



**HEART**  
EDUCATION TRUST

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **2022**

**Last Reviewed:** 30 October 2022

**Next Review Due:** 30 October 2025

**Adopted by:** Director of Education on 30 October 2022



**Heartsease**  
Primary Academy



**Lingwood**  
Primary Academy



**Henderson Green**  
Primary Academy



**Valley**  
Primary Academy

The HEART Education Trust Documents Review Record:

<b>Version:</b>	<b>Date Amended:</b>	<b>Amended By:</b>
1	September 2016	Sarah Porter
1.1	April 2017	BOE
1.2	October 2022	Head of Quality Assurance Inclusion
1.3	30 October 2022	Director of Education

The HEART Education Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 08286818. Registered office address: Heartsease Primary Academy, Rider Haggard Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 9UE.

## **Statement**

Bullying in any form, by anyone, will not be tolerated at any of the Trust's academies. We do not accept any form of behaviour which hurts, threatens or frightens any member of our school communities. Every child has the right to feel safe and happy in school. We believe in eradicating bullying by supporting the victim. Bullies also need support to change their behaviour. Punishments and sanctions will be given as necessary but we will not victimise the bully. Children and parents can be confident that they will be supported by the Trust when bullying is reported. The ethos of our academies foster high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will deal with any behaviour that falls below this.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The Trust aims to be a bully-free zone where children can freely participate in both social and educational activities in an environment free from verbal, physical and cyber abuse. We are 'Telling Schools' and everyone is encouraged to blow the whistle on bullying. We will stop bullying if it occurs, but can only do this if we know about it. Both children and parents are encouraged to tell.

At the Trust we will:

- Create a happy, safe and secure environment, free from verbal, physical and cyber abuse, where all children can learn without fear of humiliation or oppression.
- Promote the well-being of all children based on trust between all members of the school community.
- Promote a "whole school" approach, where all signals and signs are identified, and swift, effective action is taken. All reported incidents of bullying will be reported and recorded.
- Maintain Zero Tolerance to bullying at all times.
- Ensure a clear and shared understanding by the whole school community of what constitutes being bullied, being a bully and being an on-looker of bullying.
- Ensure all children, staff, members of Trust governance and parents have the confidence, skills and knowledge to recognise and handle incidents of bullying effectively.
- Have an effective means of reporting, recording and acting upon any incidents of bullying
- To support and protect victims of bullying and address the needs of those doing the bullying.
- Through the curriculum, help all children to manage their lives and relationships in a positive, non-aggressive way and to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent or deal positively and effectively with bullying situations and behaviours.

Our ethos supports children to recognise that bullying and poor behaviour should not be tolerated. They are encouraged from the earliest age, to have the confidence to tell an adult if an incident has occurred which has upset them. Expectations for behaviour are consistent throughout the Trust and reinforced frequently throughout the year, in class time, during assemblies, through School Councils and School Advocates.

## **Definition of Bullying**

Whilst there is no legal definition of bullying the DFE recognises that bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

(<https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition>)

At the Trust we follow the Anti-Bullying Alliance agreed definition of bullying which is based on 30 years of world-wide research:

**“Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”**

(<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/understanding-bullying/definition>)

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and emotional distress to the victim. Bullying is when a person is subject to either verbal, physical or indirect (i.e. social exclusion) abuse over a sustained period of time (sometimes this may be a short period but the important thing to understand is that it occurs more than once) which causes the victim to feel anxious, sad, isolated or frightened and they may find it difficult to defend themselves. Bullying is not the occasional incident between two or more children of equal stature or age. (Incidents of this nature are dealt with under our Behaviour Policy). Bullying can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), making someone feel isolated, and/or worthless.
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual
- Homophobic
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours
- Isolation
- Cyber bullying/Online - posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- Indirect – can include the exploitation of individuals

Bullying may occur anywhere including school but sometimes it is less obvious such as cyber bullying (chat rooms, text, social media etc), within the community or between families in the community.

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of bully over victim:

- Difference in size, strength or age
- Numbers of individuals involved
- Anonymity – indirect, cyber bullying, text, social media

Staff, parents and children must remain vigilant to the signs of bullying – children may not be aware that they are being bullied – they may be too young, have special needs or simply be too afraid to tell. Staff should be able to identify children who may be vulnerable to bullying or those who may demonstrate bullying behaviour.

### **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying hurts both physically and emotionally. Most adults have experienced bullying at some point in their lives.

- It is not part of growing up
- It should never be tolerated
- It should never be ignored
- Children should not have to deal with it alone or be expected to 'sort out the bully themselves

Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everyone should have the right to be treated with respect and bullies need to learn different ways to behave.

### **Signs that a child may be being bullied**

The following are signs that a child MAY be being bullied. They may also be signs of many other things but should not be ignored.

- Is frightened of walking to and from school
- Wants parent/carer to take them/collect them
- Varies their usual routine
- Unwilling to go to school – lots of vague sickness, truancy, becomes a school refuser
- Becomes, withdrawn, anxious, lacks confidence, develops a stammer
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has recurrent nightmares
- Threatens suicide or tries to run away
- Unusual mood swings, bad temper, aggressiveness, bursts into tears for no apparent reason, becomes disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts to perform poorly at school
- Belongings go missing, clothes torn
- Starts stealing or requests extra money (to pay bully)
- Continually 'losing' dinner money etc. Comes home starving
- Unexplained cuts, bruises
- Bullies siblings
- Stops eating
- Hides phone, jumpy/nervous when text messages come through
- Avoids eye contact Gives improbable reasons for any of the above

