



# Hedingham School & Sixth Form

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed by Mr D Nash, Assistant Headteacher

Approved by the Curriculum and Personnel Committee on:	<b>21 May 2025</b>
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Next review due by:	<b>Ongoing</b>
Named Governor for Anti-Bullying	<b>Mr Martin Lee</b>

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## 1. Key Principles

Hedingham school seeks to create a challenging and stimulating learning environment that encourages high expectations for all learners through a safe, caring and supportive environment. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that incidents of bullying can occur and are aware that its effects can lead to unhappiness, loss of self-esteem and under achievement.

This policy is based on DfE guidance Preventing and tackling Bullying (2017) It also takes into account the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (2024).

In line with our school motto, we want everyone to be treated with mutual respect and feel safe, not just in school, but in all aspects of their life. This policy outlines what Hedingham School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. Hedingham School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture under the behaviour ethos of *Ready, Respect, Safe*.

## 2. Links with other school policies and practices

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

- Behaviour, Relationships & Recognition Policy (including mobile phone, searching and confiscation)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour & Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
- Personal Development Policy
- SEND Policy

## 3. Links to Legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation, which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include, but are not limited to:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011. Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2011 states that the Headteacher has the ability to ensure that students behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

## 4. Responsibilities

### School Governors

Take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.

### The Headteacher

The Headteacher will communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.

### Staff

All employees - Teachers, Office and Support Staff, Midday Supervisors and Agencies - are involved in building a safe environment for students:

- To support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly
- To listen to all parties involved to ensure a fair and proportionate approach to any outcomes
- Take all disclosures seriously
- Know who to refer to
- Understand the context
- Work with victims and bullies, and their parents
- Be aware of supportive agencies, both inside the school and out

Employees continue to work until:

- the victim is no longer bullied
- the bully is no longer bullying

#### **Parent/Guardian**

- To support their children and work in partnership with the school
- Parents know who to contact
- Parents are confident that their concerns will be taken seriously and followed up
- Parents act on advice given by the school
- Parents understand that personal information about other students (such as sanctions applied) will not be discussed with them
- Parents understand we have a duty of care to educate all students on roll at the school

#### **Students**

- To abide by the Policy
- To understand that they must report bullying or it cannot be dealt with
- To use the reporting systems available within the school (Student Support Centre, Orange Card, [safe@hedingham.essex.sch.uk](mailto:safe@hedingham.essex.sch.uk))
- Understand the reasons why bullying occurs and learn strategies for tackling it in themselves and others
- Be confident that their personal concerns about bullying are taken seriously
- Know what to do, who to go to and how to behave if they or others are being bullied
- Not post any pictures or videos which feature the school site, staff or students, whilst in the school building

### **5. Anti-Bullying**

#### **Definition of Bullying/ Relational Conflict**

There is no universally accepted definition of bullying and sometimes parents/guardians and children can get confused between what is bullying and what is a friendship fall out or relational conflict between children.

Bullying can be defined as *“behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”*. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

#### **Relational Conflict vs Bullying**

The following provides a very simplistic guide to some of the differences between bullying and relational conflict.

Relational Conflict:

- Happens occasionally
- Accidental
- Equal Power
- Remorseful
- Effort to solve problem

Relational conflict is still taken seriously and will still need intervention from an adult but may not be regarded as bullying unless they are part of an on-going pattern of behaviour against the victim.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Repeated hurtful behaviour - there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a ‘one-off’ incident
- Deliberate - the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it
- Imbalance of power - the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves
- No remorse
- No effort to solve problem

## Types of Bullying

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

- Physical – Pushing and shoving, tripping up, kicking or spitting
- Emotional – Name calling, using insulting names or comments, humiliating someone
- Driven by a prejudice – This might be homophobia, transphobia, racism or victimising those who have special needs or disabilities
- Indirect – Spreading rumours whether true or not
- Cyber bullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (email, social network and instant messenger). This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos

## Responding to bullying

Bullying can be reported to any adult in the school. Students and parents can also use [safe@hedingham.essex.sch.uk](mailto:safe@hedingham.essex.sch.uk) to report any concern. Students can also use 'orange card' boxes situated around the school.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the Student Support Centre will be informed of the issue and in most instances, a Year Leader or Pastoral Support Officer will take a lead on the investigation and outcome of the incident
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate
- The designated safeguarding lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns
- The school will inform other staff members and parents/guardians, where appropriate
- Sanctions (as identified within the school Behaviour & Recognition Policy) and support for individuals will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including early help or children's social care (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm). The school will use the National Police Chiefs Council Guidance on when to call the police. The school will also work with the School Police Liaison Officer
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is investigated to the best of its ability, depending on what electronic evidence is provided. Appropriate intervention will be taken including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures, including details of any decisions and action taken
- When recording incidents, the school will make a judgement as to whether the issue is bullying or a social issue (friends falling out/ social groups having negative interactions)
- When establishing the facts in relation to any alleged incident of bullying, the school must apply the civil standards of proof i.e.: 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt'
- In some instances, use of a 'consensual' model to change behaviours may be used. This is often called, 'the No-Blame Approach,' and can involve a circle time discussion and a Respect/Safe agreement being signed by all those involved

## Cyber-bullying

The school recognises that it has a duty of care for the welfare of students if they are being cyber bullied. We also recognise that we cannot 'police' social media. We will strongly advise all parents/ carers of a student who is a victim or perpetrator of cyber bullying to fully monitor their child's on-line presence. We would also advise parents/ carers to take phones away from their child for periods of time (particularly at night time) and have a digital detox from sites which do not offer facilities to keep records of messages.

