouraging others to target someone;
manipulating images or videos to humiliate another person.

Online bullying can be particularly harmful because content can spread rapidly, reach a large audience and remain accessible after the original post has been removed.

6.1 Online Bullying Outside Brightfield
Brightfield Academy recognises that online bullying frequently occurs outside normal provision hours and away from Academy premises.
Where online behaviour between learners:
affects a learner's safety or wellbeing;
disrupts learning;
damages relationships within the provision;

causes a learner to feel unsafe attending Brightfield;
involves threats, harassment or discriminatory behaviour; or
raises safeguarding concerns,

Brightfield Academy will respond appropriately even where the original activity occurred away from the Academy.
Where necessary, this may involve parents/carers, referring schools or commissioners, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Children's Social Care, Police or other relevant agencies.

Staff must not ask learners to forward indecent images or other potentially illegal material in order to provide evidence. Any such incident must be referred immediately to the DSL and managed through safeguarding procedures.

7. Recognising Possible Signs of Bullying
Children and young people do not always tell an adult when they are experiencing bullying. Staff should therefore remain alert to changes in behaviour, presentation, relationships or engagement that may indicate that something is wrong.

Possible indicators may include:
becoming withdrawn, anxious or unusually quiet;
reluctance or refusal to attend the Academy;
changes in attendance or punctuality;
unexplained injuries;
damaged or missing possessions;
deterioration in engagement, concentration or progress;
avoiding particular learners, activities or areas;
changes in friendship groups;
distress following use of a phone, social media or gaming platform;
becoming unusually secretive about online activity;
changes in eating or sleeping patterns;
increased emotional distress, anger or dysregulation;
loss of confidence or self-esteem;
expressing fear about attending activities or travelling to the provision.

These indicators do not necessarily mean that bullying is occurring. However, they should prompt professional curiosity and, where appropriate, sensitive discussion with the learner.
Where indicators suggest a safeguarding concern, staff must follow Brightfield Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8. Reporting Bullying
Brightfield Academy wants learners to feel confident that they can report bullying and that they will be listened to.
Learners may report bullying to:
any member of staff they trust;
their key worker or tutor;
the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
the Deputy DSL;

a parent/carer or other trusted adult, who may report the concern on their behalf. Reports may be made verbally or in writing.
A learner does not need to be certain that behaviour meets the definition of bullying before asking for help.
If something is making a learner feel unsafe, intimidated, humiliated, excluded or distressed, we want them to tell us.
Reports made by witnesses or other learners will also be taken seriously.

8.1 Parents and Carers
Parents and carers are encouraged to contact Brightfield Academy if they believe their child is:
experiencing bullying;
displaying bullying behaviour;
witnessing bullying;
affected by online behaviour involving other learners.
Concerns should normally be raised with the learner's key member of staff, Head of Provision, DSL or Deputy DSL.
Parents/carers should provide any relevant information or evidence available, particularly in relation to online incidents.
Brightfield will communicate appropriately with parents/carers while respecting the confidentiality and safeguarding needs of all children involved.
Information about another child, including disciplinary or safeguarding action concerning them, will not normally be disclosed.

9. What Staff Must Do
Any member of staff who witnesses bullying or receives a report of possible bullying must take it seriously.
Staff must not dismiss behaviour as:
"banter";
"just a joke";
"a personality clash";
"kids being kids";
something the learner should simply ignore.
The member of staff should:
Respond
Ensure the learner is safe and listen calmly to what they are saying.
Reassure
Explain that reporting the concern was the right thing to do and that it will be taken seriously.
Establish immediate facts
Clarify sufficient information to understand what has happened and whether anyone is currently at risk. Staff should not conduct a safeguarding investigation themselves.
Record
Make an accurate factual record of the concern and the learner's own words where relevant.

Report
Pass the concern to the appropriate member of staff and, where there is any safeguarding element, to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
Respond and review
Appropriate action will be agreed and the situation monitored to determine whether the behaviour has stopped.
Immediate action must be taken where a learner is at risk of harm.

10. Responding to Bullying
Brightfield Academy will respond proportionately to the circumstances of each incident.

Our response will consider:
what happened;
the nature and seriousness of the behaviour;
whether behaviour has occurred previously;
whether there is an imbalance of power;
the age and developmental understanding of those involved;
SEND, communication or additional needs;
the impact on the learner experiencing the behaviour;
whether discriminatory or sexual behaviour is involved;
whether the behaviour occurred online;
whether there are wider safeguarding concerns.

The immediate priority will be to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the learner experiencing bullying.

Actions may include:
increased staff supervision;
changes to activities, groups or arrangements;
individual support;
restorative approaches where appropriate and safe;
work around relationships, empathy and behaviour;
clear boundaries and consequences;
individual behaviour or support plans;
engagement with parents/carers;
liaison with the referring school or commissioning authority;
safeguarding intervention;
referral to external agencies where necessary.
Brightfield Academy will not use restorative meetings where these could place a learner under pressure, create further distress or expose them to additional harm.

11. Supporting the Learner Experiencing Bullying
Support will be tailored to the individual learner and the impact of the behaviour.

This may include:
identifying a trusted adult;
regular check-ins;

pastoral support;
adjustments to activities or routines;
support with friendships and peer relationships;
online safety advice;
liaison with parents/carers;
liaison with schools, commissioners or relevant professionals;
additional safeguarding measures where required.

The learner should, wherever appropriate, be involved in decisions about support and asked what would help them feel safe.

The responsibility for stopping bullying rests with the adults managing the behaviour and those responsible for it. A learner experiencing bullying should not be expected to change who they are or unnecessarily lose access to activities in order to avoid being targeted.

12. Responding to Learners Who Bully Others
Brightfield Academy will challenge bullying behaviour clearly and consistently.
However, simply labelling a child as "a bully" is unlikely to address the causes of their behaviour.
We will distinguish between **the child and the behaviour**.

Where a learner has bullied another person, staff will seek to understand:
what happened;
why the behaviour occurred;
whether there are patterns or triggers;
the learner's understanding of the impact of their behaviour;
whether peer pressure or group dynamics contributed;
whether the learner has additional needs affecting their understanding or behaviour;
whether they are themselves experiencing harm, exploitation, bullying or other difficulties.

Support does not remove accountability.
Appropriate boundaries and consequences may be necessary alongside education and support to prevent recurrence.

13. When Bullying Becomes a Safeguarding Concern
Bullying may constitute or reveal a safeguarding concern.

The DSL must be informed where behaviour involves or indicates:
significant physical harm or threats of harm;
sexual harassment or sexual violence;
harmful sexual behaviour;
exploitation;
coercion or control;
discriminatory or hate-related abuse;
serious or persistent online harassment;
sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
threats involving weapons;
criminal behaviour;
significant emotional harm;
concerns about a child's safety outside the provision.

In such circumstances, the incident will be managed under the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** in addition to this policy.
External agencies may be contacted where appropriate, including Children's Social Care, Police or the relevant Local Authority safeguarding service.
Parents/carers will normally be informed unless doing so could place a child at greater risk or prejudice a safeguarding or criminal investigation.

14. Recording and Monitoring Bullying
Reports of bullying will be recorded appropriately.

Records should include:
date and time;
individuals involved;
factual description of the incident;
the learner's account;
witnesses where known;
whether the incident involved online or discriminatory behaviour;
immediate action taken;
safeguarding action where applicable;
parent/carer contact;
agreed support or intervention;
follow-up and outcome.

Safeguarding information will be recorded on **LearnTreK** in accordance with Brightfield Academy's safeguarding procedures.

Recording incidents enables the Academy to identify patterns that may not be apparent when incidents are considered individually.

Brightfield will monitor for:
repeated incidents involving particular learners;
particular locations or activities;
discriminatory themes;
online trends;
peer-group dynamics;
recurring times or circumstances;
effectiveness of interventions.
Patterns or emerging concerns will be reviewed by the DSL and/or Head of Provision and further action taken where necessary.

15. Preventing Bullying
Brightfield Academy believes that the most effective response to bullying is to develop a culture in which respectful relationships, inclusion and kindness are actively promoted. Prevention is embedded within everyday Academy practice rather than addressed only after an incident occurs.

