



# Anti-Bullying Policy

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Consultation	Student Leaders –Anti-Bullying Community
	Guidance Team
	Governors

Related Policies	Behaviour
	Safeguarding
	Acceptable Use
	Complaints

**The Hobart High School anti-bullying policy outlines what Hobart High School will do to prevent and tackle bullying.**

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## 1. Statement of Intent

Hobart High School has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. The aim of this Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that all students learn in a supportive, caring, and respectful environment without fear of bullying.

Bullying, including prejudice-based and online bullying, is anti-social behaviour and will not be tolerated. All members of the school community are expected to promote a culture of respect and inclusion. The school is committed to ensuring that students and their parents/carers feel confident in reporting concerns. All reports will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and addressed effectively.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE)

## 2. Policy Aims

This policy aims to outline clear procedures for responding to bullying incidents. Sanctions for incidents shall be consistent with the school's 'respect' behaviour approach and Behaviour Policy.

### Hobart High School:

- Discusses, monitors, and reviews its Anti-Bullying Policy on a regular basis.
- Ensures that students, staff, and all stakeholders within the Hobart community understand the school's definition of bullying.
- Supports staff in promoting positive relationships and in identifying, tackling, and recording bullying appropriately.
- Ensures that students, families, and carers are aware of how to report bullying, and that all concerns are dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- Aims to ensure that students feel safe to learn and abide by the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Reports back to students, parents, and carers regarding their concerns and deals with complaints promptly.
- Encourages parents and carers to work with the school to uphold the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Seeks to learn from good practice and utilises support agencies where appropriate.

## 3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or a group by another person or group where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online. (Anti-Bullying Alliance 2022)

Bullying is therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Bullying, including coercive and controlling behaviour, may constitute child-on-child abuse and will be treated as a safeguarding concern where appropriate. (refer to our Safeguarding Policy)

#### 4. Types of Bullying

Bullying can include, but is not limited to:

Type of bullying	Possible Characteristics
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting.
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence.
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial</li> <li>• Faith-based</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Homophobic/Biphobic</li> <li>• Transphobic</li> <li>• Disability-based</li> <li>• Appearance or Protected Characteristics</li> </ul>	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g., gender, race, sexuality, body shaming).
Sexual, including sexual harassment and sexual violence	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching.
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites, devices or via images, audio, video or written content generated by artificial intelligence (AI).

By law, schools have the power to respond to and manage student behaviour outside of school sites. The definition of bullying above is therefore applied both on and off the premises and the seriousness of an allegation will not be lessened by it taking place off-site for example, on school transport or trips.

Hobart will not accept any discrimination or harassment on grounds of the Equality Act 2010 – Hobart will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the grounds of disability, race, religious belief, gender, pregnancy, physical characteristic, sexuality and/or the expression there of (Equality Act 2010).

If these are repeated acts they will be dealt with as bullying incidents in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy and behaviour policy and if they are an isolated act, then the behaviour and/or safeguarding policy will be followed.

#### Racist Bullying

"Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person" (MacPherson Report 1999). Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse by name calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry.
- Physical attacks or threats.
- Wearing of provocative badges or insignia.
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics, magazines or materials into school.
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way.
- Racist graffiti or other written insults.
- Social media – promotion or discussion of behaviours.

## **Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence**

Sexual harassment and sexual violence can impact on all students, regardless of sex or gender identity. Incidents can include:

- Abusive name-calling.
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty.
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching.
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions.
- Showing or distributing pornographic material.
- Graffiti with a sexual content.
- In its extreme form, sexual assault and/or rape.
- Verbal or physical incidents relating to sexual orientation.
- This may include coercion, pressure or manipulation into unwanted sexual activity or behaviour.

We will use the definitions and information from Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE (Department for Education) Guidance – please refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Cyberbullying**

Online bullying (often referred to as cyberbullying) is any form of bullying that is carried out through the use of electronic media devices, such as computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles (Anti-Bullying Alliance).

Incidents may include (but not exclusively):

- Text messages - involving unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
- Picture/video clips sent via mobile phone cameras.
- 'Happy slapping' - filming and sharing physical attacks via picture or video using social media.
- Phone calls and voice notes e.g. silent calls or abusive messages.
- Email bullying - sending threatening or abusive messages.
- Group chat bullying.
- Instant messaging - internet based bullying, messages are sent in 'real-time' during conversations online.
- Website bullying - using defamatory web blogs; 'blogs', personal websites and online personal polling sites.

