

DRIFFIELD KARATE ACADEMY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Definition

Bullying is behaviour that is intended to hurt, intimidate, humiliate or undermine another person. It may be physical, verbal, emotional, social or carried out online. Bullying often involves repeated behaviour over time and an imbalance of power, making it difficult for the person being targeted to defend themselves.

Bullying can include, but is not limited to:

- **Physical bullying:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, deliberately causing injury or damaging another person's belongings.
- **Verbal bullying:** Name-calling, insults, threats, teasing or making hurtful or humiliating comments.
- **Emotional and social bullying:** Deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, encouraging others to reject a person or repeatedly undermining their confidence.
- **Cyberbullying:** Using social media, messaging services, online platforms or other digital communication to threaten, humiliate, harass or target another person.
- **Discriminatory bullying:** Targeting someone because of characteristics such as disability, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or other personal circumstances.
- **Abuse of power:** Using age, grade, physical strength, experience, seniority or influence to intimidate, control or exploit another person.

A single serious incident may not meet the definition of bullying, but it can still constitute unacceptable behaviour, abuse or a safeguarding concern and will be addressed appropriately.

Not every disagreement or conflict is bullying. However, all reports of behaviour that causes harm or distress will be taken seriously, whether the behaviour is repeated or occurs on a single occasion.

2. Statement of Intent

Driffield Karate Academy is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, respectful and inclusive environment in which all students can learn, train and develop without fear of bullying, intimidation, harassment or abuse.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Every student has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of age, ability, experience, background or personal circumstances.

We recognise that bullying can have a serious impact on an individual's confidence, self-esteem, emotional well-being and enjoyment of karate. We therefore encourage all students, parents, carers, instructors and members to speak up when they have concerns.

All reports will be taken seriously, handled sensitively and investigated fairly. Appropriate action will be taken to protect those affected, address unacceptable behaviour and reduce the risk of further incidents.

3. Aims

Driffield Karate Academy aims to:

- Promote a positive club culture based on respect, discipline, kindness, inclusion and good sportsmanship.
- Prevent bullying and other unacceptable behaviour wherever possible.
- Make clear that bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation and abuse will not be tolerated.
- Encourage students to report bullying, whether they experience it themselves or witness it happening to someone else.
- Ensure that students know who they can approach for help and understand that they will be listened to.
- Take all reports seriously and investigate concerns promptly, sensitively and impartially.
- Support those who have experienced bullying and take appropriate steps to prevent further harm.
- Address the behaviour of those responsible in a fair, proportionate and constructive manner.

- Work with parents and carers, where appropriate, to resolve concerns and support the students involved.
- Ensure that instructors and other responsible adults understand their responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying.
- Protect individuals from retaliation or victimisation for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

4. Prevention and Expectations

All members of Driffield Karate Academy are expected to contribute to a safe and respectful training environment.

Students must:

- Treat fellow students, instructors, officials and visitors with respect.
- Never use karate skills, physical strength or martial arts rank to intimidate, threaten or hurt another person.
- Refrain from name-calling, humiliating comments, deliberate exclusion, threats or discriminatory behaviour.
- Respect differences in age, ability, experience, background and individual needs.
- Follow instructors' reasonable instructions and the academy's codes of conduct.
- Report bullying, unsafe behaviour or other concerns to an instructor or appropriate responsible person.

Instructors will promote positive behaviour, monitor interactions between students and respond promptly to concerns. They will make clear that karate is taught for personal development, discipline, fitness and responsible self-protection, never as a means of bullying or exerting power over others.

5. Reporting Bullying

Any student who experiences or witnesses bullying should tell an instructor, the Chief Instructor or another trusted responsible adult as soon as possible.

Parents and carers are encouraged to report concerns directly to the Chief Instructor. Reports may be made verbally or in writing.

The person receiving a report should:

1. Listen carefully and take the concern seriously.

2. Reassure the person reporting the incident that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
3. Establish the basic facts without making assumptions or promising an outcome before the matter has been considered.
4. Record relevant information, including dates, locations, the behaviour reported and any witnesses, where appropriate.
5. Refer safeguarding concerns promptly to the appropriate safeguarding lead or responsible authority.
6. Take any immediate steps necessary to protect the individuals involved.

