

North Halifax Grammar School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Approved by:	Full Governance Board (Standards)
Date approved:	Autumn Term 2021
Next review:	Autumn Term 2024
Policy owner:	Assistant Vice-Principal – Behaviour and Safeguarding

Aims

1. To promote an anti-bullying ethos throughout the entire school community
2. To ensure that all staff, students and parents know what to do in the event of bullying taking place
3. To ensure that instances of bullying are dealt with properly and that bullying and the impact of bullying are minimised in the NHGS school community

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- *Behaviour for Learning Policy*
- *Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures*
- *Online Safety Policy*
- *Equal Opportunities Policy*
- *Exclusion Policy*

School Ethos

NHGS does not tolerate bullying. All members of the school community, whether staff, students or others, have a responsibility to act if they witness bullying or suspect that it is taking place.

Any bullying involving staff is covered in the 'Code of Conduct' section of the Employee Handbook.

Definition of Bullying

For the purposes of this policy, the following definition of bullying will be used:

When a person's or group of people's behaviour, over a period of time, leaves someone or a group of people, feeling one or more of the following:

- Physically and/or mentally hurt or worried
- Unsafe and/or frightened
- Unable to do well and achieve
- 'Badly different', alone, unimportant and/or unvalued
- Unable to see a positive, happy and exciting future

it *could be* bullying. When a person, or group of people, has been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person or persons, and they continue to behave in the same or a similar manner, this *is* bullying.

Bullying behaviours may include:

Physical bullying e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing, intimidation, interfering with property, etc.
Verbal/psychological bullying e.g. threats, taunts, social isolation, name-calling, spreading rumours, etc.
Cyber-bullying e.g. use of digital communication such as email, texting, instant messaging, social media, websites, blogs, etc. to post insulting/offensive comments or pictures etc.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- *is frightened of walking to or from school;*
- *doesn't want to go on the school/public bus;*
- *begs to be driven to school;*
- *changes their usual routine;*
- *is unwilling to go to school (school phobic) ;*
- *begins to truant;*
- *becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;*
- *starts stammering;*

- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully) ;
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost";
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen) ;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Peer-on-peer Abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline. Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence.

Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:

- *Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.*
- *Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.*
- *Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.*

To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons. The school will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, relationships education and group sessions. Such content will be specific to age and stage of development, and tackle issues such as the following:

- *Healthy relationships*
- *Respectful behaviour*
- *Gender roles, stereotyping and equality*
- *Body confidence and self-esteem*
- *Prejudiced behaviour*
- *That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong*
- *Addressing cultures of sexual harassment*

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers, and will never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up". Staff will also be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing/initiation type violence.

Where a pupil is found to have been involved in harmful sexual behaviour, the school will help the pupil to move forward from the incident by supporting them in adopting more positive behaviour patterns and attitudes.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further. Staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils are more likely to be targeted by their peers.

In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils. The school's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between pupils of the opposite sex.

Aggravated Bullying

The school may consider that any bullying incident is aggravated if it is, or appears to be, motivated by prejudice or intolerance such as: racism, religious intolerance, sexism, homophobia, intolerance of difference, SEND, etc.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Preventing and addressing cyber-bullying

To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be. Class teachers/form teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their tutor groups.

Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and other subjects where appropriate.

All staff, governors and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training.

The school also shares information on cyber-bullying with parents so that they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected.

In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.

The DSL will consider whether the incident should be reported to the police if it involves illegal material, and will work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

If a student is being bullied via electronic methods then if possible, follow the guidelines below;

- Do not respond to the communication under any circumstances
- If possible, save the message as this can be used as evidence at a later date. Don't delete it.
- Speak to a teacher / friend / parent / carer
- Block the sender/s of the email by using the 'Junk Email' or 'Spam Filter' provided by the web mail account provider
- Report via the 'Report-IT' online form, available via the School website. (<http://www.nhgs.co.uk/reportit>) or inform a member of staff

Students can find out more about cyber bullying on the Childline (www.childline.org.uk) website or contact them by telephone on 0800 1111.

Students should familiarise themselves with the content on the 'Think You Know' website (<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>) operated by The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). Students should exercise caution over whom they give their contact information to, such as email addresses and telephone numbers etc.

