Hightown Primary School

At Hightown we work together as a school community with pride, respect, rigour and fairness. We celebrate effort, respond enthusiastically to challenges and create positive opportunities that enable everyone to achieve in every way.

Anti-bullying Policy

Policy date:	September 2026
Link school staff:	Russell Ingleby
Link governor:	Kay Brennan
Next review date	September 2027

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- to define bullying
- to set out a strategy to discourage and prevent bullying
- to enable bullying to be recognised when it does occur
- to allow bullying to be dealt with effectively

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the school community are expected to be vigilant for signs of bullying, to report bullying and to respond to bullying in accordance with this policy.

Policy

At Hightown School we recognise that bullying can and does occur from time to time in most schools and organisations. The aims and rights of our school make it clear that bullying is always unacceptable. We take bullying seriously and victims will be assured that they will be fully supported when bullying is reported.

Where bullying does occur, we aim to teach bullies how to act differently and to develop empathy, conscience and self-control.

Definition of bullying

The ABA (Anti-bullying alliance) defines bullying as:

"*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*"

If two pupils of equal power or strength have an occasional fight or argument, this is not bullying. Bullying behaviour always has three components:

- *cruel, negative actions*
- *repeated aggression*
- *power imbalance*

Bullying can be:

- *emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, spreading rumours, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures),*
- *physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence*
- *verbal -name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, graffiti, ridiculing, vicious comments*
- *cyber -all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera & video/ webcam facilities*
- *sexual - sexual abuse, unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments*

It can be in relation to

- *race*
- *gender*

- *sexuality*
- *disability*
- *faith*
- *physical differences- spectacles, hair colour, height or weight,*

Bullying may also occur for no apparent reason other than for the bully to experience a feeling of power.

Why do we tackle bullying?

We tackle bullying as an issue because we aim to create a safe and secure environment where all pupils feel a sense of belonging and well-being.

Persistent bullying can result in:

- *depression*
- *low self-esteem*
- *shyness*
- *poor academic achievement*
- *isolation*
- *threatened or attempted suicide*

Unchecked bullying also damages the bully, who learns that he or she can get away with violence, aggression, and threats.

Recognising bullying

Early recognition is the key to successfully preventing and dealing with a bullying situation. A child may not feel able to report bullying as bullies intimidate their targets into staying silent. However, a child may indicate by signs or changes in behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate if a child:

- *is frightened of walking to or from school*
- *doesn't want to go on the school / public bus*
- *begs to be driven to school*
- *changes their usual routine*
- *is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)*
- *begins to truant*
- *becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence*
- *starts stammering*
- *attempts or threatens suicide or runs away*
- *cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares*
- *feels ill in the morning*
- *begins to do poorly in school work*
- *comes home with clothes torn or books damaged*
- *has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"*
- *asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)*
- *has dinner or other monies continually "lost"*

- *has unexplained cuts or bruises*
- *comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)*
- *becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable*
- *is bullying other children or siblings*
- *stops eating*
- *is frightened to say what's wrong*
- *gives improbable excuses for any of the above*
- *is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone*
- *is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received*

Vulnerable Pupils

The school takes a pro-active approach to identifying vulnerable pupils as this can prevent bullying before it starts. This is no way condones the bullying behaviour as acceptable; everyone has a right not to be bullied, harassed, assaulted or abused.

People who are targeted by bullies often have integrity, are respectful, non-violent people who will go to great lengths to resolve conflict by dialogue, unaware that this does not work with bullies.

Recognising pupils who may exhibit bullying characteristics is also important. Bullies are generally emotionally immature and compensate for this weakness with aggression. They may have no thought for consequences but also be manipulative and able to provide many excuses and justification for their behaviour.

Bullies are often surrounded by other children, not through popularity but through fear. The bully is rarely able to sustain a friendship (which is based on trust, dependability, loyalty and mutual respect) but instead form a gang or clique as part of their strategy for power and control. Some children side with the bully because they gain sufficient bravado to act like bullies themselves but most children side with the bully for fear of otherwise becoming a target. Those children who do not join the gang or clique are then targeted by the bullies who gain power from numbers.

Prevention

At Hightown we employ a number of strategies to prevent bullying occurring:

- *School staff proactively monitor issues between pupils which might provoke conflict*
- *The school gathers data by carrying out pupil and parent surveys*
- *An Anti-bullying week in November each year to reinforce the message that bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated*
- *Bullying is discussed throughout the school including teaching the language of bullying (ringleaders, colluders, bystanders)*
- *The termly reinforcement of the behaviour policy which includes defining 'respect' and 'dignity'.*
- *Red listening boxes located around the school building for any information about bullying to be provided anonymously if necessary*
- *Assertiveness teaching - everyone has the right not to be bullied*

- *Use of parents to discuss their own experiences of being bullied*
- *The introduction of peer restorative practitioners in September 2021 allows for low level conflict to be resolved before it escalates into more serious behaviour, including bullying*

Reporting Bullying

Bullying can only be dealt with effectively if the school knows that it is happening. We encourage everyone to report any form of bullying or potential bullying and we have strategies to help this to happen:

- *the listening box in the learning hub where written messages can be left anonymously if necessary*
- *peer restorative practitioners who are ready to listen and support*
- *ethos that ensures availability of all staff to listen*
- *anti-bullying email address (antibullying@hightown.kirklees.sch.uk) checked on a weekly basis*
- *access to the school's pastoral support team*
- *access to an 'out of hours' contact so that concerns can be raised out of normal school hours*

Responding to Bullying

We expect everyone in the school community to know how to respond when they witness bullying. It is everyone's responsibility to report bullying when it occurs.

The school ensures that pupils are empowered to stop bullying and teaches bystanders how to safely intercede to prevent a bullying situation occurring.

We teach that bullying should never be ignored. Once it is reported the school takes a stepped approach, based on the degree of intent and frequency that mirrors the series of consequences in the school behaviour policy.

The class teacher or lunchtime supervisors provide the initial response to complaints of bullying. They will use a 'no blame' approach although this does not equate to 'no accountability' and the bully is always held fully responsible for his or her actions.

Care is taken to ensure that the bully cannot manipulate the situation and attempt to reflect accountability back onto the accuser and to plausibly portray the target as the guilty party.

The process used at Hightown for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

- *the target and the perpetrator are seen separately;*
- *the perpetrator is given an opportunity to resolve the situation and to acknowledge that their behaviour is unacceptable;*
- *possible reasons for the bullying are investigated (does the bully have poor anger management, lack of social skills, lack empathy or want power?) this may result in the development of an individual behaviour plan for that child;*
- *a review is held one week later with regular contact with the target in between;*
- *the incident is logged on CPOMs system using the 'bullying' tag;*

- *headteacher and class teacher informed immediately and whole staff team are informed as appropriate;*
- *if there is no resolution after one week the issue is escalated to the head teacher.*

The head teacher will be aware of the situation and discuss the issue with the target and perpetrator separately.

- *Possible involvement of parents made clear to perpetrator at this point.*
- *Review held in one week after initial meeting, with regular contact with victim in between.*
- *If no resolution in one-week parents would be contacted.*
- *The parents would be invited to discuss the bullying behaviour and possible consequences in line with the school behaviour policy with the Head teacher.*

Every incident of bullying is different and some may require a different response to that detailed above. The school will always give the bully a chance to change his/her behaviour before parents are contacted.

It is often difficult to confirm that bullying is taking place and that the incident is not a disagreement between two people of equal power. It is essential that the repeated nature of the behaviour is also confirmed. This requires full investigation at stage one and hence it may be necessary for this stage to last longer.

Resolution

For resolution of a bullying issue:

- *the bully/bullies will acknowledge that their behaviour is unacceptable.*
- *the bully/bullies will apologise to their target(s)*
- *the bully/bullies will receive a consequence in line with the behaviour policy*
- *staff will continue to monitor the situation*
- *the bully/bullies will receive help to change behaviour, including the use of individual behaviour plan(s)if necessary*

Data collection

To monitor the impact of the policy, data will be collected from pupils and parents annually in November during anti-bullying week. This data will be reported to governors and staff.
This anti-bullying policy is reviewed annually by governors and staff. This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, the Inclusion Policy and the Single Equality Scheme.

Bullying Incident Records

Bullying Incident Records will include details of:

- *nature of incident (s) – outline of what happened, where, when, type*
- *names of those involved – those bullying, those being bullied and bystanders*
- *analysis of seriousness – severity of impact, frequency, duration, intent, imbalance of power, empathy (remorse)*
- *action(s) taken*
- *monitoring - feedback from those involved including parents*

Anti-bullying alliance

As 'associate' members of the Anti-Bullying Alliance, we subscribe to the following values:

- *believes bullying in any form is wrong and should not be tolerated, and that any environment that encourages bullying, or shows indifference to prejudice and discrimination is unacceptable;*
- *believes bullying is a behaviour choice and that anyone can be encouraged to change their behaviour;*
- *believes all children and young people have intrinsic value and worth and we embrace their uniqueness and autonomy;*
- *respects difference and welcome diversity in our children, young people and in society in general, and believe our work should be inclusive of all;*
- *believes children and young people should have the right to feel safe, secure and valued, and that creating a safe environment and dealing with bullying is our shared responsibility;*
- *believes children and young people should actively participate in decisions that affect them and should be supported in taking responsibility for their choices and subsequent actions;*
- *supports a range of positive strategies to deal with bullying and actively challenge the use of humiliation, fear, ridicule and other similar approaches in an effort to reduce bullying;*
- *works within the un convention on the rights of the child (articles 14 and 28); and*
- *believes that people should be treated with respect and courtesy*

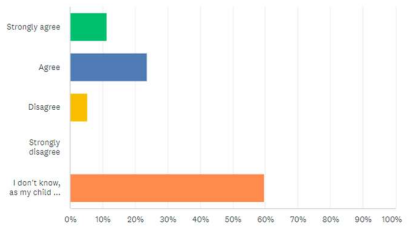
Parent view and staff view

Each year we ask parents/carers and staff about bullying as part of the 'Ofsted' set of standard inspection questions:

Parent view:

My children has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively.

Answered: 114 Skipped: 2

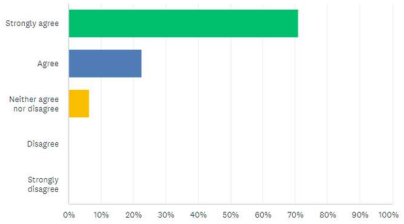


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	11.40%	13
Agree	23.68%	27
Disagree	5.26%	6
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
I don't know, as my child has not been bullied.	59.65%	68
TOTAL		114

Staff view:

The school deals with any cases of bullying of pupils effectively (bullying includes persistent name calling, online or prejudice based bullying)

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	70.97%	22
Agree	22.58%	7
Neither agree nor disagree	6.45%	2
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		31