It is also worthy of noting that the vast majority of Social Media and Online Messaging applications have minimum age requirements due to the nature of the content shown and the way in which it permits open internet-based communication. Current age ratings shown (at the time of writing): WhatsApp – 16, SnapChat – 13, TikTok – 13, Facebook – 13, Instagram – 13, Twitter – 13. We would advise that parent/guardian author what applications are installed/being used on any smart devices to ensure they are age appropriate.

Children are at risk of being bullied 24 hours a day. Children can also access sites with inadequate safeguarding measures in place. Therefore, parents/carers should protect their child from these potential risks outside of school hours.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation. This will be needed at the earliest available opportunity for the investigation to proceed. Videos can be brought into school to be shown to a member of staff. Screenshots should be emailed or printed and sent to: [enquiries@hedingham.essex.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@hedingham.essex.sch.uk) or [safe@hedingham.essex.sch.uk](mailto:safe@hedingham.essex.sch.uk)
- Any indecent images or videos should be reported straight to the Police and should not be sent via email. The school will not view any indecent image and will refer the issue to the Police. The school will provide appropriate support

Please note:

- Some applications do not allow for users to take 'screenshots' as it violates their terms of service. However, in the instance of a cyberbullying issue you should take a photo of the screen using another camera to keep a record of the incident. This is especially important on time restricted applications/sites where content disappears after a period of time eg SnapChat
- Other than on the schools eLearning platform (Microsoft Teams) the school is unable to get offensive or inappropriate content removed from sites such as TikTok, SnapChat etc. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make contact with these sites to have the content removed on behalf of their child

### **Investigating Alleged Bullying**

The school will take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible.

This may include:

- looking at use of the school systems
- identifying and interviewing possible witnesses

In cases of Cyber-Bullying, the school will:

- Work with the individuals and families to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation
- Requesting the deletion of locally held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies
- Ensure that appropriate interventions are applied to the person responsible for the cyber-bullying if there is evidence 'on the balance of probability' in line with our Behaviour and Recognition Policy. The school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need
- Provide information to staff, students and parents regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online

This may include:

- advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply
- advising students/parents on the use of social media sites if they are causing distress to the well-being of a student
- providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists

- helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain

Education to prevent bullying will be provided to all students during their time at Hedingham School and appropriate behaviour will be reinforced during lessons and around the school site.

Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying through:

- Personal Development Programme
- Assemblies
- Anti-Bullying Week
- Presentations from outside agencies and theatre groups

### **Supporting Students**

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the student and providing continuous support
- Offering an opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff
- Support the student in building resilience as appropriate
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

### **Students who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change
- Informing parents/guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions
- If online, requesting that content be removed and offering parents advice on reporting accounts/content to service provider
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyber-bullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help

### **Supporting adults**

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by students, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable

Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school's behaviour and discipline policy
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

It is made clear to all students in assemblies that using a staff photo or video without their consent on any on-line platform can lead to serious sanctions for the perpetrator. Staff have a right to an on-line presence and, like we would expect within the school building, an equal right to respect on-line.

### **Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:**

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Headteacher to establish the concern

- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures
- If online, requesting that content be removed
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required

## **6. Support**

The whole school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the school's attention, which involves or affects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied

## **Education and Training**

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents)
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem

## **Involvement of Students**

We will:

- Ensure all students are aware of our 'Character Expectations,' (see Appendix I) in line with our ethos of Ready, Respect, Safe
- Ensure students have a voice on well-being within the school. This is led through Mood Scales
- Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure that all students are aware of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites
- Offer support to students

## **Involvement and liaison with parents and guardians**

We will:

- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for students, both on and offline
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner in order to address the problems they have

## **7. Criminal Law**



Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the “sender.”

## **8. Bullying outside school premises**

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.

This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour co-ordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning
- The Headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate
- The named Governor for anti-bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes

## **10. Useful links and supporting organisations**

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

### **Cyberbullying**

- Internet Controls for parents: <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>
- Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

### **Race, religion and nationality**

- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)

### **LGBT**

- Barnardos LGBT Hub: [www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_work/lgbtq.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm)

## Character Expectations

H E D I N G H A M S C H O O L

# READY RESPECT SAFE C H A R A C T E R



## *Am I ready for the 21st Century World?*

All Hedingham students should develop the characteristics of hard work, perseverance and resilience in their pursuit of ambitious goals in preparation for their 21st Century World



## *How do I celebrate difference & diversity?*

All Hedingham students should respect everyone regardless of race, religion, sexuality, gender or disability

All students should be kind to everyone in the language they use and be accountable for their own actions

All students should positively contribute to their school and wider community



## *How do I look after myself and others?*

All students should learn how to identify and manage risk

All students should be kind and positive digital citizens

All students should look after their health and well-being