## **Bullying by Text Messages on Mobile Phones, Emails or through Social Media/Networking**

Students should be encouraged to be careful who they give their phone number/email address/online personal details or social network details to and should aim to keep a record of the date and time of offensive messages (screen shot where possible).

Students should save messages they are concerned about and let a family member see them or discuss the message with a member of staff. Students should not respond to the message.

The student's family will need to be informed and where incidents have happened outside school may need to contact the police or take appropriate action themselves including reporting it to their online provider.

If a student has sent messages in school time or used ICT facilities in school for bullying or harassment, the school will take action in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

It is important that families work with their children and school to monitor and promote safe use of ICT, social media, mobile phones and games consoles.

## **Incidents whilst travelling to school or outside school premises**

Students (including student leaders) and parents/carers are encouraged to report all incidents or concerns. Issues created outside school and affecting students inside school are a matter of school concern and teachers have the power to sanction students for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring off school premises such as on school, public transport or in the local area. However, the school is not directly responsible for all bullying taking place off site. Where a report of bullying off the school premises is reported, the school will support victims and may:

- Rearrange seating/allocate seating on the school bus.
- Talk to the local police.
- Talk to the transport company and/or Local Authority school transport department.
- Talk to the heads of local schools sharing school transport and work together with parties involved.
- Discuss safe routes with students.
- Inform family of concern/incident.
- Work with students, families and other agencies to stop the incidents of bullying.
- Where appropriate issue a bus behaviour agreement or contact and consider requesting a travel ban from the LA (Local Authority). Use CCTV on buses to establish details where possible.

### **Special Educational Needs including Disability**

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a 'physical or mental impairment' which 'has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

Some students with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) are less likely than others to recognise and report bullying behaviour, or that their own behaviour may be seen by someone else as bullying and they may be more vulnerable.

Children with SEND may:

- Be adversely affected by negative attitudes to disability and perceptions of difference.
- Find it more difficult to resist bullies.
- Be more isolated/not have as many friends.
- Not understand that what is happening is bullying.
- Have difficulties telling people about bullying.
- Find communication or sustaining relationships difficult.

A whole school, positive culture and anti-bullying message is essential in supporting all students but particularly those with SEND.

### **Bullying due to Religion/Belief**

Bullying in relation to belief or religion/religious belief may include that linked to; perspectives linked to a particular religion, religious practices such as not eating meat or drinking alcohol, or clothes or symbols linked to belief such as wearing a headscarf, cross or kara. This list is not exhaustive. Bullying linked to religion/belief is discrimination and will be addressed in line with policy.

### **Bullying due to Maternity/Pregnancy**

Bullying of this nature may include derogatory comments linked to appearance or the pregnancy itself.

## **5. Possible Indicators of Bullying**

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, an erratic attendance pattern, refusal to attend school or truancy. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns or lack of concentration. Victims of bullying can suffer from low self-esteem and negative self-image and bullying can lead to: anxiety, depression and self-harm risk. They may show a change in behaviour, isolate themselves and suffer with issues around mental health. If there is an unexplained change in a child's behaviour, happiness or general wellbeing, this should be reported following the school reporting systems so it can be investigated further, and support can be offered as needed.

## **6. Reporting and Recording Bullying**

Hobart aims to be an inclusive and 'telling' school, where students are encouraged to report all incidents if they are being treated unkindly or if they think someone else is being treated in an unkind way. All allegations of bullying are taken seriously and are recorded on Go4schools. Where bullying is suspected to be happening based on logging, it will be identified and dealt with using the Hobart anti-bullying flow chart.

The school aims to take a positive approach to tackling bullying behaviour by encouraging a friendly, responsible atmosphere allied with swift action when required. All staff, students and parents/carers are encouraged to share

these values and translate them into action. Several students will be trained as part of the Anti-Bullying Community (ABC) to offer extra support to their peers.

Bullying can be reported by any member of the community to any member of Hobart staff. Form Tutors, Heads of Year, SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and members of the guidance or safeguarding teams are often those who follow up and respond to bullying reports.

In any incidences of suspected bullying we should:

- Record the date, time and location of any incidents of bullying/unkind behaviour.
- Reassure the young person/family that their concerns are being taken seriously and will be investigated.
- To keep any evidence of bullying, for example, messages shared via social media.
- To report incidents as soon as possible to prevent further escalation.

