

# Hulme Hall Grammar School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Control	
Report	Anti-bullying
Approval Body	Education Committee
Date Reviewed	November 2023
Review Schedule	Annual
Next Review Date	November 2024

## Introduction

This is a whole school policy and also refers to the Early Years' Foundation Stage (EYFS).

This policy has regard to the DfE non-statutory guidance documents "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" (2017) and "Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff" (2014).

This document should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding, Behaviour and Discipline and E-Safety Policies.

The School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all pupils and staff so that teaching and learning can take place in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. It strives to be a welcoming place, offering the support necessary for individuals to develop and achieve their full potential. An active and effective anti-bullying policy is a key element in underpinning that ethos.

At Hulme Hall Grammar School, bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is essential that pupils and their parents can be confident that bullying will be dealt with seriously, promptly and effectively.

The School also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills into school. The School will do what is reasonably practical to eliminate such bullying. Bullying outside of school may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to School staff, it should be investigated and acted on as outlined in this policy.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying can be defined as the intimidation or harassment of a person or persons against their will by means of any form of verbal, mental or physical abuse, to include racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, specific learning difficulty, disability or cyber (mobile phones, texts, social networks and email).

Whilst bullying behaviour may involve a series of incidents over a period of time, single instances of such behaviour will not be ignored and any form of bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Prejudice-based bullying on the grounds of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. Emotional or psychological bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying.

Bullying includes:

- Name calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making gestures
- Excluding others
- Belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- Making offensive or humiliating comments
- Gossiping
- Spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- Taking or deliberately damaging a person's belongings
- Physical violence
- Cyberbullying e.g. inappropriate text messaging, e-mailing and use of social media, or sending offensive or degrading images by phone or email or the internet
- Racist, religious, sexual, sexist, homophobic, special educational needs or disability related language and comments
- Sexual harassment.

Child-on-child abuse - All staff are made aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse.

This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- the sharing of nude or semi-nude pictures – sometimes known as sexting
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

All staff have received updated training on how to recognise and report child-on-child abuse.

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

If bullying gives rise to a safeguarding concern, the School's Safeguarding Policy and procedures will be followed. This policy is available on the School website.

Low level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged, or dismissed as banter or horseplay, it can also lead to a reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable, to help stop negative behaviours escalating.

## Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour:

- becoming shy and nervous
- pretending to be ill

- taking unusual absences or complaining of feeling ill in the morning
- seeking attention from adults
- changes in work patterns- beginning to do poorly at school
- a lack of concentration
- truancy
- attempting / committing suicide in the most extreme cases
- stopping eating / “binge” eating
- bullying other children / siblings
- being afraid to use the internet / mobile phone.

## Reporting Bullying

Any pupil subjected to, or any pupil who suspects any aspect of bullying behaviour, must inform a member of staff immediately.

All claims of bullying behaviour must be reported to / by the member of staff promptly and efficiently. Investigations into bullying allegations can be complex and take time to carry out. Staff should try to investigate as fully as possible within a reasonable timescale.

Any adult (defined as parent, teacher or member of staff) who witnesses bullying behaviour has a duty to report it to the Headmaster or a member of the SLT.

The School encourages all to ‘Speak Out’ as bullying thrives in a climate of silence.

All reported incidents of bullying should be:

- referred to the Headmaster, a member of SLT or the relevant Key Stage Manager and investigated. The Headmaster, SLT, or Key Stage Manager will interview the victim, witnesses and alleged bully and a written record will be made to enable any patterns to be identified
- recorded in the pupils’ personal files.

The parents of all pupils involved (i.e. alleged victims and perpetrators) are to be informed as soon as is practically possible.

## Seriousness of Bullying

The potential for bullying to cause serious psychological damage or, in extreme cases, suicide, must not be underestimated. Whilst bullying is not specifically a criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. If staff feel that a criminal offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

## Sanctions

If a reported incident of bullying behaviour, upon investigation, is proven:

- the parents of the victim and the bully are to be informed on the day of conclusion
- the incident details are to be recorded in the pupil’s personal file
- depending on the severity of the incident, in the first instance the sanctions might include a pupil being placed in a detention and / or isolated either from lessons and / or at break /

lunch times for a period deemed appropriate by the Headmaster, SLT member or Key Stage Manager.

In addition, in all cases, pupils will be warned that such behaviour is unacceptable.

Victims will be monitored to ensure that there are no adverse effects of the bullying and that the bullying has stopped. If the bullying behaviour continues, the identified and proven aggressor will be subjected to the punishments outlined below and in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy as decided by the Headmaster or SLT.

## Disciplinary Action

In each case, the report of bullying will be treated as a potentially serious incident and will be investigated by the relevant Key Stage Manager or member of SLT, who will then report their findings to the Headmaster in line with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy, which is available on the school website.

### Stage 1

- If the report is confirmed the offender will be interviewed by the relevant member of staff and warned as to their future conduct. Both the pupil and their parents are informed that they have been placed on Stage 1 of the Anti-bullying procedure. A suitable sanction e.g. a school or Headmaster's detention may be given.

### Stage 2

- Where re-offending is confirmed, the offender will be interviewed by a member of the SLT or the Headmaster
- A letter will be sent to Parents/Carers, informing them of the situation (i.e. their child has been placed on Stage 2 of the Anti-bullying procedure). Parents may also be invited to attend a meeting with a member of SLT or the Headmaster
- Depending on the nature and severity of the bullying, a more serious disciplinary sanction may be imposed (e.g. removal from lessons / isolation at break and lunch times for a fixed period of time).

