

# **JOHN TAYLOR MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**



## **Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance within John Taylor MAT Schools**

**Reviewed September 2025  
Author: Andrea Packer**

## **JTMAT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals to reflect changes regarding advice within education and following analysis of behaviour trends within each JTMAT School. Local Governing Bodies monitor the implementation of procedures and their effectiveness in JTMAT schools. The MAT Board will have responsibility for the overarching policy itself.

Each JTMAT School will have a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will be the lead for behaviour.

### **Rationale**

JTMAT Schools are completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate such behaviour. Bullying is viewed as being contrary to the school values and principles that we work and live by. It is also contrary to British Values. All members of a JTMAT school community have the right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have the responsibility to contribute to the protection and maintenance of others within the school environment.

JTMAT schools want their pupils to be able to make a positive contribution within the society that they live. We recognise that pupils will make decisions that may not have positive outcomes. Policy implementation at a JTMAT school is a statement of good practice that covers all aspects of school that contribute to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive ethos both inside and outside the classroom.

Effective behaviour management is essential for the smooth running of each JTMAT School, which includes trying to prevent bullying issues and managing any situations that arise. Each school recognises the importance of promoting acceptable behaviour and does this explicitly through the curriculum and implicitly through modelling our expectations.

All members of the school are expected to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning with courtesy and consideration for others as basic requirements, allowing teachers to teach and pupils to learn.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the MAT's policies and schools' guidance documents on SEND, Behaviour, Attendance, Safeguarding and Drugs. JTMAT schools acknowledge their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Should the matter involve staff-on pupil bullying, policies relating to Staff Discipline and Grievance may subsequently be required.

As part of the statutory duty of each JTMAT school to promote pupils' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in the management of pupil's behaviour. To support this, the Government's [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), ensures that school staff have the information, advice and power to:

- Discipline pupils whose behaviour is unacceptable, who break the school rules or who fail to follow a reasonable instruction (Section 90 and 91 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)).
- The power also applies to all paid staff (unless the Headteacher/Head of School says otherwise) with responsibility for pupils, such as teaching assistants.
- Discipline pupils at any time the pupil is in school or elsewhere under the charge of a teacher, including on school visits.
- Discipline pupils in certain circumstances when a pupil's misbehaviour occurs outside of school.
- Impose detention outside school hours.

- Confiscate pupils' property.

JTMAT Schools have a safeguarding duty, in respect of all of its pupils, regarding appropriate behaviour as per the [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) statutory guidance. The school will share relevant data to the Local Authority and other relevant professionals as required. Please read this policy alongside the Trust's Behaviour, Health and Safety, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions, Drugs, and Safeguarding policies and associated school procedures.

Whilst there is no specific national or LA guidance pertaining to anti-bullying policy, this policy has been written to include measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils and has been informed by relevant research data. JTMAT schools will also follow [anti-discrimination law](#).

### **Aims**

To ensure that all people (children and adults) in the school community are able to work in a safe and secure environment free from humiliation, harassment, discrimination, victimisation, oppression and abuse.

To create an atmosphere in school where anyone who is being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to, and that action taken will be swift, effective in halting the bullying and sensitive to their needs.

To clarify for all members of the school community that bullying is not acceptable and must be totally discouraged. Everyone must act in a positive way to ensure that bullying is challenged and reported.

Successful implementation depends on full participation. Every member of the school and the Trust, has a responsibility to ensure positive behaviour.

### **Definition:**

The Trust's accepted definition of bullying is as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)
- sexual and sexist bullying
- prejudice-based bullying
- discriminatory bullying

<https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition>

This policy relates to all types of bullying – pupil/pupil, pupil/staff, staff/staff and staff/pupil. With regard to the first two situations (in which pupil(s) is/are the perpetrator(s), the Behaviour Policy is likely to be required regarding consequences (5.6 to 5.8). With regard to the latter two scenarios (in which a member(s) of staff is/are the perpetrator(s) the Staff Disciplinary Policy is likely to be required (see section 6). Should the victim of bullying by a member of staff be a colleague, the victim should consult with the Trust's Grievance Policy.

There is a difference between bullying and relational conflict. We recognise that bullying can take many forms, and this is outlined in section 5.6. However, we also recognise that incidents can occur between pupils that are not considered bullying but still require support and intervention of staff in schools.

Such incidents may be referred to as 'relational conflict' or falling out. Relational conflict is different to bullying as it does not include a power imbalance, usually relational conflict occurs in pupils (individuals or groups) of a similar power or status, typically in these situations pupils' actions are not repeated or may occur by accident. Pupils involved in relational conflict are also likely to show remorse for their actions and a general willingness to make things right or to resolve the conflict.

### **Signs of Bullying**

All adults on the school site have a responsibility to be aware of signs of distress in pupils as well as responding to direct/indirect disclosure. While the following types of behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems, they may also be the product of bullying: **The list is not exhaustive.**

- obvious signs of distress such as tearfulness or constantly miserable expression
- an unwillingness and to come to school
- regular absence from school
- non-attendance to lessons
- frequent headaches, stomach aches or complaints of feeling generally unwell
- request for money from staff or friends
- bruising on face or body
- isolation from other children and being withdrawn from group activities
- a sudden deterioration in standards of work
- a reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of the lesson or at the end of the school day
- a tendency to stay close to staff during breaks
- damage to child's property
- uncharacteristic behaviour
- depression

Some pupils are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the different attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are in care, those from different cultures and religions may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference.

There will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact on others. Schools are alert and aware of this and will develop strategies to prevent bullying from happening.

