



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

HEATH FARM SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER: Claire Harrap-Stanley

LEAD DSL: Mark Jones

Objectives of this policy

This policy outlines what Heath Farm School will do to prevent and tackle bullying. The policy has been drawn up through the involvement of the whole school community (this should include children and young people, parents/carers and all school staff) and we are committed to developing an anti-bullying culture whereby no bullying will be tolerated under any circumstances. All members of the school community have the right to learn, work and play in a secure and caring environment free from harm or harassment. They also have a responsibility to contribute by preventing and reporting bullying behaviour.

Further advice and guidance can be obtained from the DfE:

Behaviour and discipline in schools (January 2016) last updated September 2020

Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2014); last updated July 2017

Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying 2018

KCSIE September 2023

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021

Mental Health and Behaviour in schools (November 2018)

Working together to Safeguard Children (2018 - updated July 2022)

Our school community

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis;
- Supports all staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately;
- Ensures that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that students feel safe to learn; that students abide by the anti-bullying policy;
- Ensures bullying incidents, patterns or trends are discussed in weekly school council meetings;
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns about bullying and deals promptly with complaints; parents/carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy;
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support other relevant organisations when appropriate;
- This policy supports and compliments the HFS and OFG child on child abuse policy 2023.

Definition

What is Bullying is defined by the DfE as:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. 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.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

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. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

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 reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and is not acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Forms of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, beliefs, or culture;
- Bullying related to LDD (learning difficulties or disability);
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions;
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying) including the use of homophobic language;
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- Sexist, sexual and misogynistic bullying.;
- Transphobic bullying, including the use of transphobic language;
- Cyber bullying;
- Other prejudice based bullying not identified or classified above can include.

No form of harassment will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

Our response to specific types of bullying and harassment Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of harassment listed in our examples above. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored on appropriate internal and external databases. Follow-up sanctions (PBRs HFS behaviour policy), where appropriate, will be given to students and staff found using any such language.

A prejudice-based incident is an incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. The protected characteristics are:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment and gender expression;

- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation.

Such incidents might also relate to other characteristics, such as:

- Culture, class or nationality;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- Academic achievement;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disability;
- Appearance;
- health conditions;
- home or personal situation;
- related to another vulnerable group of people (such as young carers).

All prejudice-related incidents are taken seriously and recorded internally (see below) and on relevant external databases. A firm, appropriate response is given to them and perpetrators are required to reflect on and ameliorate their actions.

Where it appears that the gravity of an incident represents a matter of criminal significance that exceeds the proportionate jurisdiction and public interest of the school code of conduct, the matter will be referred to an appropriate organisation. This could include Kent Police (school liaison officer), the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or, Channel (where a young person is deemed to be at risk of being drawn into terrorism).

Racist Bullying

Unfortunately racism runs deep in our society. Consequently, racist bullying is still an issue in schools. Racist bullying singles out people because of skin colour, race or ethnic background. Some children are bullied because they are Black, Middle Eastern, East Asian, Jewish, South Asian, or Latine.

When racist bullying occurs, children are taunted by peers, called names, or excluded from the group because of hatred, fear, or lack of understanding. In some instances, racist bullying may cause children to be embarrassed about their skin colour or ethnic background.

To counteract the messages of a racist bully, HFS and supporting staff will find ways to help students feel good about their race or their heritage. HFS will report all racist bullying. Though it may start as one incident, knowing that racist bullying often escalates into worse offenses any form of bullying will not be tolerated and all incidents will be reported and recorded.

Religious Bullying

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs, and etiquette of different faiths can lead to religious bullying. In general, bullies target others because they are different. As a result, students can be taunted and teased about their religious beliefs and this will not be tolerated at HFS.

HFS staff will keep in mind that anyone can be bullied because of their religious beliefs. People also are bullied because they are Catholic or Mormon. Atheists can be bullied for not believing in God. Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh students especially get bullied because of mixes of antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, and xenophobia and therefore HFS will prioritise support and provide informed lessons to promote the HFS anti bullying culture and educate students so they develop equality type thinking and attitudes.

Many times, religious bullying results because of preconceived ideas or a lack of understanding about the differences between religions. These differences can include everything from beliefs, fasting, and prayer practices to the type of clothing they wear. Bullies point to these differences as a reason to harass and target the victim.

LGBT Bullying

LGBT bullying refers to being physically or verbally harassed because of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. LGBT bullying also can include name - calling, sexual bullying, cyberbullying and in some cases misogynistic type attitudes. This type of bullying affects people in LGBT communities as well as those who are perceived to be.

HFS acknowledge and recognise that you do not have to be gay to experience LGBT bullying. In fact, sometimes students are taunted and called names simply because they act and express themselves in a gender non-conforming way. Meanwhile, other students are bullied for being lesbians, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Other relevant forms of bullying:

Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, making a child/young person do something they don't want to do or stopping them from doing something they do want to do. Taking belongings, damaging someone's belongings.

Emotional being unfriendly, excluding and tormenting, sending malicious emails, or text messages, intimidating glances and body language.

Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, insulting, blackmail and threats, making offensive remarks.

Discriminatory making offensive remarks and singling out for poor treatment based on someone's sex, race, gender re-assignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation – this may be unlawful (Equalities Act 2010).

Hidden or indirect bullying lying and spreading rumours, negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks, playing nasty jokes to embarrass or humiliate, mimicking unkindly, encouraging other to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's reputation.

- Falling out with previously good friends;
- Being moody and bad tempered;
- Being quiet and withdrawn;
- Wanting to avoid leaving the house;

- Aggression with brothers and sisters;
- Doing less well at schoolwork, signs of struggling;
- Unwilling to go to school or socialise;
- Insomnia;
- Anxiety;
- Claiming to be unwell on a regular basis, particularly in the morning;
- Coming home with cuts and bruises;
- Self-harm/self-injurious behaviour;
- Torn clothes;
- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced.

Staff have to be extra vigilant of children/young people's behaviour patterns as it can be difficult to separate out behaviour that stems from the child/young person's background/attachment issues and behaviour that stems from being bullied.

Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying

The school community will:

- Have a named Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator - who is Mark Jones and he holds the responsibility of the lead DSL;
- Listen and take time to talk to children and young people who disclose bullying, take what they say seriously and investigate the situation;
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying;
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience;
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support and through the School Council weekly meetings and focussed groups;
- Complete a student led annual survey in the autumn term and then complete another survey to evidence the impact in the summer term of each academic year;
- Train all staff including Support staff, Administration and Facilities staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying, including recording and reporting incidents of bullying;
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people;
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.

Responding to Incidents of Bullying and Harassment

The school has an agreed procedure for responding consistently to incidents or allegations of bullying. At our school, all CYP are encouraged to report incidents of bullying whether they have been bullied or have witnessed bullying. The school will investigate the incident and decide on an appropriate course of action.

When responding to incidents involving any type of bullying the school will consider the situation in relation to the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures. In cases of severe or persistent bullying, staff will liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection particularly where there are concerns that a child or young person may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm in terms of emotional abuse. The procedure and stages in responding effectively to bullying at our school are:

Monitoring and recording incidents of bullying and harassment

Staff use the school's definition of bullying to assess situations as they arise and judge whether or not bullying has occurred or where a pattern of potential bullying behaviour may be developing.

Staff report and record incidents of bullying on the Sleuth system as a safeguarding concern, so they are prioritised and managed effectively. All bullying incidents are reported to the Lead DSL or Deputy DSL before being recorded on Sleuth, where they are triaged and assigned to appropriate staff to deal with. The response to bullying incidents is quality assured, and an overview of incidents is monitored to identify any patterns or trends which might need a response.

There are 3 stages to bullying incidents and how they are addressed and managed post the red card that will have been recorded and implemented:

Stage 1 - meeting with class teacher and department lead, followed by a restorative type conversation with the victim. Parents or carers informed.

Stage 2 - Meeting with class teacher and Deputy Headteacher and the parent or carer, followed by a proactive intervention and restorative conversation with the victim.

Stage 3 - Meeting with Deputy Headteacher and the Headteacher with the parent or carer, followed by a proactive intervention and restorative conversation with the victim.

If the perpetrator continues to target students with child on child type abuse or additional bullying occurs, the Headteacher may be forced to implement the suspension and exclusion policy.

Making sure the person being bullied is safe and feels safe

When a CYP reports being bullied, the school will acknowledge their concerns and the incident will be taken seriously. Incidents of bullying reported by witnesses are treated in the same manner and will always lead to a conversation with the targeted child. Appropriate support will be offered to the child, and they will be offered access to a safe space if this is needed.

Establishing and recording what happened by listening to the targeted child and after listening to the views and feelings of the targeted child and their account of what has happened to them, teachers will ask the child to complete (with support if needed) an incident report form, in which they give an account of what has happened, and, if able to, give specific information about the incident such as locations and times and witnesses. These details will help further investigation.

The school will record the incident on the school safeguarding reporting system on Sleuth. They will include:

Where the incident(s) occurred;
When the incidents(s) occurred;
Who was involved, allegedly or otherwise?
The type of bullying.

A Restorative Approach

Where appropriate the school will consider the use of a Restorative Approach to resolve the situation. A Restorative Approach involves perpetrators of bullying focussing on their unacceptable behaviour in an emotionally intelligent way and ensures CYP causing harm are held to account for their behaviour by enabling them to:

- Accept responsibility for the harm caused to the individual being bullied;
- Accept responsibility for the harm caused to others (for example staff, friends or family);
- Recognise the need to take action to begin to repair the harm caused;
- Agree on a range of helpful actions to repair the harm caused, which will be monitored over an agreed period of time.

A targeted student will only be asked to participate in a restorative session if they feel safe and secure in doing so. They will never be pressurized into participating.

Responding to incidents of cyberbullying

The school will follow the above procedures and will seek guidance on responding to different forms of cyberbullying via organisations that provide information on the safe and responsible use of technology.

Responding to incidents of bullying that occur off the school premises.

The school recognises that bullying can and does happen outside school and in the community. Bullying is a relationship issue and its occurrence reflects the ways in which CYP socialise in school and in the wider community. The school believes that bullying is unacceptable wherever and whenever it happens.

When an incident of bullying is reported and has occurred off the school site and out of school hours e.g. walking to and from school, on the school bus, the school will follow the guidance in the Behaviour Policy on regulating the conduct of CYP at times when they are not on the premises of the school and/or not under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff.

The school encourages CYP to seek help and to tell us about incidents of bullying that happen outside the school so that the school can:

- Raise awareness among the whole school community of possible risks within the community e.g. trouble spots/ gang;
- Alert colleagues in other schools whose pupils are bullying off the school premises;
- Make contact with local police officers and representatives from the Youth Service, (including sports clubs and voluntary organisations);
- Discuss safe routes to school in the event of a CYP being bullied on their journey to school;
- Offer CYP and parents/carers strategies to manage bullying off the school premises e.g. guidance on how to keep safe on the internet and when using their mobile phones.

Involvement of students

We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying;
- Obtain the views of school council and student based online safety committee;
- Ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying;
- Ensure all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying;
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools;
- Participate in National Anti-Bullying Week;
- Participate in Project Salus bullying survey;
- Pupils to annually complete a pupil survey which includes how they feel bullying is managed and supported at HFS;
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites using various methods including links on our school intranet and website;
- Offer support to students who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address any underlying issues they may have;
- Students will identify peer anti bullying mentors through school council meetings.

Liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying;
- Report back to parents/carers regarding their concerns about bullying as quickly as possible;
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, promoting this by its inclusion on the policy area of the school website;
- Ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about face to face and cyber-bullying, including the use of links on our school website;
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying;
- Parent/carers anti bullying and online safety workshop will be delivered by a Project Salus representative and/or external providers.

We expect parents/carers to:

- Inform the school of any suspected bullying, even if it does not involve their child;
- Encourage their child to report bullying to a member of staff using the 4Ws: Who, What, Where and When;
- Inform their child(ren) not to retaliate through violence in any situation;
- If their child has been accused of bullying, work in partnership with the school and listen to evidence.

Links with other school policies and practices

This Policy links with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour policy (PBRs);
- Confidentiality policy;
- Equalities policy;
- Safeguarding Policy;
- Child on Child abuse;
- Complaints policy;
- Online safety policy;
- The recording of racial incidents and sexual harassment and/or sexual violence;
- The teaching of Citizenship, SMSC and PSHE Education, Sex and Relationships Education, ICT curriculum and Prevent duty, including Safeguarding teaching to students.

Continuous Professional Development

Staff will be offered on-going training with direct delivery through specific safeguarding and E safety training as well as active involvement in PSHE lessons and participation in the National anti-bullying week. This will interlink with statutory safeguarding updates and will support E safety/Online safety and cyber bullying lessons being delivered to support the safer internet day and on-going support practice for staff and the pupils. This will form part of the school council meeting and on-going monitoring will be conducted by the anti-bullying coordinator and the anti-bullying peer mentors.

Bullying outside of school premises

The school will work collaboratively with local residents, community wardens, police support officers, school transport providers and local businesses to prevent and respond to bullying outside of school.

Actions and responses to non-criminal challenging behaviour and bullying which occurs off the school premises is set out in the school behaviour policy (PBRs).

Monitoring and review, policy into practice

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on: 1st term of each calendar year, unless statutory guidance dictates otherwise.

Reviewed September 2025

The Headteacher will report to Acorn Education and care and/or Outcomes first Group on incidents of bullying and their outcomes (***Please see child on child abuse policy for acts of sexual harassment and sexual violence***). Any issues identified through the monitoring of this policy will be incorporated into the school action plan. The school Deputy Headteacher with lead responsibility of well-being and pastoral care, will be the named Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator who is responsible for how the school uses the guidance by the DfE, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) and the current Project Salus Anti bullying safe school status, to inform its action planning to prevent and tackle bullying.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- Deputy Headteacher Mark Jones to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy & is responsible for co-ordinating and strengthening the schools' approach to anti-bullying;
- The Headteacher, Senior Managers, Teaching and Non-Teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly;
- The Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community;
- Students to abide by the policy;
- Parents/carers to abide by the policy;

Useful organisations relating to anti bullying:

1. www.childline.org.uk - get help and advice about a wide range of issues, talk to a counsellor online, send **ChildLine** an email or post on the message boards.
2. www.cybermentors.org.uk - A social networking place where you can find out about bullying and what you can do about it and also talk to mentors your own age.
3. www.bullying.co.uk - bullying at work, cyberbullying, and find out how you can deal with it from leading bullying organisation Bullying UK.
4. www.need2know.co.uk/beatbullying/ - Helpful articles on how to deal with issues around bullying.
5. www.antibullying.net/ - The Anti-Bullying Network is an independent operation with the following objectives: •to support anti-bullying work in schools; •to provide a free website; •and to offer an anti-bullying service which will include the provision of training, publications and consultancy services.
6. www.ypas.org.uk - committed to supporting young people aged 10 to 25 years in a safe environment with a primary focus on respect and acceptance.
7. www.education-otherwise.org - a UK charity offering information and support to home educating families.
8. www.cruelatschool.co.uk - website aimed at other families whose children are or have been bullied at school.
9. www.cctvcameraworld.com/what-is-cyberbullying-and-how-to-prevent-it.html