



Howard Community Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy was approved on:	
Person responsible for this policy:	Head Teacher
Date to be reviewed:	Summer 2027
Distributed to:	All staff and shared on the website

Aims

The aims of this document are:

- To provide a clear definition of bullying
- To provide whole school strategies to prevent bullying
- To provide a clear framework for the management of incidents of bullying
- To establish whole school approaches for the monitoring of incidents of bullying

This policy should be used alongside the Positive Behaviour Policy.

Our Commitment

- We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn, play and communicate in a secure atmosphere.
- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils and adults should know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. At Howard Community Academy, we believe that ignoring bullying is unacceptable. Anyone who is aware of or who witnesses an incident of bullying has a duty to intervene, to get help and to report it.
- To discuss, monitor and reviews the school's anti-bullying policy on a regular basis
- To support staff to identify and tackle bullying appropriately
- Ensure that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with effectively and sensitively
- Inform parents and keep them up to date regarding incidents of bullying related to their child
- Seek to learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere and utilise the support of the Trust, Local Authority and other organisations when appropriate.

Definition of bullying

At Howard Community Academy, we define bullying as any or all of the following:

- Repeated attempts to ridicule or humiliate other pupils using name calling, verbal abuse or teasing of any kind (in particular sexist, racist, homophobic, religious or in relation to pupils' ability/disability) which may cause long lasting fear, anxiety or harm to another person or group of people
- A repetitive series of actions by an individual or group often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities.
- Verbal or physical actions, which are designed to intentionally hurt and intimidate or to make the recipient feel unhappy, embarrassed or insecure about themselves.

The three main forms of bullying are:

- Physical: E.g. hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal: E.g. name calling, insulting, offensive remarks. Name-calling is often the most direct form of bullying. This may be because of individual characteristics, but pupils can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality, colour or disability.
- Indirect: Cyber bullying can feature heavily in this form of bullying e.g. spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious messages, texts or emails through social networking sites and mobile phones.

Howard Community Academy Anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia

Howard Community Academy welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to disability, ethnicity, sex (gender), religion/belief, sexual orientation, transgender (and in relation to staff and parents: age, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity).

These duties and intentions reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The duties to promote equality in relation to sexuality, transgender and gender identity are relatively new to many in our community. This section of the policy is to provide support for the school community in moving forward to fulfil these duties.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations, we are guided by these principles:

- ❖ Principle 1: All learners and other members of the school community are of equal value.

All members of our community have the right to feel safe and valued. It should be understood that there are lesbian, gay and bisexual, transgender people and those who experience gender dysphoria in every community including, every cultural and religious group. The leadership of all faith communities in Britain confirm that they do not condone or encourage homophobia or transphobia.

- ❖ Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

We must take account of differences and provide a welcoming and inclusive community for all, including in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are welcome as employees, governors, parents, visitors and pupils in our school community.

- ❖ Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote positive attitudes towards diversity including with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity. Positive interaction and good relations between different groups and individuals in an absence of prejudice-related bullying

and incidents, including specifically homophobia, transphobia and the stereotyping of gender behaviours

- ❖ Principle 4: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We will challenge all instances of homophobic/transphobic bullying or derogatory language and work towards removing any inequalities and barriers that may exist in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. The senior leadership and governing body will monitor progress towards equality in relation to sexuality and gender identity. No one within our community has the right to discriminate against any other member of the school community.

What kind of behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour?

Bullying by sexuality, race, gender or disability takes many forms:

- Abusive name-calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching
- Sexual innuendos and propositions
- Pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- Targeted for representing a group and attacking the individual by sending messages to that group.
- Racist bullying is likely to hurt not only the injured party, but also other members from the same group and their families.
- Verbal abuse by name calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- Physical threats or attacks
- Wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- Racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Racist graffiti or written insults could relate to food, music, dress or costumes
- Refusing to co-operate in work and play
- Comments related to the religious or ethnic group that the pupil belongs to e.g. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
- Pupils with SEN or disabilities may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other pupils. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly and usually about their specific difficulties or disability. A child who may find it difficult to verbalise what is happening to them will often communicate in other ways; through, for example, changes in behaviour and attitude.

