

HANDEL HOUSE SCHOOL
Northolme, Gainsborough, Lincs. DN21 2JB
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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy which applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is available on the school website and upon request from the school office.

Document Details

Information Sharing Category	Public Domain
Version	V2
Date Published	September 2023
Authorised by (if required)	Proprietor who is also the Headteacher
Review/Update Date	September 2024
Responsible Area	Headteacher and Early Years Foundation Stage Co-ordinator

- Complies with Part 3, paragraph 10 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force.
- Prepared with reference to: [Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying \(DfE- November 2014\)](#), [Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff \(DfE- November 2014\)](#), [Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies \(DfE- October 2017\)](#) and
- [School support for children and young people who are bullied \(DfE- March 2014\)](#) Has regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty

Related documents:

- Safeguarding Policy Child Protection Policy, Single Equalities Policy; Mental Health and Well-Being Policy
- Anti-Bullying: Parents and Pupils Information Sheets, Anti-Bullying Code, What to do if you are Worried;
- Positive Behaviour Management Policy (including Sanctions, Rewards, and Exclusions), The School Rules;
- e-Safety Policy including ICT Acceptable Use, including Mobile Phone and Camera Policy;
- Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) Development, Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

Applies to:

- all staff (teaching and support staff), students on placement, the proprietor and volunteers working in the school. Inclusive of all activities provided by the school, including those outside of the normal school hours and away from the school site.

Designated Member of Staff responsible for Anti-Bullying: Responsibility for Anti-bullying in the whole school is: Mr Mark Raisborough (Headteacher/Proprietor) and for the Early Years Foundation Stage is Mrs Wendy Smith (Foundation Stage Co-ordinator).

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher.

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- The Headteacher (who is also the Proprietor) will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date: September 2023

Mr Mark Raisborough
Headteacher/ Proprietor

This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Proprietor of the school in September 2023 and will next be reviewed no later than September 2024 or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Introduction: Handel House School's Anti-bullying Policy is dovetailed with the Behaviour Management Policy (with support for the victim and the bully) and makes it clear what the sanctions are for bullying. Bullying is never acceptable as part of life at Handel House. It is our belief that our children always have the right to achieve and learn in a safe, calm, supportive and fair environment. Pupils, staff and parents should be cared for and educated so that good behaviour is the norm. At Handel House, all unacceptable behaviour such as bullying should be reported, investigated, and confronted in a firm but sensitive manner so that the people involved can be supported and educated into different and better behaviour. We are therefore strongly committed to the avoidance of bullying in all its forms. We provide a clear framework for dealing with incidents of bullying, ensuring that bullies are dealt with swiftly and firmly. Our straightforward procedures make it easy to report bullying, including cyber bullying and bullying and bullying outside of school.

In publishing this policy we aim to:

- ensure all members of our school feel safe, valued and respected, have positive feelings about themselves and Handel House, and are able fully to participate in all aspects of school life. We want Handel House always to feel like a second home for our pupils;
- develop and maintain a school culture that challenges bullying and bad behaviour and supports everyone in the School in learning how to behave well with each other and those beyond our school community and
- address individual incidents of bullying in a firm and sensitive manner.

Bullying – Child Protection Related Issues: A bullying incident is treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. In such cases the school reports its concerns to Lincolnshire Children Services, Customer Service Centre (CSC) on 01522 782155 or if outside of office hours contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01522 782333. The website address is: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscp> Any kind of bullying is unacceptable.

What is bullying?

Definition of Bullying: Bullying can be defined as a deliberate, unprovoked single or repeated (over time) action to intentionally hurt, humiliate, threaten, frighten or hurt an individual or group physically or emotionally. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. For example, this may prejudice-based bullying on the grounds of race, culture, religion, sex, sexual orientation, homophobia, gender reassignment, special educational needs or disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), the use of discriminatory language, religion and belief, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology such as social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email.

We are concerned in our school whenever a member of our community, especially a child, feels:

INSECURE - THREATENED - EXCLUDED

Our school has a zero tolerance of bullying. We recognise the seriousness of bullying, both physical and emotional (which may cause psychological damage).

