



Hazel Cottage
School

Part of
OptionsAutism

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Number	4.0
Review Date	September 2025
Owner	Laura Kitching – Deputy Headteacher

Document History

Version	Comments/amendments	Name	Date
1.0	First Version	Mark Montgomery	September 2023
2.0	Amended policy, minor changes.	Laura Kitching	March 2024
3.0	Amendments made	Laura Kitching	June2024
4.0	Reviewed.	Laura Dickinson	September 2024

CONTENTS	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
2.0 DEFINITION.....	4
3.0 GENERAL	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.0 STAFF AND MANAGEMENT	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.0 THE CURRICULUM	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6.0 RACIST/SEXUAL BULLYING	8
7.0 CYBER BULLYING	Error! Bookmark not defined.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Hazel Cottage School recognises that young people with disabilities remain, in general, a vulnerable group in society.

Young people who attend Hazel Cottage may, therefore, encounter bullying in both the community and their living situation. It is vital that staff are aware of this potential, given the cumulative effect of negative experiences that any one young person may suffer. Bullying is frequently described by young people with Autistic Spectrum Condition as the main reason for negative behaviour as a retaliation, resulting in exclusions and changes in school placement.

At Hazel Cottage School we are committed in providing a warm, friendly and disciplined atmosphere in which every child is valued, challenged and feels safe. We aim to provide an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect, creating an inclusive environment. Pupils can openly discuss bullying without fear of discrimination and should not be afraid to challenge and stand up for what they know is right.

We promote a safe and calm community, in which education is the primary focus. We promote equality and ensuring safeguarding for all and provide the opportunities that will allow each pupil to achieve success in as many aspects of their school life as possible.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on Equal Opportunities, Safeguarding, Behaviour Policy, our PSHE schemes of work and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils.

Our Policy and the Law

Independent School Standard Regulations 2014:

The Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 provide that the proprietor of an independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

This policy incorporates the latest recommendations from the relevant legislation and current DfE Guidance – Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2017), the Equality Act 2010 and The Education and Inspection Act 2006 (sec 89).

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 section 89:

Provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

Gives head teachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Duty has three aims:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Document Type	Policy	Version Number	1.0
Policy Owner		Headteacher	Last Review Date
Date First Issued	September 2023	Next Review Date	September 2024

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 (supplemented 2004), a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, school staff should report their concerns as per the Children Protection Policy and Procedures. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

Aims and Objectives

- To make it possible for pupils to experience the school as a caring, supportive, learning environment, free from bullying behaviour.
- To create an atmosphere of tolerance, mutual respect, co-operation and consideration for others, enabling pupils to feel safe from fear and threat.
- To accept that it is everyone's responsibility to prevent all forms of bullying.
- To accept that all forms of bullying are breaches of the school behaviour policy.
- To counter the belief that informing staff and parents of incidents of bullying is not "telling tales" but is helping to keep the school a happy and safe place in which to develop.
- To involve all staff in promoting and following the policy and in referring bullying incidents.
- To communicate with parents, pupils and staff effectively on the subject of bullying
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the policy through questionnaires and pupil interviews.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Implementation: It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that staff members are aware of and understand this policy and any subsequent revisions.

Compliance: This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed in the *Compliance with Regulations & Legislation Statement*.

2.0 DEFINITION

What is bullying?

Bullying is a wilful, conscious intention to hurt, threaten, frighten and humiliate and where the behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated over time. This could be over consecutive days/weeks and usually has a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves. Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a child has been adopted or has caring responsibilities. It may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.



3.0 GENERAL

What does bullying look like?

- Social and emotional: including attempting to or excluding from any friendship group; intimidation
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: humiliation, teasing, name-calling
- Cyber: All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Possible signs and symptoms of bullying

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school,
- doesn't want to go on the school / public transport,
- changes their usual routine,
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic),
- begins to truant,
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence,
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away,
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares,
- feels ill in the morning,
- school work deteriorates,
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing",
- has unexplained cuts or bruises,
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable,
- is bullying other children or siblings,
- stops eating,
- is frightened to say what's wrong,
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone,

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying could be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

4.0 STAFF AND MANAGEMENT

Staff

- All staff should be alert to any incidences of bullying in classrooms and around school.