### **Managing Allegations from Pupils Against Other Pupils**

The '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' document states that Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that their child protection policy includes:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse
- the systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously
- how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with

- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported
- a recognition that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported
- a statement which makes clear there should be a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children
- recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously, and

Part 1 and Annex A of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) outlines types of abuse and neglect and specific safeguarding issues, including Child on Child abuse.

Part five of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) guidance sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

At any JTMAT school we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to impact on that individual child’s emotional and mental health and wellbeing.

### **Purpose and Aim**

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways, which would be classified as peer-on-peer abuse. The purpose of this section of the policy is to explore the many forms of peer-on-peer abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At JTMAT we have the following policies and local procedures in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- JTMAT Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’.

### **Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

Types of Abuse taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

### **Bullying (physical or emotional)**

Bullying is unwanted behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying the behaviour must include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. SEND, size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

### **Cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying is the use of technology, such as phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the [Malicious Communications Act 1988](#) under section 1 which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the [Communications Act 2003](#), Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.

If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#). Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

### **Sexual and sexist bullying**

Bullying and sexual and sexist behaviours also overlap and it is possible that behaviours can be sexual bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment. For example, sexual bullying taking place may also be a sign that there is a heightened risk of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual exploitation and/or sexual violence.

### **Discriminatory bullying/identity-based bullying**

Children and young people are often bullied because of their race, faith, sex, disability, sexual orientation or trans status, irrespective of whether those differences are real or perceived.

### **Sexting**

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#).

Further non-statutory information to support schools with sharing of nude and semi-nude images is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes>

### **Initiation/Hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony, which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as starting at a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The purpose of this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials, which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

### **Prejudiced Behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society.

In particular, prejudices linked to the 9 protected characteristics as protected by law:

Disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, age (adults only) and marriage/civil partnership (adults only).

Prejudice may also be linked to other factors such as home life, issues of care, parental occupation, socio-economic background.

### **Teenage relationship abuse**

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

### **Expected action taken from all staff**

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

It is important to deal with a situation of child-on-child abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. For example; avoid using the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of child on child abuse it is necessary that all staff be trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

Should staff be concerned that this is becoming a safeguarding concern, they should follow the school's process for referral. and pass to the Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL).

The DSL/DDSL will then gather the facts, consider the intent and decide on the next course of action. This may require getting the police involved.

### **Informing parents/carers**

Parents/carers will be informed of any concerns, if relevant, and following advice from relevant agencies. Staff will always advise students to inform parents as a matter of course.

### **Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established, a JTMAT school will consider any necessary next steps regarding relevant intervention and support.

This could involve one or more of the interventions below:

- Support via the specific school pastoral systems
- Referral to the Tier 2 provider, Early Help Team, or other relevant agency

- Restorative Justice work between relevant pupils
- Targeted work with a class, group, year group regarding the issue.
- A risk assessment being undertaken
- An Early Help Assessment Plan
- A consequence (internal, suspension or permanent exclusion) may be appropriate
- A graded care profile being undertaken

### **Prevention**

JTMAT schools will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils by:

- Providing a developmentally appropriate RSE syllabus which develops pupils' understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe;
- Establish an ethos of being a 'telling' school, where pupils are able to let staff know of any concerns they have;
- Having systems in place for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued;
- Using Early Help systems to identify at risk pupils;
- Ensuring adequate communication with other relevant agencies as appropriate;
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk
- Developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.

### **Reporting Bullying**

Some forms of bullying are illegal. In this situation a JTMAT school will seek advice from the police. Examples of such behaviour could include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, cyber bullying, or hate crimes.

### **Bullying Outside of the School Gate and Out of Hours**

JTMAT schools and the staff, have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises "to an extent as is reasonable". This includes misbehaviour when the pupil is:

- Taking part in a school-organised or school related activity;
- Travelling to or from school;
- Wearing school uniform;
- Is identifiable by any other means as a pupil of a JTMAT school.

For misbehaviour at any time that:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- Poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public;
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the JTMAT.

JTMAT schools will respond to non-criminal behaviour and bullying which occurs off the school site but is witnessed by a member of staff or reported to us, in line with the school's behaviour procedures. Criminal behaviour, including cyber-bullying, should be passed to the appropriate authorities with whom the school will typically liaise – particularly in the event that the behaviour impacts upon well-being, progress or behaviour of those within school.

### **Managing Allegations from Pupils Against Staff**

JTMAT schools will wish to establish a quick resolution should an allegation be made against a member of staff. This will be in the best interests of all concerned.

In response to the allegation, staff suspension will not be the default position.

Any allegation should be reported straight away to the Headteacher/Head of School, unless the allegation is about them. If that is the case, the allegation should be reported to the Chair of Governors. The JTMAT designated member of staff will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), as and if required.

A thorough investigation of the incident will be undertaken by the designated member of staff, following advice from the LADO. Support will be offered for the victim.

Should the accusation be deemed malicious or unfounded, the pupil will have breached the school rules and it will be deemed a significant incident. This could lead to a fixed term exclusion, a permanent exclusion, and/or police involvement. The LADO will refer the matter to Children's Services.

Should the allegation, following investigation, be found to be wholly or partially upheld, then the member of staff will be subject to the MAT's staff disciplinary procedures.

Local school specific context and procedures will be found on individual school websites.

### **Managing Allegations from Staff against Staff**

In the event that any employee of JTMAT alleges that they are subject to bullying behaviour from a colleague, they should be supported and directed to the Trust's Grievance Policy and Procedure.