How do you know when a child is being bullied?

When a child is being bullied, you may notice changes in their behaviour, attitude, learning and social interactions. The warning signs that someone is being bullied include:

- Not wanting to go out to play
- Deterioration in concentration
- Poor school attendance

- Unexplained changes in behaviour, learning etc.
- Having trouble with work for no apparent reason
- Pupils who seem troubled e.g. irritable, emotional or easily upset
- Pupils who are being ignored or left out
- Pupils being laughed at, teased or called names
- Pupils who present themselves at school with damaged or missing clothes, without money they should have, or with scratches or bruises
- Pupils telling you that they or their friends are being picked on

Additionally, research has indicated that whilst any child can be an injured party of bullying, there are certain risk factors, which will make the experience of bullying much more likely. These include:

- Being shy
- Lacking close friends at school
- Coming from an over protective family environment
- Being from different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- Being different in some obvious respect from the majority
- Having special educational needs
- Being a 'provocative injured party' – the child who behaves inappropriately with others, barging in on games or being a nuisance

Strategies to help deal with these kinds of bullying include:

- Using surveys to find out the extent of the problem
- Recording of incidents
- Exploration of issues e.g. diversity, sexism and sexual bullying through the curriculum
- Recognise and challenge sexual content within verbal abuse
- Use single sex groupings to explore sensitive issues
- Ensuring that the school site is adequately supervised, paying attention to areas where pupils may be vulnerable
- Involvement of parents and the wider community

Anti-bullying Strategy Proactive/Preventative Strategies

The school recognises that incidents may occur in all areas of the school, but also online and away from the school grounds. Therefore, we take a range of measures to prevent incidents occurring and promote appropriate behaviours and relationships:

- Adult supervision in the playground and in the dining hall.
- Limiting the number of children coming into the school during break and lunchtimes
- Playground equipment is provided and the school often adopts sports coaches whose role it is to engage, as many children in positive physical activities.
- Adults to promote positive relationships and support playtime games
- Those on duty monitor the behaviour of all pupils in the playground. Incidents are dealt with promptly and reported to the class teacher and senior leaders following our STEPs approach.

- Any incidents of bullying will be investigated or overseen by a senior leader.
- Worry boxes in classes and a culture of pupils reporting incidents are promoted.
- We promote a healthy, safe and caring environment for all pupils and staff
- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all our pupils, having considered gender, ability, ethnicity, religion and culture
- We promote pupils' self-esteem and emotional wellbeing and help them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community
- We prepare our pupils to confidently meet the challenges of adult life
- We provide sufficient information and support to enable our pupils to make safe choices
- Through an enriched curriculum, we provide pupils with opportunities to develop the necessary skills to manage their lives effectively
- We help our pupils to learn to respect themselves and others and move safely from childhood, through adolescence, into adulthood
- We create a wider awareness of religious, cultural and moral values within a Christian framework and respect for different ethnic groups, religious beliefs and ways of life
- We promote an inclusive ethos and a culture of mutual respect where diversity and difference are recognised, appreciated and celebrated.
- Regular class assemblies
- Small targeted group work developing friendships and relationships
- Celebration assemblies
- Key messages are promoted during whole school assemblies
- Use examples from literature during English lessons to discuss and explore relationships. Many books include characters and scenarios to explore with pupils to promote better understandings of difference and develop empathy.
- Whole school anti bullying assemblies
- Computing curriculum promotes E-Safety and cyber bullying strategies.
- Raising the profile through school displays

Monitoring

Monitoring of incidents of bullying is an important feature of this policy. Monitoring helps us to assess progress and evaluate our anti-bullying policy so we can target action where it is most needed and most effective. Teachers log all forms of bullying and harassment.

Responding to bullying

It is important that:

Staff take all incidents of bullying seriously and respond in a sensitive manner to pupils when they say they have been bullied

Pupils' concerns are acted upon in every case according to an agreed procedure

All pupils are aware of the procedures for reporting bullying and to whom they can report them to

All pupils are encouraged to report bullying and are confident that staff will take such reports seriously. This can include reports of adults bullying pupils.

The pupil who has been bullied should be made to feel safe.

All pupils should be shown that bullying is taken seriously.

We need to remember that bullying indicates that all is not well for both the bullied and the bullying person and the emotional, social and developmental needs of both parties should be addressed.

Safeguarding

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 to the safeguarding team as a matter of urgency. This will be recorded using the school's electronic logging system.

If the bullying behaviour is to be averted on a long-term basis, the emotional, social and developmental needs of both parties will need to be addressed. Research has shown that pupils who bully others have little capacity for empathy. Moreover, their retreat into 'non-feeling' may well be protection of sorts from abusive or painful features in their own circumstances. This means that we need to respond to bullying in ways that are not humiliating, punitive and blaming in a simplistic fashion.

Carrying out an investigation

If a pupil, or a parent/carer, reports bullying. The school will take the following actions:

Stage 1: A statement is taken from the pupil and they are informed of the procedure that will follow.

Stage 2: An appropriate member of staff investigates.

Stage 3: The investigator gathers information by interviewing all relevant parties separately. The investigator may need to consult pupil records and consult and staff who were on duty at the time as appropriate. This is completed in a timely manner.

Stage 4: The investigator, in consultation with other members of staff, then considers the evidence and reaches a conclusion. The investigator then discusses the findings with all parties, including relevant staff and parents of the pupil being bullied and the pupil carrying out the bullying.

Stage 5: The school then decides upon an appropriate course of action. This action may include:

Reparations

- Restorative meeting between all parties
- Appropriate consequences designed to promote pro-social behaviour outcomes
- Where a restorative and suitable consequences approach has failed to modify the behaviour of a perpetrator and the bullying is continuing, other consequences should be considered including inviting the parents/carers of the perpetrator to the school to discuss their child's behaviour. The outcome of the meeting and agreed actions/responses will be recorded.
- The school adopts a problem solving approach with parents/carers e.g. 'It seems your son/daughter and (other child) have not been getting on very well' rather than 'your son/daughter has been bullying....' While the school firmly believes that all bullying is unacceptable and that the perpetrators should be made to accept responsibility for their

behaviour and make amends, the school understands that a cooperative ethos is desirable when trying to reach a resolution that is effective and long lasting. Parents/carers of those causing the bullying will also have support to come to a balanced view of what is happening and appreciate their role in helping their children to learn about the consequences of their actions and adopt alternative ways of behaving.

- The school ensures that staff and all parents/carers remain fully aware of the measures that have been put into place to prevent the occurrence of further incidents. Follow up appointments may be made with parent/carers to share these agreed measures and to monitor their success in preventing further bullying.

Whichever action is chosen it is important to continue to monitor both victim's and perpetrator's behaviour for an appropriate period. This may be through meetings and/or observations.

Long-term support

The above is only a short term strategy. For behaviour and attitudes to change, a variety of long term strategies need to be used. If a child is involved, as either the bullied or the bully, then it is likely that their social and emotional development is often affected. These developmental needs need to be addressed if they are to successfully change their behaviour after all there are often other underlying factors, the bully may also be experiencing bullying for example. Individual and group strategies can be set up to support the needs of both the bullied and bullying child.

Cyber Bullying Guidance

Because of the anonymity that new communications technologies offer, anyone with a mobile phone or Internet connection can be a target for cyber bullying. What's more, bullies can reach much larger numbers within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on a website, for instance, can be seen by a large audience, as can video clips sent by mobile phone.

Howard Community Academy takes cyber bullying very seriously and does not tolerate bullying of any account. E-Safety lessons are delivered to ensure pupils are aware of cyber bullying, what to do if they are a victim and how to prevent cyber bullying.

Code of conduct

- If you feel you are being bullied by email, text or online, talk to your parent, carer or teacher.
- Never send any bullying or threatening messages. Anything you write and send could be read by an adult.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.
- Do not reply to bullying or threatening text messages or emails - this could make matters worse. It also lets the bullying people know that they have found a 'live' phone number or email address. They may get bored quite quickly if you ignore them.

- Do not give out your personal details online - if you're in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.
- Do not forward abusive texts or emails or images to anyone. You could be breaking the law just by forwarding them. If they are about you, keep them as evidence. If they are about someone else, delete them and don't reply to the sender.
- Do not ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.
- Remember that sending abusive or threatening messages is against the law.

Appendix A

Bullying: National Legislative and Policy Context

The Schools Standards & Frameworks Act (1998) sets out the expectation that all schools are required by law to have an Anti-Bullying Policy. Children and young people should be involved in both the development and the monitoring of the Anti-Bullying Policy by being encouraged to discuss the policy and its effectiveness (compatible with Article 12 of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989).

The Education Act (2002) gives schools and local authorities a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Guidance that shows how this duty applies, issued by the DfES, refers specifically to bullying as an issue that needs to be considered as part of keeping children and young people safe (DfES 2004). More recently, a new section has been added to this act, which introduces a duty on schools' governing bodies to promote community cohesion.

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014) imposes a statutory duty on Academies/Free Schools to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy/policy is drawn up and implemented.

The Education Act (2011) provides schools with legal powers to search for and confiscate items that may have been used to bully or intimidate including electronic devices.

The Education and Inspections Act (2006) imposes a statutory duty on governing bodies to promote wellbeing in the context of 'Every Child Matters' and the Children Act (2004). The act also creates a clear, statutory power for members of school staff to impose disciplinary powers for inappropriate behaviour of pupils; enables head teachers as far as is reasonable, to regulate and take action on behaviour that occurs outside the school premises and when a member of staff is not in charge of the students. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops or in a town or village centre.

Criminal Law Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communication- could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act (1997), the Malicious Communication Act (1988), the Communications Act (2003) and the Public Order Act (1986). If school staff feel that an offence has been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act (1988), it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and The Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) state that schools, youth clubs and other educational settings should liaise with their local police officers where acts of bullying become criminal e.g. harassment, assault, wounding and causing grievous bodily harm with intent, or the carrying of weapons.

Equality Act (2010) brings together a raft of discrimination acts, regulations and codes of practice into one single act. It covers a number of protected characteristics. Those relevant for schools provision are: disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Schools and colleges must:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

This act is vital for the prevention of prejudice-related bullying in schools.

The Children Act (2004) sets out the expectation that all professionals who work with children and young people are expected to work towards the five outcomes for children:

1. Be Healthy
2. Stay Safe
3. Enjoy and Achieve
4. Make a Positive Contribution
5. Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Bullying and discrimination feature as high-level aims in two of the five ECM outcomes – ‘Stay Safe’ and ‘Make a Positive Contribution’. Schools and local authorities will be held responsible for ensuring that children and young people in their care achieve these outcomes.

The Common Inspection Framework (2015) requires Ofsted to make a judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management and pupils’ personal development, behaviour and welfare. Under these two criteria inspections will evaluate the effectiveness of measures established by schools to address all forms and types of bullying.

The Children and Families Act (2014) requires a Local Authority to produce a Local Offer that demonstrates the arrangements schools in their local area have in place for "supporting the emotional mental and social development of disabled children and young people and those with SEN (this should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of pupils and students with SEN and measures to prevent bullying)" - SEN Code of Practice June 2014

The Human Rights Act (2000) is based on the European Convention on Human Rights. The act contains two articles, which may be of particular relevance to a bullied child who fails to receive protection from bullying:

Article 3: ‘No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment’.

Article 6: ‘Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence’.

In order for a claim to be brought under the Human Rights Act, the bullying would have to be extremely serious and have resulted in physical or psychiatric damage, which is supported by strong medical evidence.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) contains the following articles relating to bullying:

Article 2: 'All the rights must be available to all children whatever their race, religion, language or ability'.

Article 3: 'A child's best interests should always be the main consideration'.

Article 12: 'Children's opinions should always be taken into account in matters that concern them'.

Article 19: 'Children have a right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated'.

Article 37a: 'No child should be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment'.

Although the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child cannot be upheld in UK courts of law, the European Convention on Human Rights is a relevant international legal instrument that is legally binding; hence it can be enforced in UK courts.

Appendix B

A Sample Bullying Incident Report Form

Logging information

SECTION A: ALLEGED BULLYING INCIDENT			
Target			
Name(s):	Age:	Year group:	Class:
Ethnicity:	Gender: M / F	SEN Stage:	
Home language:	Looked-after child: Y / N	Young Carer: Y / N	
Member of staff to whom the incident was reported:			
Date of incident:			
Time of incident:			
Location of incident:			
Target's Account / Concern of parents/carers:			
Alleged perpetrator(s):			
Name(s):	Age:	Year group:	Class:
Nature of incident including details of any injury or damage to property, etc:			

Circle any elements that apply:

Form: Physical Verbal Indirect Cyberbullying Type:

Bullying related to

Ethnicity/culture and religious background	Gender identity	Special educational needs and disabilities	Appearance or health conditions
Gender	Sexual identity	Being gifted or talented	Home circumstances e.g. young carers or looked-after children

Parents/carers of alleged target(s) informed:

Date: _____ Time: _____

SECTION B: ACCOUNTS OF THOSE INVOLVED

Alleged perpetrator(s) account of the incident

Name(s): _____ Age: _____ Year group: _____ Class: _____

Bystanders'/ witnesses' accounts of the incident

Name(s): _____ Age: _____ Year group: _____ Class: _____

Parents/carers of alleged perpetrators informed:

Date: Time:

SECTION C: ACTION TAKEN

Details of immediate action taken:

Monitoring of action taken and details of follow up and longer term action taken:

Appendix C

Responding to Incidents of Bullying – The Support Group Method

This appendix outlines the restorative processes and approaches the school will take when responding to incidents of bullying. This appendix includes an outline of The Support Group Method.

The Support Group Method – Introduction

The Support Group Method, developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson, was first outlined in *Educational Psychology in Practice* (1991). The approach addresses bullying by forming a support group of children and young people who have been bullying and/or have been involved as bystanders. It uses a problem-solving approach, without apportioning blame, giving responsibility to the group to solve the problem and to report back at a subsequent review meeting.

The Support Group Method – A Seven-Step Structure

Step 1 – talk with and listen to the target

Aims of this step:

- To understand the pain experienced by the target
- To explain the method and gain permission to proceed
- To discuss who will make up The Support Group
- To agree what will be recounted to the group.

Step 2 – convene a meeting with the people involved

The facilitator arranges to meet with the group of children who have been involved and suggested by the target. A group of six to eight children works well. This is an opportunity for the facilitator to use their judgement to balance the group so that helpful and reliable children are included alongside those whose behaviour has been causing distress. The aim is to use the strengths of the group members to bring about the best outcome.

Step 3 – explain the problem

The facilitator starts by telling the group that s/he is worried about the target who is having a very hard time at the moment. By asking the group to listen to his/her own worries, the facilitator can divert some suspicion or irritation which might be directed towards the target.

The facilitator recounts the story of the target's unhappiness and may use a piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise the target's distress. At no time does the facilitator discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step 4 – share responsibility

When the account is finished the listeners may look downcast or uncomfortable and be uncertain about the reason for the meeting. Some may be anxious about possible punishment. The facilitator makes a change in the mood by stating explicitly that:

- no-one is in trouble or going to be punished.
- it is the facilitator's responsibility to help the target to be happy and safe but they cannot do it without the help of the group.
- the group has been convened to help solve the problem

Step 5 – ask the group members for their ideas

Group members are usually genuinely moved by the account of the target's distress and relieved that they are not in trouble.

Each member of the group is then encouraged to suggest a way in which the target could be helped to feel happier.

Ideas are owned by the group members and not imposed by the facilitator. The facilitator makes positive responses and does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step 6 – leave it up to them

The facilitator ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. S/he thanks them, expresses confidence in a positive outcome and arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step 7 – meet them again

About a week later, the facilitator discusses with the target how things have been going. S/he then meets with the group to discuss how things have been going for them. This allows the facilitator to monitor the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process.