

Beacon Alternative School CIC (and Alternative Provision)

Anti-Bullying Policy



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Note: Beacon Alternative Provision operates under Beacon Alternative School CIC, which is not currently a registered school but is working toward future registration. This policy applies to all staff, young people, parents/carers, volunteers, and professionals working with Beacon across all settings.

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1. Introduction

Beacon Alternative School CIC is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where all young people are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying of any form is not tolerated. We recognise that many of the young people we support have experienced trauma, exclusion, anxiety, or unmet needs, and that these factors can both increase vulnerability to bullying and influence behaviour.

This policy outlines Beacon's approach to preventing, identifying, and responding to bullying in a way that is safeguarding-led, restorative where appropriate, and firmly protective of young people's wellbeing.

2. Aims and Scope

This policy aims to:

- Protect young people from all forms of bullying and peer-on-peer abuse
- Promote a culture of respect, empathy, and safety
- Ensure bullying concerns are responded to promptly, consistently, and proportionately
- Embed anti-bullying practice across all Beacon provision

This policy applies to:

- All young people accessing Beacon provision
- All staff, volunteers, and contractors
- All settings, including on-site, off-site, online, and community-based activities

3. Safeguarding Responsibilities

Bullying is recognised as a **safeguarding concern**, particularly where it involves peer-on-peer abuse, discrimination, coercion, or results in emotional or physical harm.

Under the Children Act 1989 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026), serious or persistent bullying may constitute a child protection issue. All bullying incidents and concerns must be:

- Taken seriously
- Recorded on Beacon's Incident Log
- Escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where appropriate

External agencies may be involved where necessary to support the young person experiencing harm or the young person displaying bullying behaviour. While bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, some behaviours associated with bullying may be illegal and require police involvement.

4. What is Bullying?

Bullying is **repeated and intentional behaviour** that causes emotional or physical harm to another person or group and involves an imbalance of power, making it difficult for the targeted individual to defend themselves. Single incidents of harmful behaviour are taken seriously and recorded, as bullying often develops over time.

5. Types of Bullying

Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

- **Physical:** hitting, pushing, intimidation, theft
- **Verbal:** name-calling, insults, threats, discriminatory language
- **Emotional:** exclusion, manipulation, humiliation, spreading rumours
- **Cyberbullying:** harassment via social media, messaging platforms, or online forums

Bullying may be related to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, including disability, race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or perceived differences.

6. Recognising Early Signs

Early indicators of bullying may include:

- Changes in behaviour or mood
- Increased anxiety or withdrawal
- Avoidance of certain settings or activities
- Unexplained physical complaints
- Emotional distress or reduced engagement

Staff are expected to remain vigilant and to challenge and record any concerning behaviour at an early stage in line with Beacon's Behaviour Policy.

7. Locations and Contexts of Bullying

Bullying may occur:

- Within Beacon settings
- During travel to or from provision
- Online or via digital platforms
- In community or external placements

Beacon retains responsibility to respond to off-site or online bullying where it impacts a young person's safety, wellbeing, or engagement with provision.

8. Impact on Young People

Bullying can have significant short- and long-term effects, including:

- Anxiety, low self-esteem, and emotional distress
- School or provision avoidance
- Difficulties with trust and relationships
- Depression or trauma responses

Early, supportive intervention is essential to reduce harm and promote recovery.

9. Reporting Concerns

Concerns about bullying can be reported by:

- Young people speaking directly to any trusted member of staff
- Parents/carers contacting staff or line managers

- Use of Beacon's reporting systems where available

All reports are taken seriously and handled sensitively. Anonymous disclosures will be considered, though they may limit the actions that can be taken.

10. Responding to Bullying

Beacon's response to bullying is proportionate, safeguarding-led, and focused on wellbeing.

Actions may include:

- Immediate support for the young person affected
- Investigation and recording of incidents
- Restorative approaches where appropriate and safe
- Clear boundaries, consequences, or sanctions
- Involvement of parents/carers and external professionals where required

Repeated or serious incidents may result in significant sanctions, including exclusion, in line with Beacon's Behaviour Policy.

11. Prevention and Education

Beacon actively promotes anti-bullying practice through:

- Curriculum-integrated discussions around respect, conflict, and resolution
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week
- Consistent staff modelling of respectful behaviour
- Staff training to challenge inappropriate conduct

Young people are encouraged to speak openly and to seek support without fear of blame.

12. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored through:

- Incident Log data
- Identification of patterns or repeat incidents
- Review meetings and safeguarding oversight

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

13. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety and Technology Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure

14. Beacon Anti-Bullying Commitment

At Beacon Alternative School CIC, we stand firmly against all forms of bullying.

We commit to:

- Creating a safe and respectful environment
- Responding promptly and sensitively to concerns
- Supporting young people affected by bullying
- Challenging behaviour that causes harm
- Working in partnership with families and professionals

If you are experiencing bullying:

- Speak to any member of staff
- Ask for help at any time

We promise to:

- Take every concern seriously
- Act quickly and appropriately
- Support you through and beyond the issue