



**Hermitage
Academy**

Anti-Bullying Policy

Review date: December 2024

Date of next review: December 2026



**North East
Learning Trust**

Review history

Review Date	Reviewer	Approved by	Date approved	Implementation
December 2024	Mr R Hutchinson	Head of School	December 2024	December 2024
December 2026				

Recent revisions

Issue No.	Date	Revisions made
1	December 2024	Full review of the policy. Policy streamlined and updated with Trust reporting mechanisms.

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1. Introduction

Hermitage Academy is part of the North East Learning Trust and is committed to providing students with a caring and safe environment where individuality can flourish, allowing them, without hindrance, to live their lives to the full. Everyone has the right to be treated with kindness and respect and to be properly supported if they are not. Bullying of any kind is always unacceptable and is taken seriously and acted upon.

2. Aims

The aims of the policy are to:

- ensure a safe environment for all students at Hermitage Academy
- emphasise the fundamental importance of establishing and maintaining a positive, caring ethos within the Academy
- establish an atmosphere where bullying is clearly unacceptable
- to raise general awareness so that the whole school can play its part in recognising bullying and to act when it occurs by preventing or responding appropriately to it

3. Objectives

The objectives of the policy are to:

- ensure that all students, parents/carers, staff, and governors can recognise what bullying is, know what the policy is on bullying and what to do if it occurs
- ensure that staff access regular safeguarding training that includes anti-bullying
- build understanding and discussion of anti-bullying and related topics into the PHSCE, (World Ready) programme
- confirm that students will always be supported if bullying is reported
- ensure that whenever someone knows that bullying is happening, someone is told about it and something is done
- work with other professional agencies when necessary to keep children safe

4. Legislation

This policy has been written regarding the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children's Act 1989
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997

- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- The Public Order Act 1986
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

5. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside the following Trust and Academy policies:

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- E-Safety Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- RPI Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

6. Responsibilities

The **Executive Headteacher** will ensure that

- SLT and all staff are involved in the determining of the strategies and procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying
- the policy is communicated to all staff, students, and parents/carers
- appropriate training is made available to all staff
- when breaches of the policy are identified disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably

The **Head of School** will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- ensure that the Executive Headteacher and the DSL are informed of all incidents

- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to support students that are victims and/or perpetrators of bullying
- determine the involvement of parents/carers in the solution of individual incidents

All **teaching and support staff** will:

- ensure that Trust and Academy policies are implemented fairly and consistently across the school
- be aware of the procedures for dealing with reported incident
- undertake training as directed by the Executive Headteacher and/or Head of School

Parents/Carers who are concerned that their child is being bullied at school should:

- talk to their child about what is happening
- be calm and show sensitivity
- reassure your child that the school will act on the information
- agree the next step with your child
- speak to your child's Year Manager who will ensure that an investigation is undertaken
- maintain contact with the Year Manager until the matter is resolved

Students should:

- talk to their Year Manager if they believe they are being subject to any form of bullying or use the confidential 'EASI' button to contact staff
- speak with parents/carers to let them know what is happening
- accept help and support that is offered by the school
- speak with a Year Manager should they witness any form of bullying in school or use the confidential 'EASI' button to contact staff

7. Definition of bullying

Bullying is “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

Bullying can include, but is not limited to, name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include but is not limited to, sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

8. Identifying signs of bullying

The behaviour of children, young people and adults is not easily understood. Changes in behaviour may have many causes. Being bullied can be one reason why behaviour changes and there is a need to be alert to the possibility that this may be the case. Students who are being bullied may:

- become withdrawn, clingy, moody, aggressive, and uncooperative
- behave in immature ways
- have sleep or appetite problems
- have difficulty concentrating
- show variation in academic performance
- have cuts, bruises, aches, and pains without adequate explanation
- request extra money or start stealing
- have clothes or possessions that are frequently lost or damaged
- complain of illness more frequently
- show a marked change in a well-established pattern or behaviour e.g., sudden loss of interest in activities, changing times of coming and going from home,

reluctance to leave home, a request to change school, a refusal to return to a place or activity, experimenting with drugs or alcohol

9. Responding to incidents of bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- if bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with swiftly by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern
- the school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate
- A member of the pastoral team will speak with all parties involved.
- the designated safeguarding lead will be informed of all bullying issues
- the school will inform other staff members, and parents/carers, where appropriate
- sanctions (as identified within the Behaviour Policy) and support for individuals will be implemented as appropriate. Students who have been the perpetrators of bullying will complete a PIP
- if necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved.
- where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will provide advice to support parents. Where this has an impact on school, the behaviour policy will be applied as appropriate.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded using CPOMS. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken
- The perpetrator(s) will complete educational Pro-active Intervention Programmes (PIPs) in response to bullying and the impact that this can have on others.

10. Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the Academy will:

- act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified
- consider whether action is necessary from parents/carers

- provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again
- encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation
- take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at the use of school systems
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses
- contact the service provider and the police, if necessary
- work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - supporting reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content
 - confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school behaviour policy
 - requesting the deletion of locally held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies
 - ensuring that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
 - informing the police as necessary
- provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain

11. Supporting students

The Academy will support students who have been subject to bullying or who are the perpetrator of bullying. This may include discussion, restorative work, PIPs, working

with parents/carers, sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy, counselling and working with external organisations.

12. Preventing bullying

The Academy will:

- create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration, and care for others, which will be upheld by all
- recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the school, including adults and children (child-on-child abuse)
- openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities
- challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination, and respect towards others
- be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones, and social media positively and responsibly
- work with staff, the wider school, and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children and young people
- celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos

13. Education and training

The Academy will:

- train all staff using face to face sessions and Educare online training, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g., administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school’s policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents)
- consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc

- provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem

14. Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk