



# Highlands

## School & Sixth Form

**Dare to  
flourish**

**Anti-bullying policy**  
**APPROVED**

Governor Committee	January 2026
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## **Section 1: Policy statement**

Highlands School is a place where every person has the right to be themselves and to be included in a safe environment. Everyone at our school is equal and should be treated with respect. At our school the safety, welfare and well-being of all students and staff is a key priority.

Highlands School is committed to ensuring that all students can learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at school. The school takes all incidents of bullying seriously and it is our duty as a whole school community to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment or discrimination. If bullying does occur, all members of the school community should know how to identify it and ensure it is dealt with promptly and effectively. Bullying is a type of peer on peer abuse.

Highlands School actively promotes values of respect and equality. The promotion of these values is embedded across the school community to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the school community,

### **Respect**

Working individually and with others to uphold the rules and laws of our community whilst listening to and respecting the views of others.

### **Equality**

Working to protect the rights and opportunities of every member of our community so that we all have a fair chance to participate, succeed and enjoy life.

Highlands School is committed to improving our school's approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring, reviewing and assessing the impact of our preventative measures.

No form of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously.

## **Section 2: Key documents**

- Preventing and tackling bullying, DfE, 2013
- Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and support staff, DfE, 2014
- Keeping children safe in Education, DfE, 2025

## **Section 3: Objectives of this policy**

- All governors, staff, parents, carers and students should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported or suspected.

- All governors, staff, parents, carers and students should know what the school policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.

## Section 4: Links with other school policies

Related policies include the following policies:

- Behaviour policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Online safety policy
- Safeguarding policy

These policies can be found by clicking [here](#).

## Section 5: Definition of bullying

Bullying affects lots of people and can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in sporting teams, in friendship or family groups or in the workplace. There is no legal definition of bullying. But it is usually defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically, and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.

The nature of bullying can be:

- Physical – such as hitting or physically intimidating someone, or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact towards someone.
- Attacking property – such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone’s possessions.
- Verbal – such as name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone.
- Psychological – such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people.
- Cyber – such as using text, email or other social media to write or say hurtful things about someone.

Bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse, as set out in *Keeping Children Safe*, DfE, 2025. Bullying can also take the form of sexual harrasment and sexual abuse. Please see Safeguarding policy for more information on how the school deals with such incidents.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- race
- religion or belief
- culture or class

- gender (sexist bullying)
- sexual orientation (homophobic or biophobic bullying)
- gender identify (transphobic bullying)
- special educational needs or disability
- related to home or other personal situation
- related to another vulnerable group of people.

## **Section 6: Cyber-bullying / online bullying**

Bullying can happen via online platforms. Such incidents are recognised in the behaviour policy, and in the school's online safety policy. Please see both policies for further information.

### **Discriminatory bullying**

Discriminatory language is based on prejudice or negative attitudes about a group of people. Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for students and staff found using any such language. This type of language will not be excused as banter or a joke.

### **Prejudice based incidents**

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

### **Bullying of staff**

Bullying does not only occur between students. Staff working at Highlands School can also be bullied by students. If such instances occur this policy will be followed.

## Section 7: Reporting bullying - Reporting roles and responsibilities

### Staff

- All Highlands School staff have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in preventing bullying. If staff are made aware of bullying or suspect bullying they should reassure the student and inform the relevant year team for that student.
- Form tutors are often the members of staff who are likely to notice bullying or have it reported to them. The role of the form tutor is to notice bullying and report it to the pastoral team.
- Behaviour mentors support the investigations into bullying and support with the follow up work relevant to the students involved.
- Heads of year will often be able to identify repeated behaviour that may constitute bullying. Heads of the year will then raise the concern and ensure that a serious incident investigation begins (see below). They will coordinate the response to identified bullying and communicate with parents to work together to resolve the issue.
- The senior leadership team and the head teacher have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the school upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people. The assistant headteachers attached to year groups review cases of bullying with heads of year.

### Parents and carers

Parents and carers should look out for potential signs of bullying such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour. Parents and carers should tell their child not to retaliate and support and encourage them to report the bullying. Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying to the school by phoning or emailing the student's form tutor, behaviour mentor or head of year. If a parent or carer is informed their child has engaged in bullying behaviours they should work with the school in the sanctioning, if relevant, and education of their child to modify their behaviour.

### Students

- If a student is being bullied they are encouraged to not retaliate but to tell their parents or carers and a member of staff.
- Students can report bullying concerns in school directly to their form tutor or any member of staff. Highlands School has a dedicated pastoral team which will address these concerns promptly.
- Students can report bullying by emailing their form tutor directly.
- Students are able to email the school's dedicated safeguarding email address [staysafe@highlearn.uk](mailto:staysafe@highlearn.uk). This email account is monitored by the designated safeguarding lead.
- Students can call ChildLine to speak to someone in confidence on 0800 1111.

- All students have a responsibility to report bullying. If a student witnesses or hears of bullying they must report it to a member of staff. The school's behaviour policy encourages students to be allies to those who experience bullying. Students must not be bystanders to bullying behaviours.

## **Section 8: Responding to bullying - When bullying has been reported the following actions will be taken.**

- A relevant member of the pastoral team will investigate the concern raised.
- If the initial investigation reveals evidence that suggests a student has acted in a way that would result in a concern code ranging from a C5 - C12 the serious incident process will be instigated. The behaviour concern codes and the serious incident process can be found in appendices 4 and 7 respectively.
- Staff will ensure reasonable measures are in place to protect the victim from further bullying or harassment as a result of any report they have made.
- The parents and carers of both the victim and the student who engaged in bullying behaviours will be contacted by a member of staff to inform them of the incident and the measures the school has put in place to stop the bullying.
- Student records will be updated accordingly on Bromcom and CPOMS.
- The pastoral team will ensure relevant sanctions are issued where appropriate and restorative actions will be taken. Restorative measures will be put in place for both the victim and the student who has engaged in bullying behaviours. The restorative measures for students can be in the form of any of the following.
  - Work with the behaviour mentor, head of year or other appropriate member of staff.
  - Session(s) with the school counsellor.
  - A restorative justice meeting between the students.
  - Meetings/phone calls between the school and relevant parents and carers.
  - Work with the allocated safer school's police officer.
  - Coordination with external agencies, where appropriate, for further support.
- If the same student reoffends, the sanction issued is escalated in line with the behaviour policy and the restorative approach will be reviewed.
- Reflective session in line with school's behaviour systems. Reflection in IER.

## **Section 9: Bullying outside of school**

Bullying can take place in school, outside of school, on the way to or from school, online, in the wider community and over the holidays. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated wherever it takes place. Cyberbullying in particular often takes place outside of school and can have a significant impact on students' well-being. Staff, parents, carers and students must be vigilant to bullying and report and respond accordingly to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

## **Section 10: School initiatives to prevent bullying**

Highlands School uses a range of measures to prevent bullying. Some of these measures are listed below.

### **Staff**

- A clear behaviour policy consistently enforced by the staff. Highlands School adopts a zero tolerance approach to peer on peer abuse, sexual harassment and harassment and discrimination of any kind.
- Staff receive regular training in order to ensure that they are aware of the ever-changing nature of bullying.

### **Students**

- Year group assemblies raise awareness of bullying, how it manifests and the role students play in tackling bullying.
- Year group assemblies and the PSHE curriculum make clear what bullying behaviours are to ensure all students are aware of their role and how to report bullying concerns.
- Highlands School has a stay safe curriculum to ensure that students have a high quality education that teaches them how to identify behaviours that are defined as bullying, and how to respond to such behaviour.
- The school's DARE values are embedded throughout the school, promoting respect and equality to ensure the school is as inclusive as possible.
- The school operates a no mobile phone policy on the school site for all KS3 and KS4 students to reduce the opportunities for cyberbullying to occur.
- In year 7, smart phones are banned from the school site.
- Students who experience bullying are offered appropriate pastoral support.
- Students who have bullied others are educated and supported to prevent further instances of bullying as seen in section 3 in this policy.

### **Parents**

- Special feature newsletter shared with parents, carers and students to raise awareness of bullying and how to support the community in addressing it in line with the school policy.
- Special events held to promote discussions and strengthen understanding of equality issues.
- If necessary, parents receive updates in order to ensure that they are aware of the ever-changing nature of bullying.

## **Section 10: Training**

All Highlands School staff are trained to use the processes for dealing with bullying. The staff training needs will be reviewed regularly, in consultation with the staff concerned. Training will be delivered either by staff within the school or by external trainers on INSET days or as part of a meeting schedule.

## **Section 11: Dissemination of the policy**

- A copy of the policy will be made available to all staff and Governors. An electronic copy will also be shared on the school website and in a newsletter to parents and carers.
- Students will be aware of the key components of the anti-bullying policy through an assembly delivered on anti-bullying each academic year.

## **Section 12: Monitoring and reviewing**

To monitor the effectiveness of the schools' provision, pupils will be required to complete a regular cycle of surveys to determine:

- trends or patterns in bullying behaviour in and out of school.
- the effects of bullying on learning and mental wellbeing.
- the impact of school interventions.

## Appendix 1:

Signs and symptoms of bullying.

Listed below are the signs and symptoms of bullying.

### Physical Signs

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, or scrapes.
- Torn or damaged clothing.
- Lost or broken belongings

### Emotional & behavioral signs

- Increased anxiety, fear, or distress.
- Becoming withdrawn, quiet, or isolated.
- Sudden mood swings, irritability, or anger.
- Changes in eating habits (loss of appetite or overeating).
- Sleep problems (nightmares, insomnia).
- Self-harm or signs of depression.

### Social signs

- Falling attendance.
- Poor academic performance or suddenly failing.
- Avoiding school activities or friends.
- Showing distress after using phones or computers (cyberbullying).
- Asking for or stealing money.