Examining electronic devices

School staff have the specific power under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (which has been increased by the Education Act 2011) to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices, including mobile phones, iPads and other tablet devices, where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

When deciding whether there is a good reason to examine or erase data or files on an electronic device, staff must reasonably suspect that the data or file in question has been, or could be, used to:

- Cause harm, and/or
- Disrupt teaching, and/or
- Break any of the school rules

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the staff member in conjunction with the DSL or other member of the senior leadership team to decide whether they should:

- Delete that material, or
- Retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline), and/or
- Report it to the police*

* Staff may also confiscate devices for evidence to hand to the police, if a pupil discloses that they are being abused and that this abuse includes an online element.

Any searching of pupils will be carried out in line with:

- The DfE's latest guidance on [screening, searching and confiscation](#)
- UKCIS guidance on [sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)
- The school's COVID-19 risk assessment

Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

Scope

The school will investigate/intervene in any instance of bullying involving our own students whether or not incidents have occurred on school premises or in school time.

Criminal Behaviour

Many bullying behaviours are illegal. It is the right of any individual who feels they are the victim of a crime to report that crime to the police. The school will comply with all rules and legislation currently in place in assisting the police in any enquiries they might make in such regard.

Awareness of Sensitivities

Staff dealing with bullying need to be aware of how emotive an issue it can be – for the victim, the bully and their parents/carers. It is important to treat everyone involved sensitively and avoid labelling and blaming individuals, especially as it is common for bullies to be the victims of bullying themselves. It is therefore of paramount importance that interventions and discussions are focused on behaviours rather than personalities.

Promoting the anti-bullying ethos to students

Anti-bullying posters and messages will be prominently displayed around school. These posters will put across the message that bullying is not tolerated and will make it clear how students can get help if they want it.

All students will learn about bullying, its impact and how to counter it through the PSCHEE curriculum and an anti-abusive behaviours statement will be included in planners. *Students must read through this statement at the start of the school year and regular reference is made to this statement. The statement reads as follows;*

Abusive Behaviours

NHGS does not tolerate any kind of abuse towards staff or students, including peer on peer abuse.

The school is fully committed to dealing seriously with any and all complaints that are received about abusive or bullying behaviours, whether these occur inside or outside school, in person, by phone or online.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, and bullying related to prejudice or intolerance such as racism, religious intolerance, sexism, homophobia, intolerance of difference, SEND etc;
- Physical abuse, such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, etc;
- Sexual violence/assault (from inappropriate physical contact to rape);
- Sexual or racial/homophobic harassment, such as: sexist, racist or homophobic comments, remarks, inappropriate jokes etc;
- Upskirting (taking pictures under a person's clothing);
- Sexting (seeking, sending or receiving sexually explicit or suggestive images, messages, or video via digital media).

Any of these abusive behaviours can be highly detrimental to the well-being and welfare of a victim (or victims). This is clearly unacceptable, but may not be immediately apparent, as the victim(s) may mask their feelings by "putting on a brave face" or laughing along with the abuser(s). Victims of abuse can sometimes do this in order to cover up embarrassment or hurt at the time of the abuse.

All members of the school community, (staff, students or others), have a responsibility to act if they witness abuse or suspect that it is taking place.

Abusive behaviours can be reported using any of the school's reporting channels, including in person or over the phone, via email or by using the Report-It button on the school website. School will respond to all reports sensitively but seriously.

The school will investigate, intervene, and impose sanctions (if required) in any instances of abuse whether or not incidents have occurred on the school premises or in school time. Whenever necessary, the school will refer issues to outside agencies (potentially including the police) as appropriate.

- Remember: Silence is the friend of the bully and the abuser.
- Speaking out about peer on peer abuse is the first step towards putting an end to it.

Don't assume that someone else will report what is happening. Don't assume that someone who is laughing is not hurting. We all have a duty to report things we know are wrong. The impact of bystander silence is more pain for those who are hurting. People who call others "snakes" (or similar terms) for doing the right thing, are enablers of abuse.

Be Kind; Be Honest; Speak Out!

Senior staff will raise awareness through assemblies, as appropriate.

Bullying will be a regular item on school council meeting agendas.

Promoting the anti-bullying ethos at home

Parents are expected to support the school policy in tackling bullying, including supporting all parties to find a positive resolution. They are expected to:

- *Report incidents of bullying to the Student Progress Tutor or Year Group Leader.*

- Allow appropriate time for investigations to take place.
- Re-assure any victims that a resolution will be found
- Support the restorative approach to educating the bully.

