

Anti-Bullying Policy



Hart Primary School

'To give all children the opportunity to be the best that they can be and have fullness of life.'

Prepared by: Head of School

Approved: NLLT Board and Local Governing Body

Signature Chair Local Governing Body: Colin Reid

Date of Renewal: Spring 2025

Pastoral Care/Spiritual Development

The quality of relationships between all members of school, staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents/carers is integral to the ethos of the school.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents/carers and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to create and maintain such. Those who are school staff and in particular those in leadership roles, which include all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the school is organised and the way policies are written and implemented.

Our Shared Values

We respect and care for all members of the community, nurturing talents and creating opportunities for all in a supportive environment. We believe that it is through the nurturing of the children, they will become equipped to develop the beginnings of their own values and our vision:

‘to give all children the opportunity to be the best that that they can be and have fullness of life’

We share a common set of values that underpin all that we do in our work at Hart Primary School.

These values are:

- Friendship and Trust
- Compassion
- Always Our Best
- Thankfulness

People involved in policy formation:

- Head of School
- NLLT Board
- Staff
- Pupils
- Local Governing Body

Hart Primary School has zero tolerance with incidents regarded to be bullying.

The school takes a very serious view of bullying. The Government defines bullying as

‘Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally’.

This statement is shared with the pupils:

“A pupil is being bullied, or picked on, when another pupil or group of pupils say nasty things to him or her. It is also bullying when a pupil is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, when no-one ever talks to them and things like that. When bullying is identified these things may happen frequently and it may be difficult for the pupil being bullied to defend himself or herself. It is also bullying when a pupil is teased repeatedly in a nasty way. However, if two pupils of equal power or strength have an occasional fight or quarrel, this is not bullying.” (Sheffield Project)

Hart Primary school believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school’s curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school’s response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- DfE (2017) ‘Preventing and tackling bullying’
- DfE (2018) ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’
- DfE (2018) ‘Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools’

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.

Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.

Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

We use the acronym ‘STOP’: Several Times On Purpose. Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time and it is important for school, pupils and parents/carers to use the term appropriately to describe this behaviour that occurs 'several times on purpose' (STOP).

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.

Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything.

Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying can be acted out through the following:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber)

Emotional bullying: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting and threatening gestures

Physical Bullying: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person’s gender ‘variance’ or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g. SEND or mental health issues.

Roles and responsibilities

The **governing board** is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The **head of school** is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a record of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups
- Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

Parents are responsible for:

Children may make disclosures to parents at home or parents may notice changes in behaviour that are not evident in school. Parents should feel confident that they can come into school with their concerns and speak to either the class teacher or the Head of School. Your concern will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.

If you feel a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child in the playground or out of school. Please inform school immediately. It is important that you do not advise your child to fight back or to repeat the bullies' behaviour. This will only make the situation worse. Reinforce the school policy on bullying and ensure your child is not afraid to ask for help.

- Informing their child's teacher if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

We aim to **prevent** bullying behaviour by:

- Promoting an ethos where the act of bullying is seen as totally unacceptable behaviour;
- Imparting respect for one another in all our relationships and understanding how the other party feels;
- Setting out our expectations about the way pupils should behave towards each other;
- Making children fully aware of the range of sanctions that we are prepared to bring against pupils who deliberately refuse to keep to the agreed code of behaviour;

Raising awareness of bullying through:

- Discussions and stories in worship
- Implementation of the curriculum, (e.g. PSHE, RHE, RE, E Safety, Class Novels)
- Drama to help children understand the effects of bullying
- Recognising the nature of bullying: the intentional repetition of incidents to cause distress
- Managing carefully those occasions and places where bullying is more likely to happen
- Class rules devised annually in September giving clear codes of behaviour for all children – regularly addressed throughout the year
- Development of outdoor provision to ensure children are active
- Encouraging a positive relationship between school and home so that parents/carers are encouraged to discuss and share problems;
- Tackling speedily and sensitively with victim and perpetrator any incidents that might escalate into bullying.
- Assembly themes, values, learning powers, Courageous Advocacy Progression Strand and Right Respecting Schools
- External agency visits (Harbour, NSPCC, Show Racism the Red Card, Anne Frank Ambassadors)
- Clear representation around school of Rights, Rules, Rewards, Consequences, negotiated by children and staff

Ensure staff are informed through:

- Providing Professional Development for all staff e.g., Restorative Justice,
- Ensure communication channels are open re. pupils, all staff
- Ensure all staff are aware of any particular 'situation' to be monitored
- Review &/or revise break/lunch time arrangements re. supervision as necessary

Ensure communication with families through:

- School provides opportunities for parents/carers to speak to staff regarding bullying concerns e.g. a school staff member and 'meets and greets' pupils and parents each morning on the school yard; parents/carers can make an appointment to speak to class teacher; parents/carers are invited to comment on bullying in the school annually through a parent questionnaire.
- Any parent commenting on bullying through the questionnaire will be contacted by the Head of School for further discussion if the questionnaire is not anonymous
- Annual Home School Agreement – signed contract between pupils, parents/carers and school clearly identifying expected conduct opportunities for parents/carers to attend workshops sessions on cyber bullying

When dealing with incidents of bullying:

- The member of staff who is first approached &/or observe an incident must deal with situation immediately & seeks advice from other staff (class teacher, Assistant Head of School, Assistant Head, Head of School) if required
- Health and Safety of pupils and staff is immediate priority when first dealing with incidents
- Incidents are to be treated fairly with an open mind during initial discussion

- All incidents to be reported - as above, at end of break/lunch time &/or close of day recorded on class behaviour sheets /CPOMS and Designated Safeguarding Lead, Assistant Head of School and Head of school informed

The following information must be recorded:

- child/children bullied
- child/children who are bullying
- nature of incident i.e. verbal, physical
- brief outline of incident
- action taken if parents/carers informed*

N.B. Individual records should be based upon fact and not speculation.

* The decision to inform parents/carers should be taken after discussion with Head of School and/or Deputy Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School, as appropriate.

Allegations of Bullying

The first step of any bullying allegation by a parent/carer would be a thorough investigation and this should be categorised on CPOMs under 'alleged bullying'. Before being founded, the following steps must be taken:

- Discussion with victim and perpetrator separately to establish the details of the incidents;
- Discussion with any other pupils or school staff as necessary to establish events;

Consequences for bullying:

Should an alleged incident of bullying be founded then one or more of the following steps will be put in action:

- Inform parents/carers as necessary
- Offer counselling or follow up work for both victim and perpetrator;
- When dealing with an incident the consequence for the perpetrator should be clear alongside a detailed discussion of the consequence of their actions. It should reflect the severity of the incident. A consequence(s) for the perpetrator is at the discretion of the school and may include e.g. first verbal warning, second verbal warning, missed supervised playtimes, withdrawal of privileges, temporary withdrawal from activity/classroom, clubs and school representation, behaviour meeting with Deputy Head of School or Assistant Head of School, behaviour meeting with Head of School, meeting and review meeting with parent, restorative conference with all parties and parents/carers
- No parents/carers are involved in the consequence decision making process.
- Apology expected from the perpetrator to the victim, in line with our school values
- Information regarding the problem to be passed to any appropriate parties Involvement of any outside agencies necessary, for example, Educational Psychologist; in extreme cases, disciplinary procedures as set out in this policy involving reference to the Pupil Disciplinary Committee of the Governing Body.

Searching Pupils for Weapons

School staff can legally search for a pupil if it is suspected that he/she is carrying a weapon in the school grounds (Searching, Screening and Confiscation, DFE 2018) In Hart Primary School, if a pupil is suspected of carrying a weapon the Head of School, Assistant Head will be informed and a search will take place if deemed necessary. Parents will be contacted and the police may be called. This is also in accordance with statute and guidance issued by the Department of Education.

Cyber bullying

The school views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Hart Primary School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. Hart Primary School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our anti-bullying policy.

Special Needs

Children with specific needs may be particularly vulnerable to bullying activities. Staff should be vigilant for any changes in their behaviour and should provide regular opportunities for them to discuss any worries they might have. Once more, circle time discussions can provide opportunity for children to share the responsibility of looking after one another.

In some cases, the case history of children may result in them exhibiting tendencies towards bullying behaviour. Where this is the case support should be provided for both the bully and the victim and opportunities sought to break the cycle. Where some children have experienced significant bullying at home this can appear to be an accepted way to behave. This does not excuse bullying behaviour but can help explain its origins.

Equal Opportunities

It should be noted that there is no one 'stereotypical bully'. Bullies can come in all shapes and sizes and most people at some stage will have been involved in a bullying incident. It is important that staff keep an open mind when dealing with allegations and should be clear of their evidence. However, there may also be times where children have to be given the benefit of the doubt, both for and against the bully where insufficient proof is available.