ASPIRING MINDS
TUITION

EDUCATION   WELLBEING   CREATIVE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Reviewed July 2025

<u>Anti-Bullying Policy</u>

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1. Purpose

At Aspiring Minds Tuition (AMT), we are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment where all learners feel valued, supported and able to achieve their full potential. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This policy sets out how we prevent, identify, and respond to bullying, with a specific focus on protecting vulnerable learners, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

2. Scope

This policy applies to:
- All staff (permanent, temporary, contractors and volunteers)
- All learners and parents/carers
- Any visitors, partners or service providers associated with our organisation

It applies to all settings and learning environments under AMT's provision, including in-person tuition, online learning, assessments and any learner interaction involving AMT.

3. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy aligns with the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2023**
  Sets out safeguarding duties for education providers, including responding to bullying as a potential safeguarding concern.
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- **Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Department for Education (DfE), 2017**
  Provides non-statutory guidance for schools and educational settings on preventing and addressing all forms of bullying.
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023**
  Outlines the responsibilities of all agencies in protecting children from harm, including emotional harm caused by bullying.
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2
- **Equality Act 2010**
  Requires education providers to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation, all of which can result from bullying.
  https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
- **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**
  Emphasises the need to protect vulnerable learners with SEND from bullying and ensure they are fully included in school life.
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

- **Children and Families Act 2014**
  Reinforces the importance of inclusive practice and protecting the well-being and participation of all learners, especially those with SEND.
  https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted

4. Aims

AMT aims to:
- Promote a culture of respect, kindness and inclusion
- Prevent all forms of bullying, including verbal, physical, online (cyberbullying), emotional and discriminatory bullying
- Respond quickly, consistently and effectively to any reported incidents
- Support and safeguard victims of bullying
- Address the root causes of bullying behaviour through education and restorative practice
- Recognise and address the increased vulnerability of SEND learners

5. Definitions

Bullying is defined as:
"*Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.*" – DfE

Bullying can include:
- Physical harm
- Name-calling or verbal abuse
- Online harassment or cyberbullying
- Exclusion or isolation
- Manipulative behaviour
- Discriminatory bullying (e.g. race, gender, disability, SEND)

6. SEND Considerations

Learners with SEND are statistically more likely to experience bullying due to:
- Communication difficulties
- Social isolation
- Limited understanding of social cues
- Perceived or actual differences in behaviour or appearance

At AMT, we take proactive steps to safeguard SEND learners by:
- Providing accessible and differentiated anti-bullying education
- Regularly reviewing individual needs and risks
- Offering increased supervision, especially during transitions or online sessions
- Encouraging peer awareness and empathy
- Ensuring a consistent adult presence and familiar support persons

- Including SEND-specific bullying examples in e-safety and behaviour discussions

7. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff must:
- Act immediately on any bullying concern
- Model respectful behaviour at all times
- Complete safeguarding and anti-bullying training
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for:
- Monitoring bullying incidents and trends
- Reporting concerns to external agencies where required
- Ensuring all learners feel safe to report concerns
- Leading reviews of this policy and its effectiveness

Learners are encouraged to:
- Treat others with respect
- Report any bullying they see or experience
- Support peers who may be at risk

Parents/carers are asked to:
- Support our anti-bullying approach
- Report concerns to AMT promptly
- Work with staff to resolve issues cooperatively

8. Reporting Bullying – Learner Guidance

At AMT, we are committed to ensuring every learner feels safe, valued and supported. We encourage all learners to speak up if they are experiencing or witnessing bullying. These steps will be revisited regularly through our teaching and wellbeing support:

8.1. If You Are Being Bullied

We remind learners of the following steps if they feel they are being bullied:
- Speak up if you feel safe to do so. Let the person know that their behaviour is upsetting you and ask them to stop. You don't have to do this alone, a member of staff can support you.
- Tell a trusted adult. This could be your tutor, another staff member or your parent/carer. We take all concerns seriously and will act swiftly.
- Use the online reporting form. You can report a concern confidentially using the form on our website.
- Email discreetly. Learners or parents can also contact us confidentially at: info@aspiringmindstuition.co.uk

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<u>8.2. If You Witness Bullying</u>

- Support your peer by speaking up if it is safe to do so.
- Report what you've seen to a member of staff, either during a session or via email or the online form.
- Never join in, even as a joke, we expect all learners to act with kindness and respect.

<u>8.3. Support for Learners with SEND</u>

We understand that some learners with SEND may find it harder to speak up. Our staff are trained to recognise signs of distress or withdrawal and will always create a safe space for learners to communicate in the way that suits them best (e.g. using visuals, private chats, supported discussion with a trusted adult). All bullying concerns will be dealt with promptly, fairly and with the best interests of the learner at the centre of any actions.