- Anyone who suspects bullying may be happening must inform the Pastoral Manager and/or SLT and record the event on our tracking software, Sleuth.
- All staff should take any incidents of bullying reported to them seriously and be sensitive to the feelings of the pupil(s) reporting issues of bullying. Make it clear that they have made the right decision to tell.
- All staff should deal promptly with any issues of bullying in the classroom and offer the support of a safe room/area if it is necessary.
- All staff will encourage pupils to complete the bullying questionnaire issued just before Bullying Week in November.
- Support staff and the Pastoral Manager will discuss any incident with the pupil and agree the best course of action.
- Support staff and the Pastoral Manager will investigate any reports of bullying with the aim of stopping any bullying immediately.
- Support staff and the Pastoral Manager will use mediation, refer appropriate interventions or whole school sanctions as appropriate to challenge and resolve incidents of bullying.
- As a school we will offer support to change the behaviour of the child displaying 'bullying' behaviour which could involve outside agencies and/or internal education and therapeutic resources.

Responding to Bullying:

When a pupil reports bullying or staff observe incidents that may be bullying:

- Find a place where you will not be interrupted;
- Tell the pupil you are worried about them/ask them to tell you about the bullying;
- Listen in a non-judgemental way;
- Tell them that no-one should have to experience bullying;
- Tell them that the school will help them stop the bullying;
- Encourage them to agree to the incident being formally logged as an incident of bullying;
- Ensure their safety immediately after the incident and thereafter;
- Seek support from the senior school staff

Any staff member who is seen to be bullying young people will be disciplined. Bullying will be seen as gross misconduct and a staff member could be dismissed if found guilty at a disciplinary hearing.

Management

Managers at Hazel Cottage School are responsible for ensuring:

- Staff are aware of all the issues that surround bullying and the impact it has on all.
- Staff are trained to be able to counsel young people, resolve conflict and use the complaints procedure.
- Action is taken when bullying is reported –supervised by a senior manager.
- Monitor incidents of bullying and the action taken.
- Services have an open and honest culture that allows each issue such as bullying to be discussed; regular anti-bullying assemblies will be organised.

Hazel Cottage School aims to enable young people to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives, fully committed to reducing and trying to put a stop to any incidents of bullying.



Proactive Measures to Prevent Bullying

At Hazel Cottage School we accept that prevention is better than the cure and therefore strive to create a whole school ethos to reduce/eliminate bullying by:

- Proactively seeking to celebrate success to create a positive school culture.
- PSHE lessons provide opportunities to explore bullying as a topic.
- Employing teaching methods which encourage co-operative work inside and outside the classroom.
- Where appropriate, support staff provide time for class groups to discuss issues related to relationships and consider strategies for dealing with difficulties.
- Using assemblies and form sessions as an important forum to raise awareness and restate expectations of behaviour and to promote 'Anti-Bullying Week' annually during March and November.
- Teaching e-safety across the school and via assemblies to promote safe practice involving the use of on-line chat rooms/online games /social networking sites and mobile phones.
- Encouraging and expecting positive behaviour at all times, which is also recognised and fostered by our reward system.
- Viewing and promoting Enrichment activities and day trips as an excellent way of developing positive relationships and mutual understanding.

Procedures

All staff to be aware of the school's policy on bullying and should be vigilant at all times so that bullying does not pass undetected.

Staff to refer and, where appropriate to their role, promptly investigate any allegations of bullying and take the pupils' concerns seriously.

Less serious individual incidents (name calling etc.) should be challenged immediately and support given. The pupil being bullied needs to be reassured of our support and encouraged to report immediately any further incidents. Staff should then pass on this information to the Pastoral Manager and/or SLT.

