



HEREWARD HOUSE SCHOOL

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Anti-Bullying Policy

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Our School's Aims

At Hereward House we aim to provide a warm, welcoming and safe atmosphere in which every child can thrive and feel comfortable. Whilst embracing the highest academic aspirations for our pupils, we strive to create a stimulating, purposeful and happy community, where every child feels valued and secure. Promoting the well-being of all pupils is at the heart of what we aim to do. For us the most important outcome is for all pupils to be kind, considerate and confident whilst looking out for every member of the school community. We aim to be a school where pupils will be encouraged and assisted to develop academically, morally, emotionally and culturally. It is our belief each pupil should enjoy their school days and reflect upon them with pride, pleasure and affection. We are preparing pupils not just for senior school, but for life.

1. Introduction

Bullying, in any form, is not tolerated at Hereward House School. The School is committed to preventing bullying, responding promptly to concerns and creating an environment in which every pupil feels safe, respected and able to learn.

Bullying can have a significant impact on a pupil's wellbeing, confidence, attendance, relationships and ability to engage fully in school life. All reports and concerns will therefore be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and followed up.

This policy has regard to:

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies;
- Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- the Equality Act 2010; and
- the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

The DfE's established anti-bullying and cyberbullying guidance remains available through its current "Preventing bullying" collection, while KCSIE 2026 comes into force on 1 September 2026.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally or recklessly causes physical or emotional harm to another individual or group. It may involve an imbalance of power and may be motivated by prejudice relating to a pupil's identity, characteristics or circumstances.

Bullying may include:

- Physical bullying: hitting, kicking, pushing, damaging or taking belongings, or other unwanted physical behaviour;
- Verbal bullying: name-calling, threats, teasing, insults, offensive remarks or persistent ridicule;
- Emotional or relational bullying: deliberate exclusion, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships, intimidation or threatening gestures;
- Cyberbullying: bullying through social media, messaging services, group chats, gaming platforms, email, images, videos or other digital technology;

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- Sexual bullying: sexualised comments, harassment, unwanted conduct, upskirting, or the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
- Prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying: behaviour connected to race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, SEND, health needs, culture, family circumstances or any other actual or perceived difference.

Bullying may relate to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, or to other aspects of a pupil's identity or circumstances, including being adopted, being in care, having a carer, or experiencing social isolation.

Distinguishing bullying from other incidents

Not every disagreement, argument, friendship difficulty or isolated incident constitutes bullying. Children may sometimes behave unkindly, become involved in conflict or act impulsively without there being an established pattern of bullying.

However, a single incident may still be serious and require immediate action under the Behaviour, Safeguarding or Child Protection policies. Staff should consider:

- whether the behaviour has been repeated or is likely to recur;
- whether there is an imbalance of power;
- whether the behaviour appears deliberate or targeted;
- the impact on the pupil affected;
- whether prejudice, discrimination, coercion or exploitation is involved; and
- whether the behaviour may amount to child-on-child abuse.

The School will not delay action simply because it is not yet clear whether the formal definition of bullying has been met.

Possible signs of bullying

Staff should remain alert to changes that may indicate that a pupil is experiencing bullying. These may include:

- withdrawal or increased anxiety;
- changes in friendships or behaviour;
- reluctance to attend school or particular activities;
- avoidance of certain places or pupils;
- unexplained injuries or damaged belongings;
- deterioration in work, concentration or attendance;
- emotional distress or changes in eating or sleeping; or
- displaying uncharacteristic aggression or bullying behaviour towards others.

No single sign proves that bullying is taking place, but concerns should be explored sensitively and shared with the Form Teacher and Deputy Head.

This policy primarily addresses bullying between pupils. Concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a pupil must be managed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and, where applicable, the Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy. Adults are expected to model kindness, respect and appropriate professional conduct at all times.

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This policy applies throughout the School, including the EYFS, during school activities and trips, while travelling to and from school, and to online or out-of-school behaviour where it affects pupils' welfare or the orderly running of the School.

Child-on-child abuse

Bullying may amount to child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse can occur inside or outside school and online, and may be a standalone concern or form part of wider abuse, exploitation or coercion.

It may include, but is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying;
- prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;
- physical abuse;
- sexual violence or sexual harassment;
- coercive, controlling or abusive behaviour;
- initiation or hazing-type behaviour; and
- the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images.

Any concern that bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded on CPOMS in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- promote a culture of kindness, respect and inclusion in which bullying is recognised as unacceptable;
- prevent bullying through education, positive relationships and clear behavioural expectations;
- ensure that all pupils, staff and parents understand what bullying is and how concerns should be reported;
- provide a consistent, fair and proportionate response to all reports of bullying;
- support and protect pupils who experience bullying, while helping those responsible to understand the impact of their behaviour and make positive changes;
- identify and address patterns of bullying through effective recording, monitoring and follow-up;
- ensure that bullying which may constitute child-on-child abuse or a safeguarding concern is identified promptly and managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; and
- foster a warm, welcoming and safe environment in which every pupil feels valued, respected and able to learn.

This policy sets out the responsibilities of staff, pupils, parents and governors in preventing, identifying and responding to bullying. It should be read alongside the Behaviour, Rewards and

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Consequences Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Online Safety Policy and the Equality Policy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities:

Headmaster and Deputy Head

The Headmaster has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that Hereward House maintains a culture in which bullying is not tolerated.

The Headmaster, supported by the Deputy Head, will:

- promote a whole-school culture of kindness, respect and inclusion;
- ensure that staff receive appropriate guidance and training;
- ensure that all reports of bullying are investigated promptly and fairly;
- determine appropriate consequences and support where bullying is confirmed;
- decide whether behaviour meets the threshold for suspension, permanent exclusion or referral to external agencies;
- monitor patterns of bullying through CPOMS and the Annual Behaviour Report; and
- ensure that bullying incidents are followed up appropriately to reduce the risk of recurrence.

Where appropriate, follow-up meetings with pupils and parents will normally take place within two weeks of a confirmed incident and again later in the term to ensure that concerns have been resolved.

Staff

Preventing bullying is the responsibility of every member of staff.

All staff are expected to:

- promote positive relationships and model respectful behaviour at all times;
- remain vigilant during lessons, breaks, trips, fixtures and other school activities;
- challenge unkind behaviour promptly before it escalates;
- take all reports of bullying seriously;
- listen carefully to pupils and reassure them that concerns will be acted upon;
- record concerns on CPOMS and inform the Form Teacher and Deputy Head as appropriate;
- support both the pupil experiencing bullying and the pupil responsible, recognising that behaviour often requires education as well as consequences;
- reinforce the school's expectations through PSHE, assemblies, Form Time and everyday interactions; and
- attend relevant safeguarding and anti-bullying training.

Staff should remember that some pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may themselves require additional pastoral or safeguarding support.

Form Teachers

Form Teachers play a central role in preventing and responding to bullying.

They will:

- monitor relationships within the form;

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- maintain regular communication with parents where concerns arise;
- work closely with the Deputy Head, SENDCO and other staff where appropriate;
- monitor pupils following incidents to ensure that concerns do not recur; and
- contribute to whole-school monitoring through staff meetings and pastoral discussions.

Parents

Parents are important partners in preventing bullying.

Parents are encouraged to:

- contact the Form Teacher promptly if they believe their child may be experiencing bullying or may have been involved in bullying another pupil;
- encourage their child to speak openly about any concerns;
- reinforce the school's expectations of kindness, respect and responsible behaviour;
- work collaboratively with the School to resolve concerns; and
- share any information about bullying or online behaviour occurring outside school which may affect pupils' wellbeing.

The School values open communication with parents and will keep them appropriately informed throughout the investigation and resolution of bullying concerns.

4. Procedures

Preventing Bullying

Preventing bullying is the responsibility of every member of the school community. The School promotes a culture in which kindness, respect and inclusion are actively encouraged through:

- positive relationships between staff and pupils;
- PSHE and RSHE lessons;
- Form Time and assemblies;
- anti-bullying awareness activities;
- pupil leadership and peer support;
- staff training; and
- consistent modelling of respectful behaviour by adults.

Staff remain vigilant during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes, trips, fixtures and other less structured parts of the school day, where bullying is more likely to occur.

Reporting Concerns

Pupils are encouraged to report any concerns about bullying as soon as possible to a trusted adult. This includes concerns about bullying that occurs:

- in school;
- online;
- during journeys to and from school;
- or outside school where it affects the welfare of pupils or the wider school community.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Form Teacher or Deputy Head if they have concerns.

All reports of bullying are taken seriously, regardless of when the incident occurred or who first receives the disclosure.

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Responding to Concerns

When bullying is reported or suspected, staff will:

1. listen carefully and reassure the pupil that the concern will be taken seriously;
2. make an accurate record of the concern on CPOMS;
3. inform the Form Teacher and Deputy Head without delay;
4. investigate promptly, speaking to pupils individually rather than together where appropriate;
5. consider whether the behaviour may amount to child-on-child abuse or require a safeguarding referral;
6. inform parents as appropriate;
7. provide appropriate support for all pupils involved; and
8. agree suitable consequences and any further pastoral or educational interventions.

Where bullying is confirmed, consequences will be applied in accordance with the Behaviour, Rewards and Consequences Policy.

Investigation

Investigations will be fair, proportionate and evidence-based.

In particular:

- pupils involved will normally be spoken to separately;
- written accounts may be obtained where appropriate;
- staff will consider the views of witnesses and any available evidence;
- online material, where relevant, will be considered in accordance with the Online Safety and Behaviour Policies;
- the emphasis will remain on establishing the facts rather than attributing blame prematurely.

The School recognises that pupils responsible for bullying behaviour may themselves require pastoral or safeguarding support. Support and education will therefore be considered alongside appropriate consequences.

Recording and Monitoring

All bullying concerns, investigations, actions and outcomes are recorded on CPOMS.

Records enable the School to:

- identify repeated incidents or emerging patterns;
- monitor individual pupils over time;
- identify safeguarding concerns;
- evaluate the effectiveness of interventions; and
- inform the Annual Behaviour Report presented to Governors.

Follow-up

Where bullying has been confirmed, follow-up is essential.

The School will normally:

- review the situation within approximately two weeks;
- carry out a further review later in the term;
- monitor relationships between the pupils involved;

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- maintain communication with parents where appropriate; and
- adjust support or consequences if concerns continue.

The aim is not simply to stop an individual incident, but to ensure that bullying does not recur.

External Agencies

The Headmaster, in consultation with the Deputy Head and other senior leaders where appropriate, will determine whether external agencies should be involved.

This may include:

- Children's Services;
- the Police;
- Educational Psychologists;
- CAMHS;
- or other specialist support services.

Where behaviour constitutes, or may constitute, a safeguarding concern, the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed without delay

5. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through the use of technology. It may occur through mobile phones, messaging services, social media, gaming platforms, email or any other online service. Like all forms of bullying, it can occur both inside and outside school and may take place at any time.

Cyberbullying may include:

- sending abusive, threatening or intimidating messages;
- deliberately excluding someone from online groups or conversations;
- sharing rumours or false information online;
- creating fake accounts or impersonating another person;
- sharing photographs or videos without permission;
- encouraging others to target or ridicule an individual;
- manipulating or editing images, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI), to embarrass, humiliate or intimidate another person;
- sharing nude or semi-nude images; or
- any other online behaviour intended to cause fear, distress or humiliation.

The School recognises that online behaviour can have a significant impact on pupils' wellbeing and relationships, regardless of whether it occurs during or outside the school day.

Preventing Cyberbullying

The School promotes safe and responsible use of technology through:

- the Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreements;
- age-appropriate Online Safety, PSHE and RSHE education;

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- filtering and monitoring systems;
- regular pupil, staff and parent education; and
- clear expectations regarding respectful online behaviour.

Pupils are expected to behave online with the same kindness, respect and responsibility expected within school.

Responding to Cyberbullying

Reports of cyberbullying will be managed in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy, together with the Behaviour, Rewards and Consequences Policy, Online Safety Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy where appropriate.

Where necessary, the School may:

- secure and preserve relevant evidence;
- search electronic devices in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and current statutory guidance;
- examine or delete data where legally permitted and appropriate;
- involve parents;
- apply disciplinary sanctions; and
- refer matters to external agencies, including the Police, where criminal offences may have been committed.

All cyberbullying incidents will be recorded on CPOMS and monitored to identify patterns or repeated concerns

6. Safeguarding

Bullying may amount to a safeguarding concern or child-on-child abuse. All staff should be aware that some incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying and sexual bullying, may require a safeguarding response.

Behaviour that may constitute child-on-child abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying;
- prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;
- physical abuse;
- sexual harassment or sexual violence;
- coercive, controlling or abusive behaviour;
- initiation or hazing-type behaviour; and
- the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images.

Any concern that a pupil may be at risk of harm, whether as a victim or as the child displaying harmful behaviour, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded on CPOMS in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The School recognises that some pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying or face additional barriers to reporting concerns. This may include pupils with SEND, disabilities, certain medical

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conditions, looked-after and previously looked-after children, young carers, and pupils with protected characteristics. Staff will take account of individual needs when responding to concerns and will ensure that appropriate support is provided.

The School will always consider whether bullying indicates wider safeguarding concerns or a risk of significant harm. Where this threshold is met, the matter will be managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including referral to external agencies where appropriate.

7. EYFS

The principles of this policy apply equally to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), with responses being appropriate to their age, stage of development and individual needs.

Children are encouraged from the earliest age to develop positive relationships and to behave with kindness, respect and consideration towards others. Through daily routines, play, stories and adult modelling, they are supported to:

- treat others with kindness and respect;
- share, cooperate and take turns;
- value differences and celebrate diversity;
- care for their own belongings and those of others;
- develop empathy and understand the impact of their behaviour; and
- seek help from an adult if they are worried about themselves or another child.

The Head of EYFS has responsibility for overseeing behaviour and pastoral support within the EYFS.

Where incidents of unkind or inappropriate behaviour occur, staff will respond calmly and consistently, helping children understand why the behaviour was unacceptable and supporting them to make better choices in the future. The emphasis is on teaching appropriate behaviour rather than punishment.

Where necessary, age-appropriate consequences may be used, such as temporarily withdrawing a privilege or supporting a child away from an activity until they are ready to re-engage positively. Such instances are uncommon.

Parents will be informed of significant incidents or repeated concerns and, where appropriate, will work in partnership with the School to agree strategies that support the child's positive behaviour and wellbeing.

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Where behaviour gives rise to safeguarding concerns, or indicates that a child may require additional support, the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

8. Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and approved by the Governing Body. It is also reviewed following any significant changes to statutory guidance or where monitoring identifies the need for further revision.

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored through:

- analysis of bullying incidents and behaviour data recorded on CPOMS;
- trends identified through pastoral and safeguarding monitoring;
- pupil voice, including the annual pupil survey;
- staff feedback and discussion at staff meetings;
- parental feedback where appropriate; and
- review of safeguarding and behaviour data by the Senior Leadership Team.

The annual pupil survey provides pupils with the opportunity to comment confidentially on their experiences of bullying, their sense of safety and their confidence in reporting concerns. The outcomes are reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and inform pastoral provision, curriculum planning, staff training and whole-school development.

Bullying trends, incident analysis and the effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying strategy are evaluated annually within the Behaviour Report presented to Governors. This enables Governors to monitor the effectiveness of the School's approach, challenge where appropriate and ensure that appropriate actions are identified and implemented.