<u>9. Cyberbullying</u>

Our E-Safety and IT Acceptable Use Policy outlines our full approach to cyberbullying, including a definition, increased risks for SEND learners, how AMT monitors and supports online safety and staff and learner responsibilities.

As an online education provider, we recognise that cyberbullying can happen through messaging platforms, emails, online classrooms, or learning portals and it can be more difficult for some learners, particularly those with SEND, to recognise, report, or respond to it. Our policy details how we proactively safeguard learners in digital spaces and how to report any concerns.

Learners are reminded regularly to follow the clear steps set out in section 8.1 of this policy to report cyberbullying, including using our online reporting form or emailing us at **info@aspiringmindstuition.co.uk**. All reports will be taken seriously and acted upon swiftly to ensure a safe, respectful learning environment.

<u>10. Promoting a Positive Culture</u>

At AMT, promoting a positive, inclusive and respectful learning environment is at the heart of our practice. We recognise that in an online educational setting, building a safe digital culture is essential to the well-being and success of all learners, especially those with SEND who may be more vulnerable to isolation, miscommunication or digital risks. We foster a strong anti-bullying ethos by embedding positive behaviour principles into every aspect of our online tuition provision.

<u>10.1. Positive Digital Communication</u>

- All sessions begin with respectful greetings and clear expectations
- Learners are reminded to use polite and inclusive language in chats, forums, and during live lessons.

- Staff model respectful, patient and encouraging digital communication.

10.2. Online Classroom Norms

- Each virtual learning space has clearly displayed digital conduct rules (e.g. microphone use, chat etiquette, hand-raising protocols).
- Staff/Learner Code of Conduct agreements are introduced and reinforced regularly.
- Staff use consistent visual cues and reminders to reinforce positive online interaction.

10.3. Use of Visual Supports and Accessible Tools

- Visual communication tools (e.g. emojis, thumbs up icons, reaction buttons) help learners with SEND express themselves safely and comfortably.
- SEND learners are supported with breakout rooms, closed captioning, alternative input formats (e.g. voice recordings) or 1:1 support where needed.

10.4. Anti-Bullying Through the Curriculum

- At AMT, we believe that prevention and education are key to tackling bullying effectively. Our tuition and wider curriculum actively promote respect, kindness, inclusion and empathy. Topics related to personal safety, relationships, diversity and online behaviour are embedded throughout our teaching to raise awareness and build resilience among all learners, including those with SEND who may be at greater risk.
- To support this, we offer the BCS Level 1 Smart Digital Award in E-Safety, which helps learners understand how to stay safe online, recognise risky or harmful behaviour, including cyberbullying and know how to respond appropriately. This nationally recognised qualification enhances learners' digital literacy and supports their personal development, reinforcing AMT's commitment to creating a safe and respectful online learning environment.
- Sessions are differentiated to ensure accessibility for all learners, including those with SEND, so that every learner is supported in developing the knowledge and skills to stay safe and respectful in all environments, both offline and online.

10.5. Celebrating Respect and Inclusion

- All learners are recognised weekly for kind, respectful and inclusive actions online (e.g. "Star Communicator," "Digital Helper," "Respect Champion").
- All learners are celebrated for communication, social efforts and participation, not only academic achievements.

10.6. Regular Check-ins and Well-being Focus

- Staff carry out regular pastoral check-ins via secure messaging, email or live check-ins.

- Learners are encouraged to share their thoughts about the learning environment confidentially.
- A digital feedback form is available for learners who may struggle to speak up directly.

10.7. Community and Belonging

- AMT runs inclusive online clubs and virtual socials to build friendships and reduce isolation, particularly among SEND learners.
- Staff facilitate cooperative tasks and peer feedback activities that promote teamwork and build mutual respect.

10.8. SEND-Aware Positive Behaviour Support

- Tutors receive ongoing CPD in recognising communication differences, anxiety indicators and sensory needs that may impact behaviour.
- Learner profiles and individual strategies are shared (with consent) so all the relevant staff understand how to support behaviour positively and fairly.

11. Linked Policies

This policy should be used in conjunction with the following AMT policies, which collectively support a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment for all learners and staff:

- **Safeguarding Policy**
  Essential for protecting learners and staff from harm.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**
  Promotes respect and inclusion for all individuals.
- **E-Safety and IT Acceptable Use Policy**
  Addresses online behaviour and cyberbullying.
- **Learner Agreement: Code of Conduct**
  Outlines expected behaviour standards for learners.
- **Staff Agreement: Code of Conduct**
  Sets out expected professional conduct for staff.
- **Complaints Policy**
  Provides a clear process for raising and resolving concerns.

12. Monitoring and Review

All reported bullying incidents are recorded, reviewed, and monitored. The DSL compiles termly reports to identify patterns and inform improvements.
This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by updated legislation or changes in best practice.

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