### **Outcomes**

- All reported or suspected bullying will be fully investigated and recorded by the Pastoral Assistant at the relevant academy and recorded on the Trust's behaviour management software system using the "bullying" classification, regardless of the incident type. The Academy Headteacher will be kept fully informed and will be involved from the earliest stage. It is recognised that there are not always physical signs of bullying and that verbal taunts etc can be equally harmful. It is also recognised that a thorough investigation is needed to ensure that the full story is established – a physical attack may have been provoked by lengthy verbal taunting, for example, meaning that the perceived assailant may in fact be the victim

- All school staff will be aware of the process of reporting any incidents of bullying.
- The academy's Pastoral Assistant will keep a log of bullying reports, actions and outcomes including sanctions and punishments which may arise from such behaviours
- Parents of both bullies and victims will be informed if bullying is suspected and they will be kept informed throughout
- If possible the children will be reconciled
- Bullying behaviour will trigger the Behaviour Policy. Sanctions will be imposed.
- The situation will continue to be monitored
- The Pastoral Assistants and Head of Pastoral will regularly monitor and analyse logs of behaviour incidents recorded on the Trust's behaviour management system half-termly to identify any patterns of bullying behaviour that may be emerging

## **SANCTIONS AND PUNISHMENTS**

Where a child has deliberately hurt another, either physically, verbally or in some other way (such as by social exclusion) two courses of action are taken.

Firstly, the assailant is made aware of the affect that their actions have had on the victim. This may be done during a talk with the class teacher, Pastoral Assistant, a member of the academy's senior management, or through supervised contact with the victim, if the victim wishes for this to happen. As a part of this, the assailant will be encouraged to make a meaningful apology (either verbally or in writing) and will be encouraged to explain how their behaviour towards the victim will be different in future. We encourage restorative justice approaches where these are appropriate and believe that it is essential that children take responsibility for their behaviour. Secondly an appropriate sanction will be considered in line with our stepped Behaviour Policy. In serious cases the school may even consider exclusion.

### **Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), bullying and exclusion**

Children with SEND are particularly at risk of being excluded due to their involvement (both perpetrating and being a victim of bullying). Studies reveal that young people with SEND are disproportionately vulnerable to being bullied, as well as sometimes being perceived as being 'bullies' themselves.

Research recommends using a 'threat assessment' approach, which takes into account the social context of perceived threats and assesses the real level of danger they present. The authors note that when this approach is used, fewer young people with SEN and/or disabilities are excluded from school, presumably because their 'bullying' behaviour is better understood or is addressed through strategies other than exclusion.

It should be recognised that some children may experience difficulties with social communication skills and that discrete work with them may be necessary for them to understand the impact of their behaviours on others. Whilst we do not accept these behaviours, every case will be considered on its individual circumstances and appropriate measures taken.

## **Prevention**

- All children are encouraged to TELL
- We are Telling Schools
- The School Councils discuss behaviour and bullying and makes suggestions

- The curriculum addresses bullying and acceptable behaviour through RSEPHSE, Citizenship, Assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week and uses a range of outside agencies to support this.
- We have dedicated Pastoral Assistants who are available to the children at all times during the school day, before and after school.
- Parents may call in to see the Pastoral Assistant or speak to them on the phone without an appointment about any concerns.
- Children are taught about cyber bullying and how to recognise it through our E-Safety policy and curriculum.
- Children are regularly consulted about Safety in School through questionnaires and informal conversation with senior staff.
- Trustees receive a report about bullying termly via Head of Quality Assurance (Inclusion), Academy Headteacher reports and outcomes of questionnaires.
- All staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other, all members of the school communities and each other's' property.
- Good, polite and kind behaviour is rewarded.
- Children are taught that it is ok to make a mistake but are also taught that they are expected to learn from mistakes and not continually repeat them.
- All children are taught that they have choices and they must take responsibility for their choices and actions.
- Open conversations lead to increased confidence in children wanting to discuss bullying that they have suffered or witnessed.
- Staff follow the Equality Policy and are welcoming and respectful of all children. Staff must guard against highlighting differences between children or individual children even in jest as this may give children advocacy.

**In addition, children are involved in prevention and recognition of bullying through:**

- Writing rules for the classroom
- Signing a Home/School Agreement
- Writing Stories, Poems and Posters about Bullying
- Sharing in class or whole school assemblies and stories about bullying
- Addressing their choices and beginning to accept responsibility for their actions
- Discussing cause and effect with the Pastoral Assistant
- Making up and taking part in role plays about bullying and how to deal with it

**Children who feel they may be being bullied or know that someone is being bullied are encouraged to:**

- Tell an adult
- Tell the Pastoral Assistant or Academy Headteacher
- Tell their parent/carer or trusted adult
- Tell a friend and ask them to see an adult with them

**If parents or carers suspect bullying:**

- Parents/Carers must let the school know – we will always fully investigate and report our findings and actions to you
- Parents/Carers should not attempt to deal with it themselves – this could place you outside of Child Protection regulations and may even prompt criminal charges or aggression/violence from another parent

- Parents/Carers should not encourage their child to bully back

**REMEMBER:**

No school is bully-free. However, all schools should take immediate and effective action when they become aware of any behaviour associated with bullying.

The Trust prides itself on tackling bullying head on to support both victim and bully and keeping parents of both victim and bully fully informed. Incidences of bullying at the Trust are very low. Bullying can be stopped in its tracks and prevented by:

- All stakeholders having a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and the difference between bullying and occasional fall-outs between friends
- All stakeholders including children holding a Zero Tolerance to any form of bullying
- Children and parents letting us know as soon as bullying behaviour starts
- Being vigilant for signs that children may be being bullied or displaying bullying behaviour,
- Having open and honest conversations
- Taking pride in Telling

Please read this policy in conjunction with our

- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy