

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Review

Next Review Date:	October 2027
Ratified by:	Local Trust Committee
Date Ratified:	October 2025
Dissemination:	All HLA & HEA staff and students

Document Control - Policy Amendments

Date	Version	Summary of Changes	Reviewer/s
September 2023	1.0	Policy written	Adam Daw
October 2025	1.1	Policy review – children previously in care added, ‘anti-social’ behaviour definition changed to ‘undesirable’, ‘pro-social’ definition changed to ‘acceptable’	Yvonne Skillern

Introduction

We want children and adult learners to feel secure and respected in our schools. Although we believe that incidents of bullying at Highfield Academies are typically low, we have a duty to be vigilant and ensure that all children and adults come into an environment that is warm, welcoming and safe. This policy links with the **Behaviour** and **Safeguarding** policies and aims to raise whole school awareness of bullying and to affirm a commitment to work with parents and carers to ensure any bullying incidents are dealt with openly and fairly.

Bullying is intentional, repeated physical or verbal aggression, cruelty or intimidation, intended to cause distress. Bullying is a safeguarding concern, and is treated as such, as it impacts on the mental or physical wellbeing of the victim. Incidents of bullying are recorded as Safeguarding concerns through our “My Concern” software.

Bullying may take the form of:

1. **Physical assault**
2. **Threats / intimidation**
3. **Extortion**
4. **Name calling**
5. **Indirect bullying** – eg. exclusion from the social group, malicious gossip
6. **Cyber Bullying** – using social networking sites, e-mail and text messaging
7. **Sexual violence/harassment** – assault/inappropriate comments/behaviours of a sexual nature

Child on child abuse

Bullying is a form of child on child abuse. All staff are made aware that children can abuse other children. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: Bullying (including cyberbullying); Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse; Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Bullying makes the victim feel unhappy, it makes it difficult to concentrate and complete their work to the best of their ability. Some avoid school to avoid being bullied. Bullying that goes unchallenged leads to more bullying and power to the bullies. Every pupil and adult learner or staff member has a responsibility to deal with any bullying they see. Instances should never be ignored.

Parents/carers will be informed if their child or adult learner is observed either bullying or being the victim of bullying.

Home / school links

Parents may be the first to notice signs a pupil is being bullied, for example if they become withdrawn and start avoiding school. Parents and Carers should notify their child's class teacher as soon as they become concerned that bullying is taking place. This can be by email, by Class Dojo, or in person by appointment. Any approach made by a parent/carer will be taken seriously, prioritised and investigated. If parents and carers are not satisfied with any action taken, they should escalate their concerns to the Assistant/Deputy Head.

Children in Care

Children in Care (CIC) and children previously in care (PCIC), are particularly vulnerable to the effects of bullying. Many of our CIC and PCIC have had significantly challenging backgrounds and will need any issues to be handled robustly, in good time and sensitively. If there are any reported incidents of bullying involving CIC and PCIC this will be flagged to the Virtual School as well as the child's Social Worker in addition to the carers and parents (if appropriate to the situation).

Victim Support

Victims of bullying will be well supported in school. This may be by the class team, a teacher or TA they have a strong relationship with, or through counselling or therapy. We will discuss this with parents and carers and support all related parties.

Consequences

In line with Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking principles, young people who bully others will face consequences for their undesirable behaviour. These will be educational consequences, such as completing work with an adult regarding why their behaviour was not acceptable and may include additional protective consequences, such as having to take break times separately from other learners until they have shown they can behave in a way that doesn't harm others.

A whole school approach to tackling bullying

All staff within Highfield Academies have a responsibility to ensure that incidents of bullying are kept to a minimum and are appropriately addressed. We will:

- Raise awareness within PSHE and other classroom sessions. Relate to rules around the school
- Use "My Concern" to record any incidents of bullying
- Model desirable pro-social behaviour
- Provide an immediate response to any reported incidents. Gather information whilst it is fresh in the person's mind. Keep records of information gathered
- Keep parents / carers fully informed
- Take all complaints seriously and make sure pupils/adult learners and staff know the allegations are taken seriously
- Take care to keep an open mind until proved otherwise

Links to other policies:

Behaviour policy
Safeguarding Policy