In the event of a more serious incident (resulting in physical or significant emotional harm) Pastoral Manager needs to be informed at the earliest possible opportunity. This would then be communicated to the SLT, with all information recorded.

5.0 THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum addresses bullying in PSHE, Circle Time and school assemblies. There are permanent Anti-Bullying displays around the school and school buddies (where appropriate) are in place to facilitate a smooth transition into the school.

Anti-Bullying Week is an annual event embedded in the assembly cycle, celebrating those children who have achieved 'Being Kind' Awards, linking with our school rules and reward system. Therapy input is used to address the underlying causes of bullying, where appropriate.

6.0 RACIST INCIDENTS/SEXUAL BULLYING

Racist or sexist bullying (including homophobic bullying) is deemed as a serious incident and should be dealt with as for any serious incident with the addition of the protected characteristics incident process.

Racist incidents include:

- Verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry,
- Physical threats or attacks,
- Wearing of provocative badges or insignia,
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines,
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way,
- Racist graffiti or other written insults,
- Refusing to cooperate in work or play.

Sexual bullying is characterised by:

- Abusive name-calling,
 - Looks and comments about appearance etc,
 - Inappropriate and uninvited touching,
 - Sexual innuendoes and propositions,
 - Pornographic material, graffiti with a sexual content,
 - In its most extreme form, sexual assault
-

7.0 CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying may be defined as an individual or a group of people using mobile phones, the internet or other technologies to make recipients feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable.

In what ways can cyber bullying occur?

Mobile phone

Sending humiliating and abusive text or video messages, as well as photo messages and phone calls over a mobile phone. This includes anonymous text messages over short distances using Bluetooth technology and sharing videos of physical attacks on individuals.

Email

- Sending emails that are threatening or upsetting.
- Instant messenger and chat room
- Sending instant messenger and chat room messages to friends or direct to a victim.
- Social networking sites
- Setting up profiles on social networking sites to make fun of someone.
- Abusing personal information



Posting personal photos, emails or blogs where others can see them without the permission of the individual concerned. Social networking sites make it a lot easier for web users to get hold of personal information and photos of people. It is also possible to get hold of someone else's messaging accounts and chat to people pretending to be the victim.

Interactive gaming

- Games consoles allow players to chat online with anyone they find themselves matched within a multiplayer game. Sometimes cyber bullies abuse other players and use threats. They can also lock victims out of games, spread false rumours about someone or hack into someone's account.
- Sending viruses
- Some people send viruses to another person that can destroy their computers or delete personal information from their hard drive.

How is cyber bullying different?

There are several factors that differentiate cyber bullying from other types of bullying that can make it more difficult both to detect and to prevent:

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. No place provides sanctuary from the intrusion of a threatening text message or an abusive e-mail. Young people are particularly adept at using new technology, which can seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages may make it difficult for adults to identify and address potential threats.

What can Hazel Cottage School staff and managers do?

As with any other type of bullying, staff and managers need to focus on creating an ethos in which cyber bullying is recognised to be unacceptable, take steps to prevent its occurrence, support young people who are bullied, and work with young people who are bullies to alter their behaviour. The Kidscape and further websites listed below website provides useful guidance for young people and carers about how to use technology safely and what to do if they are on the receiving end of cyber bullying.

Useful Resources:

www.kidscape.org.uk

<https://www.bullying.co.uk>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>



Parents/Carers

The school ensures that parents/ carers are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. The school will report incidents of bullying to parents/ carers. If parents wish to contact an advisor to discuss any bullying issue then they too can write the email address below.

Ceri Mason, Pastoral Manager
ceri.mason@hazelcottageschool.co.uk

Evaluation

The policy will be deemed to be a success if:

- Staff are more vigilant and responsive to bullying.
- Fewer pupils report being bullied or that they are bullying.
- More pupils say that they would not join in bullying someone else.
- More pupils would tell a member of staff if they were being bullied.