Bullying can be:

- *Emotional (indirect bullying) including isolation of others by a refusal to co-operate with them and exclusion - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), deliberately excluding from*

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social groups or an activity by refusal to sit next to/ talk to/ work/ co-operate with others and refusal to follow staff instructions to do the above, or malicious rumours, e-mails or text messages, and also exclusion from play/discussions etc. with those whom they believe to be their friends.

- *Physical harm or its threat including the abuse of personal property* – jostling, serious fighting, pushing, kicking, hitting, taking or hiding belongings, punching or any use of violence; deliberately destroying or damaging work or possessions or removing personal property, use of weapons/threatened use of weapon (or any object which could be used as a weapon), intimidation through physical gestures and actions.
- *Cyber* – not occurring face to face but rather through electronic means including, but not limited to, social networking sites, internet and intranet sites, email, instant messaging, by mobile phone including through text messages and phone calls, photographs both real and manipulated and so on. For more details of this see the specific ICT-Based forms of abuse (including Cyber Bullying) Policy.
- *Racist* - Bullying directed at individuals of a certain race, culture, ethnicity, language, faith, community, national origin or national status. The distinctive feature of racist bullying is that the victim is attacked not as an individual but as the representative of a family, community or group. This is an area where schools are required to keep statistics about incidents.
- *Cultural* – focusing on and/or playing off perceived cultural differences and so on.
- *Sexist* – covers a wide range of behaviour from name calling to physical sexual assault. It is the use of sexual language or negative stereotyping on the basis of gender.
- *Sexual* - is unwanted or inappropriate physical contact or sexual innuendo.
- *Homophobic* - This is bullying which is directed towards people who are openly gay, bisexual, or perceived as gay. Heterosexual young people subject to homophobic bullying are less reluctant to report it as this may enforce the stereotypical way that they are already viewed by others, so sensitivity and positive support is required for victims.
- *Religious* – Attacking faith, belief, religious practice or custom.
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability* – remarking upon, drawing attention to, or discriminating against persons with physical disabilities or learning difficulties or other identified special educational needs such as emotional and behavioural disabilities (EBD) and Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD) - (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia).
- *Verbal* - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, making snide comments, teasing, humiliating others, threatening others, inciting others to humiliate and threaten others and
- *Written* – spreading rumours, writing or printing unkind or malicious on paper.

Bullying can take place between pupil and pupil, staff and staff and staff and pupil. We consider the pastoral care of the staff and children to be of prime importance. In class this role largely rests with the class teacher. It is school policy that any misdemeanour will be dealt with by the member of staff present when it occurs, whether in the playground, classroom, cloakroom or any part of the school. A common code of behaviour is expected from everyone in the school (see Behaviour Policy). All staff and volunteers at Handel House are expected to treat each other with a professional level of respect.

The Risks of Bullying to the Victims: Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. A feature of bullying in schools is that its existence is not always immediately known or suspected by those in authority. The school recognises the seriousness of both physical and emotional bullying in causing psychological damage and even lead to suicide. Although bullying itself is not a specific criminal act in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence; for example, under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public order Act 1986. If our staff consider that an offence may have been committed, we will seek assistance from the police. The School believes that all children and adults have the right to live in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. We treat bullying, including allegations of bullying, very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles. Bullying can be so serious that it causes psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide.

How do we deal with bullying? Handel House deals with bullying through a combination of structured practices to encourage good, caring behaviour and social integration amongst the pupils. In addition we provide staff

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information and briefing, effective communication between the school and parents, and a clear and well known procedure for reporting and investigating bullying.

Handel House's encouragement of good behaviour: We encourage good behaviour as the norm for our pupils. This is embodied in our school rules, prominently displayed around the School, and this is reinforced by all teachers including the Headteacher in assembly and in class.

