

THE HOWARD PARTNERSHIP TRUST

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date of Review: July 2025

Responsible Body: The Howard Partnership Trust

Review period: 2 yearly

Trust Committee: Standards & Performance

Date of next Review: June 2027

Executive Lead: DCEO, with advice from THPT
Strategic Lead for Inclusive Practice

Status: Non-statutory

Publication: Internal

Related policies:

Respectful Relationships and Behaviour Policy

Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Drugs Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Purpose:

- All staff, children/young people and parents/carers will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All children/young people and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying and what to do if bullying occurs.
- All staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- When bullying is reported, parents/carers and children/young people will feel assured that they will be supported, and bullying will not be tolerated.
- The policy has been developed with reference to The Equality Act 2010.

Across THPT Schools, we aim to fulfil the following objectives:

- To develop self-esteem in all children/young people
- Encourage positive behaviour, individual responsibility and ambition.
- Provide a happy, safe, caring and inclusive environment that values each individual and promotes respect and consideration for others and in which all children/young people develop to their full potential academically and socially.
- Raise awareness of bullying and the issues associated with it and teach prevention and coping strategies through PSHE, Citizenship and other curriculum areas.
- Provide a consistent response to incidents of bullying.
- Develop and support home, school and community partnerships that encourage all members of our community to be open in their concerns.

We aim to do this in school by creating an anti-bullying culture. This is essential as it creates a safe, secure and happy environment which promotes individual wellbeing, positive behaviour, an awareness of individual responsibility, good attendance, a reduction in truancy and disaffection and ultimately raises educational attainment. By ensuring early and effective intervention, the schools are able to support a change in the patterns of behaviour which enable all children/young people to mature into valuable members of society.

It is important that all members in each school's community are aware that bullying of any kind is unacceptable and that everyone is expected to be proactive and to tell a member of staff if they are aware that bullying is happening and that all staff are expected to be vigilant. The development of a 'telling culture' supports anti-bullying within the school community.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, aimed at harming, threatening or frightening someone, either physically or emotionally. The behaviour is repeated over a period of time, and it is often difficult for the victim(s) to defend themselves. It can involve a real or perceived imbalance of power.

Bullying may be carried out by individuals or groups, and may include the following behaviours:

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| Physical | Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or hiding belongings or any use of violence. |
| Verbal | Name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive remarks e.g. racist, sexist or homophobic remarks, repeated teasing, threats, sarcasm, gossiping. |
| Indirect | Spreading rumours about someone, excluding someone from social groups, leaving notes, failure to acknowledge a person, inappropriate text messaging and emailing, offensive or inappropriate use of social media, producing offensive graffiti. |

There are a number of vulnerable groups who are more at risk of being targeted by bullying behaviour. These include looked after children, young carers, traveller groups, children with a disability, children with special educational needs (SEND), children who are believed to be gay, lesbian or bisexual, children undergoing gender reassignment, children who are pregnant or children from ethnic minorities and/or faiths.

Specific types of bullying include:

1. **Racist bullying** which occurs when bullying makes a person feels unwelcome, marginalized and excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status.
2. **Homophobic bullying** which occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against people who are or are believed to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
3. **Faith-based bullying** which occurs when bullying makes a person feels unwelcome, marginalised and excluded, powerless or worthless based on differences of religion.
4. **Sexual/sexist bullying** aims to demean, intimidate or harm another person through the use of sexist language, negative stereotyping based on gender, unwanted/inappropriate physical contact, sexual innuendo, suggestive propositioning,

distribution/display of pornographic material aimed at an individual, graffiti with sexual/sexist content aimed at an individual.

5. **Cyberbullying** which can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. All the other forms of bullying can take place within the method of cyberbullying but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying in person, they use technology as a means of conducting the bullying. With other forms of bullying, the victim is able to have safe places that the bully cannot intrude into. However, with cyberbullying, no place is safe as the bullying can take place in any place, at any time. Whilst pupils/students are able to walk away from bullies, this is not possible where cyberbullying is concerned. This form of bullying evolves with technology. As a result of the Education and Inspections Act (2006), Principals have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of children/young people when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. As a result, children/young people involved in cyberbullying out of school will be dealt with within the guidelines of this policy.
6. **Emotional** which occurs when individuals are actively ignored or excluded from social groups, teased or verbally tormented
7. **Transphobic bullying** stems from a hatred or fear of people who are transgender. (transgender is an umbrella term that describes people whose sense of their gender or gender identity is seen as being different to typical gender norms). Its aim is to exclude and demean another person perhaps for their behaviour, clothing or appearance.
8. **SEN/Disability bullying** makes someone feel excluded, abused or ridiculed based on their disability or learning difficulties

Indicators of Bullying

Physical: unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, missing belongings, damaged clothes or schoolwork, loss of appetite, stomach aches, headaches, soiling/bedwetting.

Emotional: losing interest in school, withdrawn, secretive, unusual shows of temper, refusal to say why unhappy, high levels of anxiety, mood swings, tearfulness for no reason, lack of confidence, headaches and stomach aches, signs of depression.

Behavioural: asking to be taken to school, coming home for lunch, being hungry despite being provided with lunch or means to buy it, reluctance to go to school including complaining of feeling ill each morning, taking longer to get home, asks for more money, using different routes to school, 'losing' more items than usual, sudden changes in behaviour and mood, concentration difficulties, truancy, significant change in attainment/progress.

It is important that all members of the school community, including children/young people, staff and parents/carers, support each other. If anyone witnesses a bullying incident, they are expected to tell a member of staff, and everyone is expected to be vigilant at all times. Systems must be established to ensure that bullying incidents can be reported verbally, in writing or by e-mail.

Bullying of any kind within a THPT community is unacceptable. If members of a THPT school community witness bullying and do not tell an adult, they are considered to be condoning the bullying behaviour.

If bullying does occur, all members of a THPT school community should be able to report incidents and feel confident that these will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We recognise that it may be difficult to report incidents of bullying and therefore the school continues to focus on developing an anti-bullying culture, where a positive atmosphere and caring environment is created and procedures are put in place to ensure that incidents of bullying are rare.

In THPT schools, we carry out preventative measures designed to encourage children/young people to behave in a positive way towards one and another and therefore discourage bullying. Such measures will include effective supervision of children/young people at breaks and lunchtimes, provision of trained peer mentors, opportunities for children/young people to discuss the issues surrounding bullying and to practice interpersonal skills in a range of situations.

If bullying occurs, each school will follow clear procedures which will involve the children/young people, staff and parents/carers. It is important that the lines of communication remain open at all times and that everyone involved is able to talk about the incidents that have happened. We may use the restorative approach if deemed appropriate. This approach encourages the reporting of incidents by reducing the victims' anxiety about repercussions. It also educates the bullies by increasing their sensitivity and sense of responsibility for their actions. Of course, it is not always appropriate to follow this course of action and this decision will be made on an individual basis.

If children/young people do not respond to initial action taken and bullying continues, the school will use a range of additional sanctions such as detentions, loss of social time and/or privileges, internal isolation and suspension. In cases of serious and/or persistent bullying, permanent exclusion may result. Victims of bullying will be offered further counselling and support as required.

Monitoring of Bullying Incidents

All bullying incidents and remedial action taken will be centrally logged, whether detected by direct observation or reported by pupils/students or parents. THPT Heads of Phase (and in regard to stakeholder engagement the Local Board) regularly review staff, parent and student voice reports and behaviour logs and incidents to assess the extent of any bullying incidents and the actions taken, including, where available, comparative information from other schools.