Brightfield Academy will seek to prevent bullying by:
establishing clear expectations for respectful behaviour;
building positive and trusting relationships between learners and staff;
creating opportunities for learners to discuss friendships, relationships, difference and respectful behaviour;
promoting understanding of equality, diversity and protected characteristics;
challenging discriminatory language, stereotypes and prejudice;
teaching learners about safe and responsible online behaviour;
ensuring learners know how to report concerns and who they can speak to;
providing appropriate supervision;

identifying emerging patterns of conflict or harmful peer behaviour;
encouraging learners to report bullying they witness;
involving parents/carers and other professionals where appropriate;
responding consistently when bullying occurs.
Staff should model respectful, inclusive and non-discriminatory behaviour in all interactions.

16. Curriculum and Education
Brightfield Academy will use appropriate opportunities within the curriculum, enrichment activities, pastoral work and everyday conversations to develop learners' understanding of:
healthy friendships and relationships;
empathy and respect;
diversity and difference;
protected characteristics;
consent and personal boundaries;
discrimination and prejudice;
online behaviour and digital citizenship;
online bullying;
responsible use of social media;
recognising harmful behaviour;
seeking help;
supporting others safely.

Learning will be appropriate to learners' ages, developmental stages, communication needs and individual circumstances.

Brightfield will encourage learners to understand that being a bystander can contribute to harmful behaviour and that seeking help for someone else is a positive action.

17. SEND and Additional Vulnerabilities
Brightfield Academy recognises that children with SEND and other additional needs may experience particular vulnerabilities in relation to bullying.

Some learners may:
find it more difficult to recognise bullying;
experience difficulties communicating what has happened;
be more socially isolated;
interpret social interactions differently;
be targeted because of disability or difference;
have difficulty understanding online risks;
be more susceptible to coercion, manipulation or exploitation;
display distress through changes in behaviour rather than verbal disclosure.

Staff must therefore remain alert to the possibility that changes in behaviour, attendance, engagement or emotional regulation may indicate bullying or another safeguarding concern.
Reasonable adjustments will be made to reporting and support processes so that learners are able to communicate concerns in ways accessible to them.
A learner's SEND must never be used to minimise the impact of bullying or discriminatory behaviour directed towards them.
Equally, where a learner displaying bullying behaviour has SEND, staff will consider their communication, cognition and understanding when determining an appropriate response. This does not mean harmful behaviour will be ignored.

18. Child-on-Child Abuse

Bullying can sometimes form part of a wider pattern of **child-on-child abuse**.

Brightfield Academy recognises that children can abuse other children and that such behaviour can occur inside or outside the Academy and online.

Child-on-child abuse may include:

bullying, including online and prejudice-based bullying;
physical abuse;
sexual violence and sexual harassment;
harmful sexual behaviour;
abuse within intimate personal relationships between children;
consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
initiation or hazing-type behaviour;
coercion, exploitation or intimidation.

Staff must never dismiss abusive behaviour between children as normal experimentation, banter or an inevitable part of growing up.

Where bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse, the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** will take precedence and the DSL must be informed.

19. Responsibilities

Directors

The Directors are responsible for:

ensuring appropriate anti-bullying arrangements are in place;
promoting an inclusive organisational culture;
ensuring appropriate resources, training and oversight;
reviewing significant trends or concerns where appropriate.

Head of Provision

The Head of Provision is responsible for:

implementing this policy;
ensuring staff understand their responsibilities;
promoting consistent responses to bullying;
monitoring patterns and effectiveness of interventions;
ensuring appropriate communication with learners and families.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is responsible for:

providing safeguarding advice where bullying raises welfare concerns;
determining whether incidents require safeguarding intervention;
ensuring appropriate safeguarding records are maintained;
liaising with external agencies where necessary;
identifying patterns that may indicate wider safeguarding concerns.

Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

model respectful behaviour;
challenge bullying and discriminatory behaviour;
listen to learners;
take reports seriously;
record and report concerns appropriately;
maintain professional curiosity;
follow safeguarding procedures where necessary;
contribute to creating an environment in which learners feel safe to speak.

Every adult has a responsibility to act.

20. Learner Responsibilities
Learners are encouraged and supported to:
treat others with dignity and respect;
respect difference;
avoid behaviour intended to frighten, humiliate, exclude or harm others;
behave responsibly online;
tell an adult if they experience or witness bullying;
avoid sharing harmful online content;
support peers appropriately;
participate positively in resolving difficulties where safe and appropriate.

