Anti Bullying Policy

Status	**Statutory**
Responsible Governors' Committee	**Full Governing Body**
Date last approved by GB	**November 2025**
Responsible Person	**Co-Headteachers**
To Review Date	**November 2026**
Last Amended Date	**November 2024**

At New Heights School, we are committed to the protection of the individual and wish to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect, cooperation and consideration for others within our school community. Any behaviour contrary to this which makes an individual feel frightened, uncomfortable or unhappy, either in School, or on the way to and from School, will not be tolerated.

Definition

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)

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) including name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. 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.

Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of child on child abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's and young people's emotional development.

Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

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

- Bullying related to physical appearance;
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions;
- Physical bullying;
- Emotional bullying;
- Sexual bullying;
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying.
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils/learners with protected characteristics):
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith.
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture;
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND);
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying);
- Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying;
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act).

Examples of Behaviours which we consider to be bullying are as follows:

- Name calling of any kind
- Teasing/taunting /belittling someone either to their face or by speaking about them to others in a derogatory fashion
- Hitting, pushing, tripping or any unwelcome physical contact
- Demanding money or food for example
- Making someone do something against their will
- Leaving someone out or isolating them
- Making comments/spreading rumours about someone or their family
- Making rude, sexual or suggestive remarks
- Making derogatory comments about a person's faith or about those without faith
- Making racist remarks regarding a person's skin colour or culture
- Using racist names
- Making homophobic/biphobic/transphobic remarks
- Any form of sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Using Facebook/X-box/Snap Chat or any other form of social media to bully others

Child-on-child sexual violence and harassment

Sexual violence and harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated at the School. Sexual violence and harassment will not be treated as acceptable or as 'banter'.

As part of ensuring high behaviour standards, school will ensure that pupils and staff do not normalise sexually abusive language or behaviour by treating it as an expected part of growing up.

All members of the School community must advocate for high standards of conduct and model dignified and respectful relationships. If a pupil makes an allegation of sexual violence or harassment against a peer a referral in the first instance must be made to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and dealt in line with the safeguarding policy. If a pupil makes a deliberately invented or false allegation, support from the DSL and / or member of SLT will be sought to determine whether a consequence will be appropriate.

Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic (HBT) Bullying

As a school, we will ensure that students are aware that HBT language will not be tolerated at New Heights School. All incidents of HBT language will be recorded and dealt with appropriately, and if a student uses HBT language we will ensure that they are aware of the effects such language has on people.

If a student makes persistent remarks their parents/carers will be contacted immediately and in the event of the problem continuing, the parents/carers will be invited into School to discuss further sanctions and / or support necessary to the student and parents/carers in order for them to fully understand the consequences of such language or behaviour.

The School works hard to ensure that prevention is the first step in our strategy to remove HBT bullying. The use of PSHE lessons, Assemblies, Guest Speakers, Themed Days, Pastoral staff and Support staff play a crucial role in this aspect of our strategy.

We take any allegations of bullying very seriously. Where there is bullying, we will use sanctions as deemed appropriate.

The Co-Headteacher's will make a termly report to Governors which includes bullying and racist incidents.

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside School.

Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience. Negative interactions online can damage the School's culture and can lead to the School feeling like an unsafe place. The same standards of behaviour are expected online as apply offline. This includes the importance of respecting others and the use of appropriate language.

At New Heights School, we will treat the following online incidents as breaches of the Relationships and Resolutions policy, including those which;

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the School or
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or
- could adversely affect the reputation of the School. Any online breaches will be dealt with in line with this policy.

Hate Crime

Hate crime is any criminal offence committed against a person or property that is motivated, or perceived to be motivated, by hostility or prejudice based upon the victims:

- race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality or national origins
- religion or belief

- gender or gender identity
- sexual orientation
- disability
- age
- alternative sub-culture

At New Heights School, we educate students on acceptance, respect for others and understanding of all individuals through the general classroom expectations, assemblies, themed days and our Relationships for Learning / PSHE programme.

Recognising the indicators that bullying is occurring

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional, and physical stress. Each student's response to being bullied is unique.

Students who are being bullied may:

- show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, appetite irregularities, feigning illness and stomach aches, refusing to attend school/college or clinging to adults, sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations, and unexplainable injuries.
- show changes in personal habits, such as lacking concentration or high levels of distractible behaviour, difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- become super-vigilant and could even display self destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves or talking about suicide.

Individual behaviour patterns are well known to staff and when there are changes in these patterns the possibility of bullying must always be considered.

Students must be encouraged to report bullying. Staff must be alert to the signs of bullying (in all its many forms) and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with New Heights School Anti Bullying policy.

Understanding why bullying is occurring

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator/s and 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.

At New Heights School, we carefully review the reasons why bullying is occurring on a case by case basis.

Strategies to reduce bullying

At New Heights School, we have adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise aware ness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviors, including:

- The consistent promotion of the school's code of conduct which requires all students to respect the rights of others.
- Ensuring that appreciation and respect for all cultures are promoted;
- Ensuring that teaching students about bullying and its impact is embedded throughout the curriculum offer.
- The reinforcement of the clear message that violence has no place at New Heights School.
- Consultation with Student voice on appropriate action.
- Take part in initiatives and dedicated events or projects such as Anti-Bullying week to facilitate conversations with students about issues of difference.
- Talking with students about how to manage their own feelings and emotions;
- Using our extensive knowledge of students, and strong relationships with home, to recognise any changes that might result in 'bullying' behaviours;
- Changes to individual behaviour plans;
- Training for all members of staff and ensure they understand their responsibilities
- Ensuring that all students are appropriately supervised at all times.
- Providing information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if they suspect their child is being bullied.
- During assemblies and Relationships for Learning / PSHE programme, discussion and exploration of bullying issues with the students take place.
- Raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching students to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email and internet).
- Ensuring that monitoring and filtering software is effective in protecting students from cyber based bullying
- All websites accessed at New Heights School are screened. This software screens the language used in all documents., emails and websites. Rude or offensive emails, websites, documents are raised and shared with the Co-Headteachers, with action taken and recorded.

The following steps should be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached; or who suspects / observed the bullying.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded on CPOMS and shared with the appropriate member of SLT who will act with delegated responsibilities on behalf of the Co-Headteacher's;
- The SLT member will interview all concerned and keep a record of their findings;
- Information is gathered about the incident before any conclusion is made about whether the incidents were bullying behaviour – both the student suspected of 'bullying' and the 'victim' will be listened to carefully;
- Relevant staff and parents/carers will be kept informed;
- If the issue persists, then further support meetings (with parents and staff) will be held;
- A range of support / opportunities for resolution will be used / applied in appropriate proportion to the event and in consultation with all parties concerned.
- In cases where a crime has been committed or a student is believed to be in imminent; danger or risk, the appropriate authorities (police, LA) will be informed immediately prior to any internal investigation. At this point our Safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- If it is suspected that the bullying is in the form of staff on student then the disciplinary procedure will be acted upon and a safeguarding concern raised.
- If internet/social media based bullying is suspected steps MUST be taken to check if the filtering and monitoring software protection can be improved.

Role of Students

Bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be dealt with immediately.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Immediate support and reassurance;
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence;
- Participating in a restorative justice conversation, where appropriate.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- The 'bully' to be informed in a suitable way that their behaviour is inappropriate and must stop;
- Discovering more about the situation to help restore positive behaviours;
- Informing parents/carers to help change the behaviour of the student;
- Participating in a restorative justice conversation, where appropriate.

We aim to use positive methods to create and restore appropriate behaviours.

Action that is solely disciplinary is not considered the right choice within our environment and Relationships and Resolution / Trauma Informed / Emotionally Friendly ethos.

Positive behaviours, social skills and emotional well-being are promoted within the curriculum (e.g. Relationships for Learning, PSHE, Interventions such as Lego Therapy, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate).

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the school in a calm manner. If they are not satisfied with the action taken by the school, they should contact the Co-Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the procedure detailed in the Complaints Policy, a copy of which is available on the website.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school community and this expectation of support is outlined during the admission meeting in school.