



Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

FACE – Family and Community Enterprise | Registered charity 1179629 | Working as FAM

Head office: Central Buildings, Richmond Terrace, Blackburn, BB1 7AP | Applies at head office and all FAM outreach sites

REFERENCE	VERSION	OWNER	REVIEW
FAM-SV-12	1.0 (September 2026)	Operations Lead	Annually

Status: approved by the Board of Trustees on 10 September 2026.

Our commitment

Everyone at FAM has the right to feel safe, respected and welcome. We will not tolerate bullying of young people, in person or online, or harassment of staff and volunteers, including sexual harassment. We take active steps to prevent it, respond quickly and fairly when it happens, and support everyone affected.

1 Purpose and scope

1.1 This policy explains how FACE – Family and Community Enterprise (registered charity 1179629), working as FAM, prevents and responds to bullying and harassment. It has two parts:

- **Part A** covers bullying among young people who take part in our activities, including online and prejudice-based bullying.
- **Part B** covers bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment, of staff, volunteers and trustees, whether by colleagues, young people, families, partners or members of the public.

1.2 It applies at all FAM sessions, trips and events, on FAM's online spaces, and to behaviour outside sessions where it affects someone's safety or ability to take part or work. It is based on the Equality Act 2010, the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Online Safety Act 2023.

2 Definitions

Term	Meaning
Bullying	Behaviour that is usually repeated and intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally, often where there is

Term	Meaning
	an imbalance of power.
Online bullying (cyberbullying)	Bullying using phones, social media, messaging apps, games or other online platforms, including sharing images, abusive messages, exclusion from group chats and impersonation.
Prejudice-based bullying	Bullying linked to race, religion, nationality, immigration status, disability, SEND, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, appearance, poverty or being in care.
Harassment	Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
Sexual harassment	Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature with the same purpose or effect, including comments, jokes, gestures, messages, images, touching and requests for dates or sex. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they rejected or submitted to such conduct.
Harmful sexual behaviour	Sexual behaviour by children and young people that is developmentally inappropriate, harmful to themselves or others, or abusive. This is always a safeguarding matter.

- 2.1** Bullying and harassment can be a one-off serious incident. What matters is the effect on the person, not whether the other person meant it as a joke.

3 Part A: preventing bullying among young people

- Agree a group agreement with young people at the start of each programme, covering respect, kindness and online behaviour.
- Build a culture where young people feel able to speak up, and where bystanders are encouraged to help safely.
- Plan sessions and supervision to reduce opportunities for bullying, for example during free time, changing, transport and trips.
- Use activities and discussions that challenge prejudice and celebrate difference.
- Include online safety in our work, following the Online Safety, Social Media and Images Policy.
- Pay close attention to young people who may be more likely to be targeted, including those with SEND, those new to the UK and LGBT+ young people.
- Train all staff and volunteers to spot the signs of bullying and respond.

Signs a young person may be being bullied

- 3.1** Changes in mood or behaviour, withdrawing from the group, stopping attending, anxiety about phones or social media, unexplained injuries or damaged belongings, or reluctance to travel to or from sessions.

4 Responding to bullying among young people

- (a) Stop the behaviour immediately if it is happening in front of you, and make sure everyone is safe.
- (b) Listen to the young person who has been targeted, take them seriously and reassure them they have done the right thing.
- (c) Consider whether it is a safeguarding matter. If a young person is at risk of significant harm, or the behaviour involves violence, sexual behaviour, sharing of nude or semi-nude images, threats, exploitation or hate crime, tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead straight away and follow the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.
- (d) Speak separately to the young person or people accused, and to any witnesses. Stay calm and fair.
- (e) Record what happened, what was said and what action was taken, on the same day, and tell the session lead.
- (f) Agree a response with the session lead (see below).
- (g) Tell parents or carers of under-18s, unless doing so would put the young person at risk. Discuss this with the young person first.
- (h) For online bullying, ask young people not to delete evidence, help them block and report on the platform, and never ask them to send or forward images. Staff must never view, copy or store nude or semi-nude images of young people.
- (i) Follow up with everyone involved within a week, and keep monitoring.

Proportionate responses

Level	Examples	Possible response
Low	Name-calling, unkind comments, first incident	Conversation with the young people, restorative discussion, reminder of the group agreement
Medium	Repeated behaviour, exclusion, online unkindness, prejudice-based comments	Restorative meeting, behaviour plan, parent or carer involvement, temporary changes to groups
High	Violence, threats, sexual behaviour, hate crime, image-based abuse, sustained campaign	Safeguarding referral, police where a crime may have been committed, suspension from activities while a risk assessment is done, involvement of school or other agencies

- 4.1** We focus on repairing harm and changing behaviour. Young people who bully others may need support themselves. Excluding a young person from FAM is a last resort, decided by the Operations Lead, and we will try to signpost them to other support. Before any exclusion, we consider whether the behaviour is linked to SEND or other needs, as set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

5 Part B: preventing harassment of staff and volunteers

- 5.1** Since October 2024, employers have had a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010, as amended by the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees. This duty is anticipatory: we must act before anything happens, not just respond afterwards. The law in this area is being strengthened, and FAM will follow the higher standard of taking **all reasonable steps**, including to protect people from harassment by third parties such as young people, family members, partners and the public. We apply the same approach to volunteers and trustees.

The steps we take

Step	What FAM does	Who
Risk assessment	Assess the risk of harassment in our work, including detached work, lone working, evening sessions, trips and working with adults, and record controls	Operations Lead and Health and Safety Lead
Clear policy	Share this policy at induction and make it easy to find	Operations Lead
Training	Train all staff and volunteers on what harassment is, how to report it and how to respond; give extra training to managers	Operations Lead
Reporting routes	Offer more than one way to report, including to someone other than a line manager, and anonymous reporting of concerns	Operations Lead and Chair of Trustees
Third parties	Make clear to young people, families, partners and venues that harassment is not accepted, and act on it	Session leads
Culture	Leaders model respectful behaviour and challenge inappropriate comments and 'banter'	Everyone, led by trustees and Operations Lead
Monitoring	Record all reports, review trends and report anonymised figures to the board at least once a year	Operations Lead
Review	Review these steps at least once a year and after any incident	Board of trustees

6 Reporting harassment or bullying as a staff member or volunteer

- 6.1** If you feel you are being bullied or harassed, or you see it happening to someone else, you can:
- raise it informally, if you feel safe to do so, by telling the person their behaviour is unwelcome and asking them to stop

- speak to your line manager or session lead
- speak to the Operations Lead
- speak to the Chair of Trustees or another trustee, especially if the concern involves the Operations Lead
- use the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure (staff) or the Volunteer Policy (volunteers) to make a formal complaint
- use the Whistleblowing Policy if the concern is about wider wrongdoing or a cover-up.

6.2 You do not have to try to resolve things informally first. You can bring a colleague or other companion to support you. Keep a note of what happened, when, and any witnesses.

7 How we respond to reports from staff and volunteers

- (a)** Take the report seriously and treat the person with respect and sensitivity.
- (b)** Take immediate steps to keep the person safe, such as changing rotas, working pairs or venues, without disadvantaging the person who reported.
- (c)** Agree with the person how they would like the matter handled, while being clear that some situations, such as serious or safeguarding concerns, must be investigated.
- (d)** Where a formal investigation is needed, appoint an investigator who is not involved, and follow the ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- (e)** Keep information confidential, sharing it only with those who need to know.
- (f)** Take action where the complaint is upheld. This may include disciplinary action up to dismissal for staff, ending a volunteer role, or removing a trustee in line with the governing document.
- (g)** Where the harasser is a young person, family member or member of the public, take proportionate action, such as a warning, a behaviour agreement, a change of worker, or ending their involvement. Safeguarding needs of young people are always considered.
- (h)** Report to the police where a crime may have been committed, and consider whether it is a serious incident under the Serious Incident Reporting Policy.
- (i)** Offer ongoing support to everyone involved and check in regularly.

8 Protection from victimisation and false allegations

8.1 Nobody will be treated badly for raising a concern, giving evidence or supporting someone else, even if the complaint is not upheld. Victimising someone is a disciplinary matter. Allegations found to have been made deliberately and maliciously may also be dealt with under the relevant procedure, but a complaint that is not upheld is not in itself malicious.

9 Records and monitoring

- 9.1** All incidents of bullying and harassment are recorded, stored securely and kept in line with the Data Protection Policy and the Records Management and Retention Policy. The Operations Lead reviews the records every quarter for patterns, including prejudice-based incidents, and reports anonymised figures to the board at least once a year.

10 How this policy supports our focus

- This policy protects young people aged 11 to 25 in every FAM setting, including online spaces we run.
- We pay particular attention to bullying linked to SEND, sex, race, religion or immigration status, and to online bullying.

11 Related policies

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Online Safety, Social Media and Images Policy
- Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries (Staff and Volunteers)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure
- Complaints Policy
- Lone Working and Detached Youth Work Policy
- Serious Incident Reporting Policy
- Trustee Code of Conduct and Board Responsibilities

Approval record

Approved by the Board of Trustees on	10 th Sep 2026
Signed (Chair of Trustees)	
Next review due	31st July 2027
Version history	1.0, September 2026. New policy; replaces any earlier FAM or FACE version.