We advise that parents/carers also support their child in other ways, for example:

- Watch for signs of distress in your children, e.g. an unwillingness to attend school, a regular pattern of headaches or stomach aches, becoming withdrawn, loss of weight, difficulty sleeping, bed wetting, threatening self harm.
- Take an active interest in your child's social life. Discuss friendships, how lunchtime is spent and journey to and from school.
- If you think your child is being bullied, encourage her/him to talk about the problem calmly and inform school immediately.
- Keep a written record of cyberbullying, including examples of texts or emails received if bullying persists, providing supportive evidence regarding WHO, WHAT, WHERE and WHEN.
- Seek support from staff in the school to help support your child. Do not encourage your children to hit back or to reply to bullying emails or text messages. It only makes matters worse. Impress upon them the need to inform an adult immediately if bullying occurs.
- If your child is found to have been bullying others, please ensure that you co-operate fully within the school, in order that the situation can be resolved as quickly as possible.
- Attend any additional sessions or request information on key areas if you require further support or guidance

Reporting Bullying

Bullying can be reported verbally to members of staff, in person or over the phone. It can be reported in written form via letter or email. There is also a facility to make reports via the school website using the "report-it" button. Bullying is normally investigated in the first instance by the relevant Year Group Leader (YGL) but reports can be made to any member of staff that students or parents feel comfortable to approach.

What happens when bullying is reported or observed?

All instances of bullying or suspected bullying that are reported will be investigated thoroughly. The YGL or other appropriate member of staff having substantiated the report will take written statements from all those involved – either as parties to the actions being investigated or as witnesses to them. If there is not time to take statements immediately then the names of all students involved will be recorded so that follow-up interviews/statements can take place later. *The parents of any students involved in incidents of bullying, whether they be the victim or perpetrator, will be contacted by a member of the pastoral team to notify them of such incidents and to talk through the potential actions to follow.*

Staff will not deal with bullying on their own but will take a team approach. Information must be shared with relevant others (most typically Pastoral Team members such as Student Progress Tutors (SPTs) / Year Group Leaders (YGLs) /Upper and Lower School Leaders/Members of the Leadership Group, etc.) so that patterns of behaviour can be identified and dealt with.

The disciplinary consequences of individual instances of bullying between students will generally be dealt with by reference to the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy. Students whose behaviour has been found to conform to the above definition of bullying will face consequences ranging from detention up to and including permanent exclusion, depending on the severity and persistence of their offending behaviours.

Persistent Cases

Where students fall into a pattern of bullying behaviours or victimhood, a number of different approaches might be taken. These might include some or all of the following (non-exhaustive) list of strategies:

- Monitoring by SPT/YGL
- Mentoring (by staff or peers or older students)
- Counselling
- Report
- Behaviour Contract
- Social separation
- Victim /offender mediation
- Group discussion
- Assertiveness training

Staff dealing with these persistent cases will use their best professional judgement, in consultation with colleagues, as to which approach(es) to take according to the circumstances of each case.

Monitoring

The Vice Principal for Behaviour, Safeguarding and Inclusion will ensure that all cases of bullying are recorded and categorised appropriately. The Vice Principal for Behaviour, Safeguarding and Inclusion will ensure that all cases of bullying are recorded and categorised appropriately on the CPOMS system. This information will be monitored and analysed regularly with termly reports made to the Full Governance Board. The school will also participate in surveys such as the Electronic Health Needs Assessment (EHNA), the results of which will be reported to Governors.

Further Support

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues. <https://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/>

BeatBullying: A bullying prevention charity with an emphasis on working directly with child and young people. In addition to lesson plans and resources for parents. 'BeatBullying' have developed a peer support programme for young people affected by bullying. <https://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Stonewall is a member of the Equality and Diversity Forum, a network of national organisations committed to progress on age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation issues. <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

Schools Out is an organisation which sets out to make our schools and educational institutions safe spaces for our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) communities as teachers, lecturers and trainers; as students and students; as parents; as teaching and learning support staff; as siteofficers, catering and cleaning staff; and as headteachers, managers and governors <http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves www.childnet.com 12

Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers. <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

CEOP: Child Exploitation Online Protection Agency <https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

SEND Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information people who work with children and young people. <https://www.mencap.org.uk>

Show Racism the Red Card: Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism. <http://www.theredcard.org>

Anne Frank Trust: Runs a schools project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity. <https://annefrank.org.uk>