



Anti-Bullying Policy

Hillcrest School



Date established by Governing Body:	Previous Policy
Date for Full Implementation:	Ongoing Policy
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Approved by:	Head Teacher Chair of Governors
Date:	15 June 2026
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1. Statement of Intent

Hillcrest School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where all pupils feel valued, respected and able to learn. We recognise that a positive school culture—underpinned by strong relationships, consistency and clear expectations—is essential in preventing bullying.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and effectively.

Hillcrest School recognises that bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and may overlap with safeguarding concerns, including physical abuse, emotional harm, sexual harassment or exploitation.

Where bullying behaviour meets the threshold of abuse or indicates risk of significant harm, it will be managed in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This may include referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, risk assessment, and involvement of external agencies where appropriate.

Staff will not dismiss harmful behaviours as 'banter' or 'part of growing up' and will follow safeguarding procedures where there is any concern for a pupil's safety or wellbeing.

2. Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy has due regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version)
- DfE Guidance: Preventing and Tackling Bullying
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

3. Aims

- Promote a culture of kindness, respect and inclusion
- Ensure pupils feel safe, supported and confident to report concerns
- Provide staff with clear guidance and strategies
- Recognise vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND
- Promote early intervention
- Work in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies
- Monitor and review practice regularly

4. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the repeated, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where there is an imbalance of power. Bullying is deliberate, repeated and difficult to defend against.

Relational conflict is recognised as different and involves isolated or occasional disagreements between pupils of equal power.

5. Types of Bullying

Bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional, cyberbullying or prejudice-based.

- Physical bullying (e.g. hitting, pushing)
- Verbal bullying (e.g. name-calling, threats)
- Emotional or relational bullying (e.g. exclusion, humiliation)
- Cyberbullying (e.g. online or digital platforms)
- Prejudice-based bullying (race, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation)
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual violence

Hillcrest School recognises that behaviour often described as 'banter' can sometimes mask bullying. While banter may be intended as playful or humorous, it can become harmful when it is repeated, targeted, or causes distress to another pupil.

Staff will:

- Remain vigilant to the impact of language and interactions between pupils
- Challenge inappropriate or harmful 'banter' promptly
- Support pupils to understand the difference between friendly interaction and hurtful behaviour
- Reinforce that intent does not outweigh impact
- Staff will not assume behaviour is 'low-level' where there is a risk of harm.

This is particularly important in a SEND context, where pupils may have differing levels of social understanding and may be more vulnerable.

6. Recognising Signs of Bullying

Staff will be alert to withdrawal, anxiety, reluctance to attend school, changes in behaviour, missing belongings, injuries and increased dysregulation.

In a SEND setting, pupils may communicate distress through behaviour or changes in presentation.

7. THRIVE-Informed Approach

Hillcrest adopts a THRIVE-informed approach which recognises behaviour as communication. Pupils displaying bullying behaviours may be expressing unmet emotional or developmental needs.

Staff focus on building relationships, supporting emotional regulation and addressing underlying causes while maintaining clear expectations.

8. Prevention

Bullying can happen to anyone. Bullying is prevented through a whole-school approach including PSHE, emotional literacy, structured routines, staff training, positive relationships and a culture that promotes inclusion.

The school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others which will be upheld by all.
- Pupils will be supervised at all times, including during breaktimes, by staff who are familiar with their needs and maintain a vigilant and proactive approach to safeguarding and wellbeing.
- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Challenge practice which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, peer support and the school council.
- Ensure all pupils are able to identify key trusted adults within school.
- Ensure pupils have safe spaces that they can access in school.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied.
- Work with other agencies and the wider school community to prevent and tackle concerns.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Hillcrest School actively participates in national awareness events, including Anti-Bullying Week and Safer Internet Day, to reinforce key messages around respect, kindness and inclusion. This is further supported through twice-weekly PSHE sessions, delivered in line with the PSHE curriculum, where pupils are taught about anti-bullying, tolerance, respectful

relationships and online safety, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to recognise, prevent and respond to bullying.

Year Group	Links to Anti-Bullying (PSHE Association Curriculum) delivered to all pupils				
Year 7	Friendships and Bullying: -Friendship and empathy -Bullying and bystanders -Friendship challenges -Similarities and differences -Coercive friendships.	Families and Changing Relationships: -Understanding changing relationships.	Influences on Relationships: -Healthy and unhealthy relationships -Consent -Managing conflict.		
Year 8	Health and Wellbeing: -Navigating different views.	Belonging and Community: -Bias and stereotypes -Discrimination and protected characteristics -Values and constrictive disagreement -Diverse and supportive communities.	The Online World: -Gaming and social media -The business of influence.	Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships: -Healthy relationships -Staying safe online -Safer online relationships -Sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour -Consent -Preventing gender-based violence.	
Year 9	Mental Health and Wellbeing: -Healthy and unhealthy coping strategies -Influence.	Intimate Sexual Relationships: -Relationship values.	Navigating Online Harms: -Misogyny -Nudes and deepfakes -Motivations and consequences.		
Year 10	Navigating the Online World: -AI and chatbots	Friendship, Diversity and Challenging Extremism: -Recognising and challenging bullying behaviour -Recognising and challenging unhealthy attitudes to bullying -Valuing diversity -Understanding and preventing extremism	Managing Influence: -The impact and spread of misogynistic narratives -Safely challenging misogynistic beliefs and attitudes.	Exploring Consent and Recognising Abuse: -Pressure, persuasion and coercion -Relationship rights and reporting abuse.	
Year 11	Drugs and Personal Safety: -Assessing risk -Managing influence -Help seeking -How it might start.	Safe Relationships and Sexual Health: -Healthy and unhealthy relationships -Power and control -Setting boundaries and getting help -Relationship behaviours.			

8. Communication and Pupil Voice

Pupils are encouraged and supported to express their views and report concerns to trusted adults through a range of accessible methods, including 1:1 adult time, worry boxes, Zones of Regulation and the use of Makaton and visual communication systems. The school recognises and takes seriously all forms of communication, including non-verbal communication, ensuring every pupil's voice is heard.

10. Supportive Environment

The school provides trusted adults, safe spaces and access to Student Support Team provision including 1:1 support, group interventions and conflict resolution. ELSA-informed approaches are used to support emotional wellbeing.

11. Reporting Concerns

Pupils can report concerns to trusted adults, through worry boxes or communication systems.

Parents/carers can contact school directly.

Staff must record all concerns on CPOMS the same day and report safeguarding concerns to the DSL.

12. Responding to Concerns

Staff will listen, reassure, take concerns seriously and ensure immediate safety. Action will be taken promptly to address concerns and prevent escalation. Staff will work in partnership with parents/carers to address any concerns, ensuring clear and timely communication regarding actions taken and next steps. All staff are expected to recognise potential child-on-child abuse and follow safeguarding procedures without delay.

13. Context of Bullying

The school will respond to incidents occurring:

- In school
- During school activities
- Online
- Outside school where it impacts pupils

14. Recording and Monitoring (CPOMS)

All concerns are recorded on CPOMS. Senior leaders review data regularly to identify patterns.

15. Investigation and Action

Responses are proportionate. Low-level concerns are monitored, repeated behaviours are investigated and safeguarding concerns are managed in line with Child Protection procedures.

16. Support and Intervention

Support is provided to all pupils involved, recognising the needs of both those experiencing and displaying bullying behaviours. This includes access to a trusted adult, safe spaces, emotional support, targeted interventions, and restorative approaches where appropriate.

Pupils are supported to use tools such as the *Fix It File* to aid communication, reflect on experiences, and contribute to restorative conversations.

Through this approach, pupils are supported to develop social and emotional skills, including emotional regulation, empathy, and positive relationship building.

School will respond to pupils displaying bullying behaviours in a proportionate and appropriate way, in line with DfE guidance, balancing clear consequences with support to address underlying needs.

In line with our Relationship Policy and informed by Thrive principles, we recognise behaviour as a form of communication and will seek to understand and address the pupil's emotional and developmental needs.

Restorative approaches will be used, including structured conversations to support accountability, repair harm, and rebuild relationships.

We will work in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate, implementing targeted interventions while maintaining high expectations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

17. Monitoring and Review

CPOMS data is reviewed regularly by senior leaders to identify patterns and inform provision. The policy is reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness.

18. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors monitor policy effectiveness. SLT implement and review practice. Staff follow procedures and support pupils. Parents and pupils work in partnership with the school.

19. Links to Other Policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Digital Safety Policy
- PSHE Policy

20. Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBT

- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

ANTI-BULLYING: STAFF RESPONSE FLOWCHART

1. A concern is reported or observed

Pupil report, parent contact, staff observation, or CPOMS pattern.

2. LISTEN AND REASSURE

Take the concern seriously
Use appropriate communication methods
Do not dismiss as banter or low-level behaviour

3. ASSESS IMMEDIATE SAFETY

Is the pupil at risk of harm?
YES – take immediate action, ensure safety, inform DSL
NO – continue to next step

4. RECORD ON CPOMS (SAME DAY)

Record accurately and factually, including context and impact.

5. INITIAL CONSIDERATION

Does this meet the definition of bullying (repeated, intentional, imbalance of power)?
YES – continue to next step
NO – treat as relational conflict and monitor

6. SAFEGUARDING CHECK

Is there a safeguarding concern (harm, coercion, sexual behaviour, vulnerability)?
YES – refer to DSL immediately and follow Child Protection procedures
NO – continue to next step

7. INVESTIGATE AND RESPOND

Gather information from all parties
Consider SEND needs and communication differences

8. INFORM PARENTS/CARERS

Provide clear, timely, and professional communication.

9. SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

Provide support for all pupils involved
Use Thrive-informed approaches
Set clear boundaries and consequences

10. RESTORATIVE APPROACH

Use restorative conversations where appropriate
Support relationship repair

11. MONITOR AND REVIEW

Continue CPOMS recording
Review patterns
Escalate if behaviour persists

12. FOLLOW-UP

Check in with pupils regularly
Ensure behaviour has stopped and pupils feel safe