



Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Introduction

We aim to ensure that all members of the School community feel welcome, safe and happy and so are able to learn and achieve. The School ethos is built on the importance of kindness and respect for each individual, and these principles are taught and emphasised, both within and outside the curriculum.

Bullying of any kind prevents this from happening and makes people feel unsafe. As a School, we take bullying very seriously and act in line with the Human Rights Act 1998, the 2010 Equality Act (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and DfE regulations and guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and the DfE's advice documents, "Preventing and tackling bullying" (July 2017) and "Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying" (June 2018). Students and parents should understand that reporting bullying is essential, and be assured that the School will support them fully whenever bullying is reported. It is the responsibility of all members of the School community to implement this Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Policy Objective is to:

- build an anti-bullying ethos in the School
- ensure all staff, students and parents have a clear understanding of what is bullying behaviour
- ensure that all Governors and staff know and understand the School policy on bullying and follow it when bullying is suspected or reported
- ensure that all students and parents know the School policy on bullying and feel confident to activate the anti-bullying procedures
- increase understanding for students who are bullied

Students at The Henrietta Barnett School should:

- feel safe and not be made to feel unhappy by others
- not be frightened or harassed by others, physically, sexually, emotionally or in any other way
- not be inappropriately touched, pushed, kicked, hit, spat at, etc
- not have their property damaged, stolen or taken from them by extortion
- not be teased about race, religion, disability, social class, gender, personal differences, performance at School or any other matter
- not be teased, humiliated, ridiculed, threatened or made unhappy by unpleasant notes, letters, text messages, e-mails, phone calls, contact via social media, any form of gossip, or by any other means including hostile looks, taunting, whispering campaigns, peer manipulation or being excluded by peers

2. Definition of Bullying

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 isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can occur between two young people of any sex. They can also occur through a group of young people sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single young person or group of young people. Sexual harassment is taken to mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that includes comments and can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a young person's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

All bullying is designed to make the victim feel threatened, humiliated and unsafe. Not all negative interactions between students can be deemed as bullying and the School works hard to ensure that students understand the difference between bullying and other negative interactions, such as 'falling out' or arguing.

3. Practice and Procedures

Preventing Bullying: Prevention is better than cure. We are vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of bullying seriously. What constitutes bullying, including sexual violence or harassment, is discussed in PSHCE lessons and in tutorial time and assemblies. The School recognises that it is helpful to openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality, and different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Use of any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.

Prevention and Recognition: We make sure that students understand that they must report any incidents of bullying to an adult and that, when another student tells them that they are being bullied, or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report what they know to a member of School staff.

Reporting Bullying: Students who are bullied, who witness bullying or even those who have participated in bullying should feel confident to report it to a member of School staff. Parents, or anyone else, who become aware of any behaviour which could constitute bullying should report it to School staff. Each incident will be

dealt with on its merits, but all reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated. Incidents will be recorded, along with the action taken as a result of further investigation. Where relevant, an accurate note of dates, times and places of any incidents will be recorded, along with the names of those involved and witnesses to the incidents.

Responding to bullying: In the event of a disclosure the School would seek to:

- establish the facts within a supportive and safe environment
- praise the student for disclosing
- appreciate the complainant's desire to see justice is done
- inform parents, when appropriate
- feed back to the complainant
- recognise the need for using agencies as appropriate
- bring about a lasting change of behaviour in the perpetrator as needed.

Actions taken are likely to include some or all of the following, as appropriate:

- The alleged perpetrator is interviewed by a member of staff
- Friends/witnesses/others involved are interviewed by a member of staff
- If necessary further investigations are carried out
- Findings are discussed separately with the complainant and the alleged perpetrator
- If the alleged perpetrator is found to be responsible for bullying, action will be taken that is appropriate to the severity. This action will include an appropriate sanction and contact with parents.
- If appropriate a solution meeting will take place with all parties involved where the "responsible party/ parties" will be given the opportunity to apologise and make assurances regarding their future conduct.
- Students who have been bullied will receive appropriate support, including the involvement of external agencies where needed. Their parents will be informed, and included in discussions about appropriate support.
- Students who have bullied will be helped to understand the pain their actions have caused and reminded of the possible consequence of bullying. The sanctions for repeat incidents will be explained clearly to them.
- Support will be agreed to ensure they do not repeat bullying behaviours and their behaviour may be monitored. Support may include strategies such as setting up an Individual Support Plan or involvement of external agencies where needed.
- Parents of students who are perpetrators will be informed of the incident and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem and reduce the chance of repeat incidents.
- Incidents will be recorded centrally, monitored and reported to the School's pastoral team, Head and Governors as required.

Vulnerable students: Bullying can happen to all children and young people and it can affect their social, mental and emotional health. This means being alert to the effect any form of bullying can have and being especially alert to where it may have a severe impact. DfE advice states that, "Some students are 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, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference. Children in care that are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. These young people are often the same young people who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying, for example those who are going through a personal or family crisis. There will also be a range of other local or individual factors

that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others". School staff are made aware of these additional needs of vulnerable students. They will do all they can to prevent bullying, and will support any students who are bullied.

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, staff must discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Claire Leek) and the concerns will be reported to the local authority children's social care. The School will then work with social care to take the appropriate action.

It should be noted that if the alleged bullying relates to a member of staff, the matter will be dealt with under the School's Grievance Procedure or Disciplinary Procedure, as appropriate.

4. Context, Review and Update

This policy should be read in conjunction with other School policies (all available on the School website), particularly the Safeguarding (Child Protection), Behaviour, Online Safety, PSHCE, Sex & Relationships Education, Preventing Extremism & Radicalisation, Positive Mental Health, SEND and other relevant policies.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Updated October 2025.