### Stage 3

In the case where it is confirmed that the pupil has reoffended whilst subject to Stage 2:

- The pupil and parents will be interviewed by the Headmaster
- The pupil may be placed on a 'Contract of Behaviour' with clear expectations and a warning that any further offence may result in their being asked to leave the School
- A further, more serious disciplinary sanction (e.g. a fixed term exclusion) may be imposed.

### Stage 4

- Any further offences may lead to permanent exclusion from the school in line with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy (see also Exclusions and Appeals Procedure).

**For more serious incidents, the Headmaster reserves the right to move immediately to a later stage in the process and to impose more serious disciplinary sanctions.**

The possible sanctions outlined above will be applied in a fair, proportionate, consistent and reasonable manner and will take account of special educational needs and disabilities.

They have three main purposes:

- To impress upon the perpetrator that what he / she has done is unacceptable
- To deter him / her from repeating that behaviour
- To signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and to deter them from doing it.

Pupils who are guilty of bullying will be given opportunities to:

- Face up to the harm they have done
- Learn to behave in ways which will not cause harm in future
- Develop their understanding of how others think and feel
- Learn how to take steps to repair the harm they have caused.

All incidents of bullying will be recorded on the Bullying Log section of the School's Management Information System (MIS) and the parents of the pupils involved will be informed as soon as possible. Any investigation notes will be kept in the relevant pupil file.

Appropriate members of staff will be informed of the findings of the School's proposed response. Staff will also be required to monitor the effectiveness of the school's remedial action.

From the outset the victim will be offered the reassurance, support, advice and direction as necessary in order to restore his or her self-esteem and confidence. Consideration will also be given to the provision of pastoral support to the perpetrator.

Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSiE 2023) states that bullying (including cyber-bullying) is an example of child-on-child abuse and is clear that abuse should never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up' as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Incidences of bullying where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or is in need of additional support from Children's Social Care, will be treated as a safeguarding concern. Consideration will also be given to whether the perpetrator may be in need of early help or in need of additional support from Children's Social Care.

## Counselling

Pupils who are the victims of bullying behaviour will be given support and assistance to develop positive strategies and self-assertion; pupils found guilty of bullying will also be given support and assistance to change their behaviour.

## Creating an Environment Where Bullying Does Not Thrive

The School will use a range of methods to help prevent bullying, and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all, such as:

- where possible, the School takes part in national initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week to promote tolerance and mutual respect
- pupils cover topics on bullying during Form Time discussions

- guidance is offered to pupils from their Form Tutor and during ICT lessons to avoid the risk of cyber-bullying
- victims of bullying are encouraged to report any problems immediately to a member of staff
- pupils are actively encouraged to report incidences of potential bullying that they witness happening to another pupil
- staff should at all times, but particularly outside the classroom, watch out for pupils who are potential or known victims of bullying and try to ensure that they are protected from further distress
- when an allegation of bullying is made pupils should be assured that a member of the SLT or Pastoral Team will undertake a full and fair investigation into the allegations. It should be made clear that whilst it might be necessary to pass on the information that is disclosed to another member of staff, the child's wishes will be respected as far as good practice will allow, and according to School policies and procedures on confidentiality and safeguarding
- friends of the victims of bullying will be encouraged, as appropriate, to offer support and to ensure that the victim is included in group activities.

## Use of the Curriculum

The Curriculum, mainly through the PSHE programme, will be used to:

- raise awareness about bullying and the Anti-bullying Policy
- increase understanding for victims and help to create an anti-bullying ethos
- teach pupils how to constructively manage their relationships with each other
- remind pupils that if they are being bullied, or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied, they can speak to any member of staff.

School assemblies provide an effective forum for highlighting such issues. The curriculum generally may be used to reinforce the anti-bullying approach.

## Training

Staff will receive INSET training and regular updates in:

- how to detect suspected bullying
- strategies in the classroom and playground to identify or prevent bullying
- strategies to deal with bullying
- working with all parties including parents
- procedures to adopt in the event of an allegation.

## Cyberbullying

The Department for Education's non-statutory guidance "Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying" (November 2014) defines cyberbullying as 'bullying that takes place using technology.'



However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space, the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

Research into the extent of cyberbullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. It may also affect members of school staff and other adults; there are examples of staff being ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused online by pupils.

Some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but other incidents of cyberbullying may be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke may not be received as one and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.

In cyberbullying bystanders can easily become perpetrators, e.g. by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. It is important that pupils are aware that their actions can have severe and distressing consequences, and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated. Pupils acting as accessories, who actively support cyberbullying, will be dealt with under the terms of the Anti-bullying Policy.

The School has a duty of care to support pupils whose wellbeing and education have been affected by any form of bullying. The School will investigate reported incidents and work closely with pupils and their families to educate all parties in strategies to prevent incidents of bullying, including the responsible use and monitoring of digital technology, with the assistance of outside agencies, such as CEOP (The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) and the Police if appropriate.

Staff will follow the statutory guidance Searching, Screening and Confiscation (Department for Education 2022) as outlined in the Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy when investigating incidences of cyberbullying.



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## Contact Details

### Childline:

0800 1111

### Kidscape:

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

### Kidscape Parents' Advice Line:

**Call:** 07496 682785

**WhatsApp:** 07496 682785

**Email:** [parentsupport@kidscape.org.uk](mailto:parentsupport@kidscape.org.uk)

### Youth2Youth confidential helpline for young people:

020 8896 3675 or visit: [www.youth2youth.co.uk](http://www.youth2youth.co.uk)

### CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre):

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

This website has some excellent resources, advice and activities for parents, teachers and children from 7 – 18.

### Childnet (online safety for children)

[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

## Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headmaster and SLT and / or in the light of any incident that may occur related to bullying. Part of the review will involve consideration of instances of bullying during the year, including any trends and actions that the school can take to prevent bullying in the future.



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