Brightfield recognises that learners' ability to meet these expectations will vary according to age, developmental stage, SEND and individual circumstances.
Expectations and support will therefore be appropriately personalised.

21. Parents and Carers
Brightfield Academy values partnership with parents and carers in preventing and responding to bullying.

Parents/carers are encouraged to:
report concerns promptly;
share relevant information with the Academy;
preserve relevant online evidence where appropriate;
encourage their child to seek support;
discourage retaliation, either in person or online;
work constructively with Brightfield to resolve concerns;
support safe and respectful online behaviour.

Where possible, Brightfield will work collaboratively with families while maintaining appropriate confidentiality for all children involved.

22. Staff Training
Staff will receive appropriate information and training to enable them to recognise, prevent and respond effectively to bullying.

This may include:
recognising bullying and child-on-child abuse;
discriminatory and prejudice-based bullying;
online bullying;
SEND and vulnerability;
responding to disclosures;
safeguarding thresholds;
recording and reporting procedures;
managing peer relationships;
emerging online risks.
Anti-bullying practice will form part of staff induction and ongoing safeguarding development.

23. Complaints and Escalation
Brightfield Academy aims to resolve concerns about bullying promptly and constructively. Where a parent/carer or learner believes that a bullying concern has not been appropriately addressed, they may raise the matter with the Head of Provision.

Where concerns remain unresolved, the Academy's **Complaints and Compliments Policy** may be followed.
The complaints process does not prevent anyone from making a safeguarding referral or contacting the Police or another statutory agency where they believe a child may be at risk.

24. Confidentiality and Information Sharing
Information relating to bullying will be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need the information in order to protect children, manage behaviour or provide appropriate support.

Brightfield cannot promise absolute confidentiality where information indicates that a child may be at risk of harm.

Records will be stored and managed in accordance with the Academy's:
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
Data Protection Policy;
Confidentiality Policy;
safeguarding recording procedures.

25. Related Policies
This policy should be read alongside:
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Behaviour Policy
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Online Safety Policy
Social Media and Online Communications Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Policy
SEND Policy
Complaints and Compliments Policy
Data Protection Policy
Confidentiality Policy

26. Monitoring and Review
Brightfield Academy will monitor the effectiveness of its anti-bullying arrangements through:
review of reported incidents;
safeguarding records;
learner voice;
parent/carer feedback;
staff observations;
analysis of recurring patterns and themes;
review of discriminatory incidents;
consideration of online safeguarding trends.

Learning from incidents will be used to improve practice, supervision, curriculum content and individual support.
This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following:
a significant bullying or safeguarding incident;
changes to statutory guidance;
changes to legislation;
identified weaknesses in practice;
changes to the needs or operation of the provision.

Policy Owner: Directors
Date Approved: July 2026
Review Date: July 2027
Last Update: July 2026

BRIGHTFIELD ACADEMY

Inclusion. Choice. Growth.

APPENDIX A

We Listen. We Care. We Take Action.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM BEING BULLIED?

You do not have to deal with bullying on your own.

BULLYING CAN LOOK LIKE:

- Hurting you or threatening you
- Calling you names or insulting you
- Leaving you out deliberately
- Targeting you online or on social media
- Spreading rumours about you
- Making you feel unwanted or unsafe

Bullying can happen face to face or online. It is **NEVER OK**.

TELL SOMEONE

You can speak to:

- Any Brightfield member of staff
- Your key worker or tutor
- The DSL or Deputy DSL
- Your parent or carer
- Another adult you trust



There is always someone *here to help you.*

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

1. YOU TELL US
You tell an adult what is happening. We will listen.

2. WE LISTEN
We take what you say seriously. You will be heard.

3. WE HELP KEEP YOU SAFE
We work out what needs to happen to keep you safe.

4. WE TAKE ACTION
We address the behaviour and involve other adults or services where needed.

5. WE CHECK BACK
We will check in with you to make sure things have improved. We don't stop here.

REMEMBER:
You are not "telling tales" by reporting bullying.
You are asking for help with something that should not be happening.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE, RESPECTED AND INCLUDED.
We are here for you.

INCLUSION Everyone belongs. | **CHOICE** Different paths. | **GROWTH** Endless potential.

Be Kind
Be Brightfield