Students are encouraged to report rather than respond to bullying themselves in line with reporting procedures. Students, parents/carers can use the online reporting form on the school website to report bullying accessible [here](#). There is also the anti-bullying post box outside the anti-bullying room.

Students can report bullying anonymously using both the anti-bullying room post box and the online reporting form on the school website.

## **7. Responding to Bullying**

### **Investigation**

- Students, parents, or carers should report any incidents of bullying to staff. All reports will be recorded, including details of the incident, actions taken, and key points from any discussions. Where appropriate, an action plan may be developed. The anti-bullying flow chart, recording sheets and GO4schools can all be used to inform any plans.
- When a parent or carer raises a concern or complaint relating to bullying, the school will speak with the relevant student(s). Parents/carers will be contacted and informed of the actions taken where necessary.
- It is essential that the victim is supported and encouraged to share all relevant information to enable a thorough, timely, and effective investigation.
- Initial investigations will ensure clear, open, and regular communication with parents and carers.
- Staff responsible for the investigation will provide appropriate updates to all relevant parties regarding progress and outcomes.
- Incidents of a prejudicial nature linked to protected characteristics will be recorded and monitored appropriately.
- Serious cases of bullying will be escalated to the Head of Year and/or Senior Leadership Team. They will work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve the situation and provide appropriate support for affected students.
- Where criminal activity is alleged or suspected, the police may be consulted or informed, and the school will work in cooperation with external agencies as required.
- Where a safeguarding concern is identified, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed immediately, and the school's safeguarding policy will be followed.
- All incidents will be formally recorded on Go4schools and stored in the student's file and/or relevant incident logging systems.

### **Responding to the victim**

It is essential that victims of bullying are listened to, supported, and safeguarded throughout the process. Following the initial investigation, a range of support options may be offered, depending on individual need:

- An opportunity to talk through the incident with a member of the Tutor or Guidance Team.
- Access to a member of the ABC peer support group to discuss experiences, coping strategies, and appropriate support.
- Use of restorative approaches, where appropriate, to address harm and support the resolution of conflict.
- Encouragement for the person responsible to offer a sincere apology and commit to positive and sustained changes in behaviour towards the victim.
- Provision of supportive spaces during unstructured times (e.g. break and lunch), where required.
- Allocation of a trusted adult for regular check-ins and ongoing support.
- Continued monitoring and support from the Guidance or Safeguarding Team.
- Referral to external agencies where appropriate, under the Early Help framework.

- Clear communication with students, parents, and carers regarding investigation outcomes and any resulting actions.
- Formal recording of all incidents, with documentation securely stored in the student's file and/or relevant incident logs.
- Targeted support to help build self-esteem, resilience, and confidence

## **Responding to the Perpetrator(s) and/or Group Behaviour**

When discussing the incident with the bully/bullies, staff should seek to understand why the perpetrator or group have behaved in the way that they have, including providing sufficient time for the student/s to talk. The aim of our response to bullying is to change the bullying behaviour and for the perpetrator and group to understand the consequences and negative impacts of their actions. This may include work with the wider group including any bystanders.

Actions and sanctions might include:

- A consequences/agreement document aimed at preventing further incidents of bullying and making expectations clear.
- Removal from a group or lesson.
- Withdrawal from lunch or break time or reduction in spaces that can be accessed.
- Withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum.
- Withdrawal of ICT use in school.
- The offer of advice/counselling/support to the bully that aims to change their behaviour.
- Monitoring situations and within 2 weeks of an incident, check being made to ascertain that the bullying has not started again.
- Monitoring checks may also be needed to be made within longer timeframes or planned review meetings held for as long as necessary to prevent further incidents.
- Details of incidents being recorded and kept on student file and relevant incident logs.
- Internal isolation, suspension, or in serious and repeated cases, possible permanent exclusion.
- Restorative approaches and reconciliation.
- Education and reflection that may include work with our IEU manager, DEI lead or a member of the Guidance Team.
- External agency involvement for example – SMHT (Schools Mental Health Team), Kooth, MAP (Mancroft Advice Project).
- Outside agency support known as Early Help.
- Communication with Parent/Carer.
- The school will employ the full range of sanctions up to and including permanent exclusion in extreme and persistent cases.

All reported incidents will follow a consistent process: reporting → recording → investigation → action → follow-up → monitoring.

## **8. Preventing Bullying**

A range of strategies is used to support staff, students, and parents/carers, and to raise awareness of bullying and its impact, with the aim of preventing bullying from occurring. It is essential that all staff respond consistently so that students and parents/carers have confidence in the school's approach.

This is achieved through the following measures:

- Staff and student training to ensure a clear understanding of the definition of bullying, how to recognise signs, and how to report concerns at Hobart.
- Multi-agency working with internal & external partners such as the Police, Attendance Officer, School Mental Health Team and Kooth, where appropriate.
- Whole-school Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) work, coordinated by the DEI Lead, to promote understanding across the school community, including form time activities, student focus groups, and whole-school events.
- Engagement with parents/carers through parent voice to develop shared understanding of bullying, expectations, and available support.
- Use of student leadership, peer mentoring, and Anti-Bullying Community (ABC) leaders to support and guide other students.
- Regular surveys, interviews, and student voice activities to review policy and practice and to identify any emerging concerns. The ABC group meets regularly to discuss anti-bullying approaches and contribute to school improvement.

- Clear expectation that sexist, homophobic, racist, and discriminatory language or behaviour is actively challenged and addressed.
- Integration of anti-bullying, diversity, tolerance, and respect within the curriculum, including PSHE, ICT, assemblies and across wider subject areas.
- Teaching of assertiveness, emotional regulation, and social skills to support students with low self-esteem, including access to SEMH provision where appropriate.
- Use of drama and PSHE role-play activities to explore real-life scenarios and appropriate responses to conflict.
- Ongoing staff training in restorative approaches, inclusion, diversity, tolerance, and anti-bullying practice.
- Use of additional interventions such as Circle of Friends and other structured peer-support strategies where appropriate.
- Collaboration with external agencies to identify and address prejudice-driven behaviour across all aspects of school life.
- Provision of safe, supportive spaces for vulnerable students, along with encouragement to engage in lunchtime clubs and enrichment activities.
- Implementation of a clear mobile phone policy to reduce the risk of cyberbullying.
- Deployment of staff supervision at key times throughout the school day, with targeted monitoring of identified "hot spot" areas.
- Use of visual awareness campaigns, including posters and student-led initiatives, to promote understanding of bullying and reporting routes (e.g. Year 8 ICT project).
- Active involvement of students in anti-bullying campaigns, wellbeing events, and charity initiatives across the school.
- Participation in external networks such as the Norfolk Anti-Bullying Conference and engagement with SNYAB, Young Minds and the Anti-Bullying Alliance.
- Development of the Anti-Bullying Community (ABC), a trained group of students from across year groups who support peers by listening, advising, and signposting support, helping to bridge the gap between students and staff. Membership is reviewed and refreshed annually through recruitment and training.
- A structured assembly programme that promotes inclusion, celebrates diversity, and reinforces school values.
- Use of CCTV, where appropriate, to support the investigation of reported incidents.
- A clear Acceptable Use Policy is in place, providing students with guidance on how to use school systems safely, responsibly, and appropriately.
- Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are implemented in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance to ensure students are safeguarded when accessing online content.

## **9. Artificial Intelligence**

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff/students and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini. AI has many uses to help students learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes' where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. Any use of AI to bully students will be treated in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy.

## **10. Monitoring, Evaluating and Review**

The relevant Assistant Headteachers, DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and Guidance Team members will maintain a bullying incidents log and regularly review reported cases to look for patterns or trends to provide relevant training and/or support.

The relevant Assistant Headteachers, DSL and Guidance Team members will work with the Anti-Bullying Community and DEI lead to monitor and capture student voice.

Bullying logs and data will also be monitored and discussed regularly at Senior Leadership Team Meetings. The information recorded will distinguish bullying from other behaviour incidents. The bullying log will track patterns and repeat victims/perpetrators and inform interventions needed. The records may inform safeguarding referrals.

Bullying Information will be reported to the LGB (Local Governing Body).

The policy will be reviewed annually.

**At all times we will seek to work with families and students to ensure that incidents of unkind behaviour and bullying behaviour are dealt with to the satisfaction of all concerned and in line with the school policy. If you do not feel that your report about bullying has been responded to efficiently or effectively, please contact the school to discuss your situation or refer to the complaints procedure and policy that can be found on the school website.**