Additionally, our school-wide PSHEE strategy is delivered in classes through a special scheme of work in which every class engages with bullying as a theme once per term. This is supported by a Friday assembly theme once per term with an anti-bullying/caring/supporting differences theme. Our Friday assemblies also actively promote understanding and support of different cultures particularly through our celebration of a range of worldwide religious festivals.

For new children (apart from Nursery in the autumn term), our class teachers allocate two **buddies** in school within the class who act as special friends to welcome the new children into school. Class prefects are also briefed to make a special effort to welcome new children into the class they prefect. Our school behaviour and discipline policy sets out how good work and behaviour is publicly rewarded with praise in school and how bad behaviour is publicly addressed in our assemblies.

Staff Information and Briefing: All teaching and administration staff, including supply staff are trained in the school bullying policy by the Headteacher/Proprietor, plus there is a copy of the policy available to staff on the website and in the staff resource room. All staff also have further information on bullying, its signs and causes, in the staff resource room library. As necessary, from time to time, a designated member of staff is sent on a specialist training course on anti-bullying in order to update our school practices and to share that amongst the staff.

Staff also, on request to the Headteacher/Proprietor, have access to the school bullying register in which all reported incidents of bullying are recorded with details of action taken. In every classroom we ensure staff display our Handel House "Pupil's Code" in which pupils can see to whom they should talk if they are unhappy.

Strategies

Prevention - Children: We use educational elements such as Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHEE) and citizenship, assemblies, projects, drama, literature, with discussions of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language. We also, within our curriculum as appropriate, highlight the essential anti-bullying messages and maintain awareness of potential problems, striving to prevent any form of bullying through education. Children are encouraged to share their concerns with the adults responsible for them. All children (including our youngest pupils) are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. Termly assemblies are planned to highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that bullying is unacceptable and developing good social skills. At Handel House older children are encouraged to offer advice and support to younger pupils, particularly our year 5 and 6 pupils. This process of caring for younger children encourages and fosters an environment in which bullying is largely absent.

Prevention - Staff: All staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to the allegations of bullying in their first week at Handel House. They are required to read the school's policy as part of their induction. We aim to use appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHEE teaching is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school.

Experienced staff give support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies. Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and will patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur.

Staff Training: We raise awareness of staff through training, so that the principles of the anti-bullying policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems and sources of support are available. Where appropriate we can invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of the pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT)

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pupils, as appropriate to our age group of pupils.

E-safety - Cyber-Bullying Preventative Measures. *Please refer to the 'e-Safety including Cyber Bullying and Acceptable Use Policy':* In accordance with legislative requirements we have a whole school approach to e-safety. This includes annual update training for staff regarding e-safety. To support our parents/carers in their education of online safety, the school also organises annually an awareness session for parents with regards to e-safety. We expect all pupils to adhere to the safe use of the internet as detailed in our e-Safety Policy. The active management of hardware, software and connectivity and vigilance of teachers and parents has an active part to play in the protection of pupils from Cyber-Bullying incidents. Pupils will have access to technologies that have both positive and negative potential. Our policy of the use of technology within the school setting and beyond is understood and respected by staff and it is important the students and the wider school community also respect this policy. Within our e-safety policy, we have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for online safety as part of the school's wider safeguarding strategy and how this links with our main safeguarding policy (please refer to Safeguarding Child Protection policy cited in related documents). There is clear guidance on the use of technology in the classroom and beyond for all users within the school's e-Safety policy that references permissions/restrictions and agreed disciplinary sanctions. The school's e-safety policy also delineates detail into the school's technical provision and infrastructure, including the safeguards in place to filter and monitor inappropriate content and alert the school to safeguarding issues (please refer to e-safety policy). The policy also details how the school builds resilience in its pupils to protect themselves and their peers through education and information. Our staff receive training into the professional development of safeguarding techniques that include online safety (please refer to e-safety and safeguarding policies). There are reporting mechanisms available for all users to report issues and concerns to the school and how they are managed and/or escalated, especially where a child may be, or could be, suffering from harm as a result of cyber-bullying...DSL will become involved and refer to LSCP (please refer to e-safety policy including ICT acceptable use policy). The management of all personal data is in line with statutory requirements.

Effective Communication: staff and parents: Handel House is a family community. Our continued success relies on ensuring that we communicate clearly, politely and as regularly as necessary between staff and parents.

We encourage an open door policy of communication between staff and parents. This means parents are encouraged to talk to staff, from the Headteacher/Proprietor down, at the start and end of the academic day. Parents may address an issue directly at such an impromptu meeting or may ask for a private meeting which will always be arranged quickly and in private as needed. Additionally, parents may request meetings with teachers or the Headteacher/Proprietor through the school office in person or on the telephone at any time during normal school hours, from 8.15am – 4pm. Additionally, the Headteacher will always try to be quickly available to parents for a discussion.

Finally, Handel House ensures parents know about our bullying policy by publishing it on the School website and highlighting it as available there, in our weekly school newsletter, which is also on our playground school notice board that is easily accessible to parents at drop off and pick up. In addition, we aim to involve parents in making sure pupils are clear about the part they can play in preventing bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

Procedures for reporting and investigating bullying: The Headteacher/Proprietor (or DSL in the absence of the head) has responsibility for dealing with incidents of bullying with the support of the school staff and, where necessary, the parents.

If **parents** and **school staff** become aware that there are one or more incidents of bullying that affects a child at Handel House, please contact the Headteacher/Proprietor or class teacher as soon as possible. Parents can speak to the Headteacher/Proprietor during the day by telephone in confidence or the class teachers in private at the start or the end of the school day.

When reporting a possible incident of bullying, please try and provide the name and full circumstances of those involved and any information about the location, timing and identity of any witnesses to the possible bullying incident(s). This reported incident will then be registered by the Headteacher/Proprietor or class teacher in the bullying register and investigated as set out below.

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Bullying is investigated on a case by case basis. If it is a minor incident it is normal that the class teacher (having informed the Headteacher/Proprietor and reported the incident in the Bullying register) will meet the bullied person to re-assure them and to ascertain the full facts, including speaking to witnesses as needed. Then the class teacher will meet with the person doing the bullying and ascertain their version of events. The aim of this is to get the bullying person to admit their behaviour and understand its negative impact and that it must STOP. If it is the first instance of this, and the behaviour stops, parents are not normally informed unless they raised the issue initially. The action taken and results are then entered into the bullying register by the class or Headteacher.

If it is a second or regular occurrence, the Headteacher/Proprietor will certainly be involved in the discussion with the bullying person. The parents will normally be informed and asked to come in to discuss this. A letter of apology, is sanctions that the Headteacher may and will impose on the regular bully until the bad behaviour stops. Exclusion is also an option in very serious cases. Sanctions imposed will be relative to the age of the child. The bully must understand what has been done and why the sanctions are being applied. Punishing bullies doesn't end bullying. It is important to stress that it is the behaviour that is not liked, rather than the person.

Once the bully has been addressed, the class teacher will monitor him/her as well as the bullied person and report orally to the Headteacher/Proprietor any concerns about their welfare over the coming weeks. The class will undertake at least one relevant PSHEE exercise, normally from our PSHEE school scheme, and the parents will be kept informed by the Headteacher/Proprietor as needed.

The Procedures for Pupils: Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, through regular class discussions with their teachers in registration periods.

For children who are being bullied: – Remember that bullies thrive on silence.

- If you are being bullied tell someone, preferably a trusted adult.
- If you can, write down everything that has been said or done to hurt you. Be careful only to write down things that have really happened.
- Do not blame yourself – it is not your fault.
- Make friends or stay around others.
- If worried, stay near a playground supervisor or at break.
- Expensive items and large sums of money should be left at home.
- Try not to show you are upset.
- Try to ignore it at the time of the incident - stay calm and walk away to safety.

For children who see someone being bullied:

- If you see someone being bullied or in distress ACT. Watching or doing nothing can suggest support for the bully.
- Tell an adult immediately.
- Try to be a friend to the person who is being bullied.
- Ask if they feel they can talk to someone. If they won't talk to someone and you are worried about them, go to a trusted adult.
- Never join in with a bully – physically, verbally or by isolating another child.

For children who are using bullying behaviour:

- Recognise that your behaviour is seen as bullying – physically, verbally, or by isolating; this is wrong and can have a long lasting effect on others.
- Even if you think that bullying is just a laugh, children who are bullied and those who care for them, feel very scared and/or upset.
- If you are angry and upset about something, talk about it with a trusted friend or adult, instead of taking it out on someone else.
- A bully doesn't have many true friends.
- Change your bullying behaviour straight away and become a 'hero' not a 'baddie'.
- Speak to an adult about your bullying behaviour.

Action should then be taken with regard to each of the following:

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- Advice and support for the victim is in accordance with the school's behaviour management policy.
- Sanctions imposed will be relative to the age of the child. These are recorded in the Bullying Incident Book. The bully must understand what they have done and why the sanctions are being applied.
- Support for the bully is in accordance with the school's behaviour management policy.
- Giving general information to all staff, through staff briefing and staff meetings, of incidents of bullying, mentioning the type of incident and the individuals involved.

The above process and sanctions should impress on the person instigating any act of bullying that:

- their action is totally unacceptable;
- it is meant as a deterrent to enabling repeat behaviour and
- it is a signal to other members of the community that bullying is not tolerated

Appreciating the Seriousness of Bullying: Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying children need to learn different ways of behaving. The School has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. Children who bully must face sanctions, which are outlined in our Behaviour Policy. The sanctions might include apologising to the victim or, in extreme circumstances, exclusion.

Pupils' Response to Bullying

Pupils mainly respond to bullying behaviour in one of four ways. They can:

- actively encourage the bullying behaviour
- passively support the bullying behaviour
- passively reject the bullying behaviour
- actively challenge the bullying behaviour

Classroom Management: Teachers' classroom management will link strongly to the School Behaviour Policy. This includes a positive ethos with emphasis on the dignity of each pupil, on praise and reward, rather than punishment. The skills of self-discipline must be learnt early in life. All pupils will know that their teacher is the person to whom they can talk in confidence. Pupils will be given the opportunity in class to discuss bullying and how to deal with it. Pupils will be encouraged to discuss how they get on with others and how to form positive attitudes towards them. This includes a review of what friendship really is and how to treat everyone with dignity and respect. Teachers will be aware that they can radically affect the incidence of bullying and that it must always be taken seriously.

Playground Management: The staff on duty should be patrolling the playground areas and constantly monitoring the behaviour of pupils. In the case of minor misbehaviour – a pupil will be given the chance to apologise to the victim – this may stop the situation from getting out of hand. The supervisors on duty will report bullying to the Headteacher/Proprietor or EYFS Co-ordinator, who in turn will act in accordance with the agreed policy.

Sanctions: These may include withdrawal from favoured activities or loss of playtimes. If bullying is serious in the first instance or it persists, the parents of the perpetrator and victim are called to discuss the situation separately with the Headteacher/Proprietor. In rare cases, children who consistently bully may be excluded.

Anti-Bullying in the Early Years Foundation Stage: Even the youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. Mrs Wendy Smith, the Early Years Co-ordinator, is in day-to-day charge of the management of behaviour in the EYFS. We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. Pupils are encouraged to recognise that being a 'bystander' is not acceptable, and understand how their silence supports bullying and makes them in part responsible for what happens to the victim of bullying.

We rarely need to impose sanctions but sometimes we may remove a treat or privilege for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Headteacher/Proprietor, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed by the class teacher when any sanction

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or reproof is needed and, in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's Teacher and the Early Years Coordinator and to agree on a joint way of handling the difficulty. Copies of our Behaviour Management Policy are on the school website for parents and their children to read together.

Complaints Procedure: Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our complaints procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that their concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. Parents of EYFS children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to ISA if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled. The complaints policy explains how to complain to ISA.

Remember we are a *'TELLING SCHOOL'*. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated.