



Longbenton
HIGH SCHOOL

Anti Bullying Policy

2025 2026

Rationale

At Longbenton High School we aim for respectful relationships between all members of the school community in order to create a safe and inclusive environment in which learning and personal development can be effective. The Department for Education defines bullying as *“behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”* We regard bullying as the wilful, conscious desire to hurt another person or to put them under stress. We view bullying as more than one aggressive act; it is persistent deliberate harm towards another person. We believe bullying needs swift and effective action to ensure there is intervention to counter it.

Purpose

- (1) To ensure that students follow the Behaviour for Learning standards in their relationships with others.
- (2) To ensure that students understand the nature of bullying, including what should and should not be classed as bullying.
- (3) To ensure that students realise that all forms of bullying, whether they be physical, emotional, verbal or cyber, are unacceptable.
- (4) To encourage the disclosure of bullying incidents.
- (5) To ensure accurate record keeping of potential bullying incidents and incidents escalated to bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour which makes people feel uncomfortable or threatened. There is a deliberate intention to instil fear or anxiety. Bullying is defined by the Department for Education 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 include: 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 bullying 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, humiliating or degrading photos or videos.

Bullying can be a form of child on child abuse and can be abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

Bullying can and does take different forms and can include:

- **Verbal** - examples include: name calling, teasing, insulting, making offensive comments, writing unkind notes, sending inappropriate notes, threatening or intimidating, hurtful remarks including discrimination with regards to disability or of a homophobic, transphobic, racist or sexualised nature.
- **Emotional** - examples include: being unfriendly, excluding individuals from social groups, tormenting, spreading rumours.
- **Physical** - examples include: hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, taking or hiding belongings, damaging property.
- **Cyber/Online** - examples include insults and comments spread via social media/text or other new technologies, sending threatening text messages or emails, setting up hate sites, posting abusive, humiliating or threatening messages via social media/online, sending abusive images or videos, making nuisance calls or upskirting.

Most of these have the following in common:

- It is repeated over time
- It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour
- There is an imbalance of power making it difficult for the victim(s) to defend themselves

Bullying can often be motivated by prejudice. The school promotes inclusion and equality, particularly for those with protected characteristics. We shall be especially mindful and vigilant of bullying that may involve discrimination and which may include:

- special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.
- appearance or health conditions.
- sexual orientation.
- young carers or looked-after children, or otherwise linked to home circumstances.
- sexist or sexual bullying including sexual harassment.
- race, religion or culture.

What does not constitute Bullying?

It is important to understand that bullying is not an odd occasional falling out with friends, occasional name-calling, banter, arguments, or when the occasional 'joke' is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out, disagree with others, or say things because they are upset or angry. Children may also change friendship group throughout their time at school as they begin to develop new interests and perspectives. When such problems or conflicts of this kind arise, it is not always classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child's development and resilience to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, conflict, disagreements with others and the odd name calling or childish prank or jokes. We must help students to learn how to deal with these

situations and develop social skills to repair relationships and build resilience. We do not, however, deem this as acceptable, and we take all incidents which undermine the safety and well-being of students seriously and challenge any unacceptable behaviour.

Longbenton High School Bullying Guidelines

- (1) We shall ensure that students understand the nature of bullying, including what should not be classed as bullying. Bullying is not a one off fight or argument, friends sometimes being nasty or an argument with a friend.
- (2) We recognise that sometimes children may feel bullied and we encourage them and/or their parents to report this.
- (3) We shall identify opportunities within the curriculum, such as in English, Drama, History and PSHE, to deal with issues relating to bullying and the abuse of power in a sensitive but open way.
- (4) We will ensure that there are opportunities outside of the normal curriculum to understand bullying and the negative effects it can have on both the victim and the perpetrator, such as planned events and assemblies.
- (5) We shall relate all bullying situations to the Behaviour for Learning policy.
- (6) We shall encourage all members of the Longbenton High School to become aware of the incidence of bullying.
- (7) We shall work in partnership with families to deal effectively with bullying.
- (8) We shall encourage older students to take on a mentoring role with younger students.
- (9) Incidents of potential bullying will be dealt with as they arise. Potential bullying incidents can be logged by all members of staff in school to ensure early intervention. The pastoral team will monitor and intervene with any issues of potential bullying, taking action where necessary.
- (10) We shall monitor incidents of potential bullying and escalate a situation to bullying where necessary. We will intervene and provide sanctions as per the school behaviour policy. We will provide support to any victims of bullying.
- (11) In dealing with bullying, we shall encourage the bully to empathise with the feelings of the victim. We shall also involve those on the periphery of events in discussions to ensure that no further bullying takes place.
- (12) We shall ensure proper levels of supervision, through, for example, staff on duty being vigilant.
- (13) We will use CCTV cameras where appropriate to identify any specific bullying related incidents when required.
- (14) We shall provide appropriate CPD training for staff.
- (15) We shall involve appropriate school partners such as the Educational Psychologist, My School Health or Someone Cares, where necessary.
- (16) We will promote our school values KIDMAP: Kindness, integrity, determination, manners and positivity at all times.

(17) We will encourage all of our school community to follow either the staff or student code of conduct. We will endeavour to promote positive role models and positive student/staff relationships.

(18) Information on bullying, racist incidents and exclusions will be reported to staff and Governors half termly.

Longbenton High School Response to Reports of Bullying

Bullying behaviour can be brought to the attention of staff either by the students who are affected, their friend(s), their parent(s)/carer(s) or other interested parties. All reports of bullying will be taken seriously. Staff will know that they must act on instances of bullying which are brought to them and must report incidents of potential bullying where necessary and if appropriate.

Actions:

- ❖ *All staff will log any incidents of potential bullying onto Bromcom. Staff will include accurate records of any incidents.*
- ❖ *Pastoral staff will monitor and take action if necessary on any logs of potential bullying to ensure early intervention.*
- ❖ *If there are repeated concerns of potential bullying, this incident will be escalated to a bullying incident as per our behaviour for learning policy. Action will be taken; actions will be applied on a case by case basis but may include a reflection, a referral to RESET, a referral to SUPER RESET, a suspension or a permanent exclusion.*
- ❖ *Pastoral staff will work with the families of both the victim and perpetrator of cases of bullying and provide support to both parties.*
- ❖ *Pastoral staff will keep accurate records of incidents of bullying.*
- ❖ **Repeat bullying offences** - *these are reported to AHT Pastoral, an interview takes place, warning given regarding bullying. Contact home is made to both the victim and the perpetrator. A further sanction is given.*
- ❖ **Second repeat offence** - *these are again reported to AHT Pastoral. Further sanctions are given. The student and parent is invited into school for an interview regarding how to proceed.*

Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis. Depending on the severity of the case various forms of action may be taken as outlined above. The victim will need support and strategies need to be used to rebuild the student's self-esteem.

The student who bullies others however may need additional intervention on reasons for bullying, aspects and consequences of this sort of anti-social behaviour. Various mechanisms in

school within the school pastoral system may be available in addition to others such as school counsellors.

The pastoral team regularly review potential bullying incidents that have been entered on Bromcom and provide early intervention where necessary to reduce the risk of escalation.

Governors must be kept fully informed of cases of bullying and in the more severe cases Governors may need to be involved with any disciplinary action taken e.g. public discipline committees, suspensions or permanent exclusions.

Student Guidelines

What to do if you think you are being bullied:

- Tell a teacher or any other adult in school you trust;
- Tell a parent/carer who can inform school of the situation;
- Tell someone again if the bullying does not stop in school or if it continues outside school;
- If you feel threatened walk away;
- Ensure social networking sites are only accessible to invited friends; Block individuals who upset you;
- Once school is aware of the bullying, trust us to deal with the issue and allow us the chance to tackle this.

Parent / Carer Guidelines

What to do if you think your child is being bullied:

- Watch for signs – not wanting to go to school, minor illnesses, headaches, other pointers, avoiding friends, coming home with bruises or torn clothing, possessions disappearing, becoming upset after using the internet or mobile phone;
- Listen to what your child says; try to establish that the problem really is bullying and not something else;
- Learn how your child uses information and communication technology and familiarise yourself with safe practice;
- Help your child to deal with the problem by him or herself. Be tactful; Do not encourage retaliation. This rarely helps and may only make things worse for your child;
- Inform school;
- Trust school to deal with the bullying and allow us the chance to tackle this.

If you are not satisfied with the school's actions you may refer to our complaints policy.

Limits of the Policy

Where bullying occurs in school and on school trips, this policy will be applied. If bullying takes place out of school but there is a school connection, the school will, if it is in our power, take action. If the bullying takes place out of school and there is no school connection, it is difficult for school to take action and therefore this may be referred to Police. Additionally, school cannot monitor student access to technology outside of school and therefore it is difficult for school to control what students access and post online. School have a mobile phone policy to limit issues. Additionally, school ensure there are education opportunities for students regarding online safety, cyber bullying and appropriate online behaviour to prevent incidents of cyberbullying. School also liaise with parents via the half termly safeguarding update which can include information on how to keep children safe online and links to support. Due to school's limited control and as malicious communications is a crime, incidents of cyberbullying may be referred to Police.

Useful websites to help

- childline.org.uk – contains tips and resources for victims
- kidpower.org.uk – practical help for young people and parents
- bullying.co.uk – help and advice for victims, parents and schools
- nspcc.org.uk – help and advice for parents and families

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies.

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Student Code of Conduct, Home School Agreement
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure

RESPONSIBILITY: Assistant Headteacher Behaviour and Attitudes
REVIEWED/RATIFIED:: June 2025

Appendix:

Cyberbullying Guidelines for Students

Cyberbullying

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet provides new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims. If there is a concern of cyberbullying the following guidelines should apply:

If you see something inappropriate

If you ever come across anything on the internet that makes you feel uncomfortable, no matter where it is, report it. You can usually report something online using the red 'report it' button. You can ask an adult to help you report something online. You can also tell an adult who can report concerning content for you.

If someone spreads rumours about you

If someone has posted false and malicious things about you on the internet or on a social networking site, it may be regarded as harassment. Harassment, on or off line, is a crime under UK laws. For example, if someone is posting malicious content about you or sending you unkind messages this may fall under the Malicious Communications Act. This can be very distressing. Anything nasty posted about you can be seen by lots of people, very quickly, because it's so public and because the bullies make sure they tell everyone where to find the abuse. Increasingly common are complaints that the spreading of malicious rumours and vicious gossip is being carried out by a person who was once your best friend. Choose your friends carefully. Be careful what you tell your friends. Keep your own secrets to yourself. Only tell people things if it wouldn't embarrass you if other people found out about it.

If you are being threatened

It's against the law in the UK to use the phone system - which includes the internet - to cause alarm or distress. It could even be against the 1997 Harassment Act. If threats are made against you then it's essential that you alert someone you trust, or call a helpline or contact the Police. If someone is threatening you on the internet, or threatening someone you know, they could be committing a criminal offence. Try to get evidence if you can. By pressing the 'print screen' button, you should be able to print a hard copy of the threatening text or images. Otherwise, you may take a photo on someone else's phone of content you have been sent. Keep evidence in a safe place.

If you are being blackmailed

UK and even worldwide, helplines receive increasingly regular, disturbing, calls from adults and young people who say they have met a person over the internet, who calls themselves a friend, but who pressurises them into taking their clothes off and filming themselves. These so-called friends then post the images on-line worldwide. These strangers then blackmail their target, this could be you. In the UK this behaviour is a criminal offence – as indeed blackmail is and should be reported.

Grooming

Do not allow yourself to be intimidated into taking part in unacceptable behaviour over the internet, by someone online who you do not know. Simply do not participate in something you feel uncomfortable about. Just refuse and say no. These are not true friends. They may even threaten you saying that if you do not do exactly what they say, they will contact your family and/or friends and tell lies about you. They are unlikely to do this. This is just to frighten you into doing what they want you to do. This behaviour is a serious criminal offence called "grooming". Adults who have been found guilty of "grooming" have been sent to jail. If you, or someone you know, is being groomed online by a stranger – report it immediately to someone you trust. Do not hesitate to call an expert or report the matter to the Police. The Police are now able to get information from your computer's hard drive but it would be helpful if you did not delete anything that might be useful evidence of the grooming.

If someone posts inappropriate pictures of you

It is easy to take a picture on a camera or mobile phone and then post it up on social media or on the internet. Don't let anyone take pictures of you that might embarrass you. If someone has posted an inappropriate picture of you, ask them to remove or take it down. If this is not an option then the forum used to display the image will if you contact them. If you are the one that's posting images, make sure that you have a person's permission to take a picture of them for posting online, before you proceed. Once it has been posted thousands of people can see it on the internet. Don't offend others.

Don't hurt someone you care about by uploading their picture, for others to have a laugh at. That could be considered harassment and harassment is against the law in the UK. Don't digitally alter pictures of people either because what you might think is funny, may be offensive to other people. If someone asks you for money in exchange for removing a sexual photo of you, this is known as sextortion.