Students should not be expected to confront the person responsible for bullying or resolve the matter themselves.

If the concern involves the Chief Instructor or the person who would normally receive reports, it should be raised with another appropriate responsible person or an external safeguarding organisation.

6. Investigating Incidents

All reports will be considered promptly and fairly. The academy will take account of the nature and seriousness of the allegation, the age and needs of those involved, any relevant history and the information available.

Where appropriate, the academy will:

- Speak separately with the person reporting the concern, the person affected and the person whose behaviour is being questioned.
- Seek information from witnesses where necessary.
- Review relevant messages or other evidence where available and appropriate.
- Keep an accurate record of the concern, actions taken and outcome.
- Involve parents or carers when appropriate, particularly where children are involved, while taking account of safeguarding and confidentiality requirements.
- Consider immediate protective measures while the matter is being investigated.

Investigations will be handled sensitively and without prejudging the outcome. Information will be shared only with those who need it to address the concern, protect individuals or fulfil safeguarding responsibilities.

Where a concern indicates possible abuse, a serious threat or a criminal offence, the academy will follow its safeguarding procedures and refer the matter to the appropriate external organisation or authority where necessary. Internal action must not delay an urgent safeguarding referral.

7. Action and Consequences

Where bullying or other unacceptable behaviour is identified, the academy will take appropriate action based on the circumstances and seriousness of the incident.

This may include:

- Speaking with the individual concerned and making clear what behaviour must change.
- Setting clear expectations and requiring an apology or other appropriate form of repair where suitable and safe.
- Providing guidance, support or additional supervision.
- Working with parents or carers to address ongoing concerns.
- Issuing a formal warning.
- Restricting participation in particular activities or applying a temporary suspension.
- Ending membership in serious or persistent cases, in accordance with the academy's procedures.

Serious incidents involving violence, threats, discriminatory abuse, exploitation or safeguarding concerns may require immediate protective action and external referral.

Any action will be proportionate, fair and consistent with the academy's relevant policies and procedures. The welfare and safety of those affected will remain the priority.

An apology or agreement to stop is not, by itself, sufficient if further action is needed to protect the person affected.

8. Support for Those Affected

Students who have experienced bullying will be treated with compassion and respect. The academy will consider what support is needed to help them feel safe and confident in returning to or continuing their training.

Support may include:

- Regular check-ins with an appropriate responsible adult.
- Practical arrangements to reduce contact with the person responsible where necessary.
- Additional supervision during training or academy events.
- Communication with parents or carers, where appropriate.
- Referral to external support services where necessary.

The academy will take reasonable steps to monitor the situation and check that the behaviour has stopped. Retaliation against anyone who reports bullying or assists with an investigation will not be tolerated.

9. False or Malicious Reports

All concerns will be considered fairly. A report that cannot be substantiated will not automatically be treated as dishonest or malicious.

Where there is clear evidence that someone has deliberately made a malicious or knowingly false allegation, the academy may address that behaviour through its relevant procedures. Genuine concerns raised in good faith will not result in punishment simply because there is insufficient evidence to establish what happened.

10. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Information relating to bullying reports will be handled sensitively and recorded securely in accordance with the academy's procedures and applicable data protection requirements.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information needs to be shared to protect a child or adult at risk, respond to a serious concern or comply with legal obligations.

Records will be retained and shared only as appropriate for safeguarding, accountability and the effective management of the incident.

11. Responsibilities

The Chief Instructor is responsible for ensuring that reports are considered appropriately, that relevant procedures are followed and that necessary safeguarding referrals are made.

Instructors and coaches are responsible for promoting respectful behaviour, responding to concerns and reporting incidents through the appropriate channels.

Students are responsible for treating others respectfully, following the academy's Code of Conduct and reporting bullying or unsafe behaviour.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support the academy's approach, raise concerns promptly and reinforce the importance of kindness, respect and responsible behaviour.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated when necessary to reflect changes in safeguarding guidance, relevant legislation, governing-body requirements and the needs of Driffield Karate Academy.

Policy responsibility: Chief Instructor, Driffield Karate Academy

Date adopted: 20th October 2026

Review date: Oct 27