

Hollywell Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2026

Key Contact Personnel

Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy: Elizabeth Ellis

Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead: Elizabeth Ellis,
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Tracey Harlin, Sharon Sibley

Policy review date – Autumn term 2027

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedures

Hollywell Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Statement of Intent

At Hollywell Primary School, our school learning behaviours are Ready, Respectful and Responsible. We believe that every child has the right to learn and develop in a safe, caring and inclusive environment, free from bullying, discrimination, harassment and intimidation.

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We recognise that bullying can have a significant impact on a child's emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, relationships and learning. All reports or concerns about bullying will therefore be taken seriously and responded to promptly, fairly and proportionately.

Children should feel confident that they can tell a trusted adult if something is happening to them or someone else and know that adults will listen and act.

We will work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and, where appropriate, external agencies to prevent bullying and respond effectively when concerns arise.

2. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure that:

- all pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers understand what bullying is;
- pupils know how and where to report bullying or concerns about the behaviour of others;
- staff recognise potential signs of bullying and respond consistently;
- reported incidents are investigated promptly and appropriately;
- pupils who experience bullying are supported;
- pupils displaying bullying behaviour are supported to understand the impact of their actions and change their behaviour;
- incidents involving discrimination, harassment or protected characteristics are identified and responded to appropriately;
- bullying which may constitute child-on-child abuse is managed through the school's safeguarding procedures;
- patterns and trends in bullying are monitored by school leaders; and
- the school promotes a culture of respect, inclusion and belonging in which bullying is less likely to occur.

3. What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying may involve an imbalance of power between children. This may be physical or psychological and may arise because of factors such as age, strength, numbers, popularity, confidence, access to information, SEND or vulnerability. Bullying can be overt and obvious or subtle and difficult to detect. It may happen face-to-face or online.

Bullying can be, but not limited to:

- **Physical bullying** – hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or damaging belongings or other physical aggression.
- **Verbal bullying** – name-calling, insults, threats, teasing or offensive remarks.
- **Indirect/social bullying** – deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships or encouraging others not to associate with someone.
- **Emotional bullying** – intimidation, humiliation, threatening behaviour, coercion or deliberately undermining another person.

- **Prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying** – behaviour related to race, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other perceived differences.
- **SEND-related bullying** – bullying connected to a child's special educational needs, disability, communication needs or differences.
- **Sexual bullying or harassment** – sexual comments, unwanted contact, sexualised behaviour, sharing sexualised material or other harmful sexual behaviour.
- **Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying** – bullying relating to actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Bullying related to personal or family circumstances** – for example, bullying relating to being looked after, previously looked after, a young carer, family circumstances or socio-economic circumstances.
- **Online/cyberbullying** – bullying through social media, messaging, gaming platforms, images, videos or other digital technology.

There is no hierarchy of bullying. All forms are taken seriously.

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

4. Bullying and Other Harmful Behaviour

At Hollywell, we use the child-friendly reminder: **STOP – Several Times On Purpose**

This helps children understand one of the key characteristics of bullying: that behaviour is often deliberate and repeated.

However, not all harmful behaviour has to be repeated to be serious. A single incident may constitute harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence, abuse or another safeguarding concern. Staff must therefore consider the nature, severity and context of an incident rather than deciding that something is not serious simply because it has only happened once.

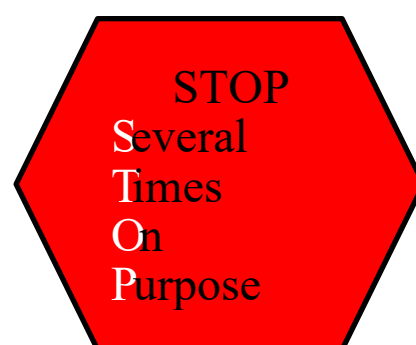
Conflict or friendship difficulties between children of relatively equal power are not necessarily bullying. However, these situations will still be addressed appropriately through the school's behaviour and pastoral systems.

To help, we give the children the following guidance:

When is it bullying?

When it happens **Several Times On Purpose**

To remind children, we use the STOP sign, illustrated here:



5. Bullying as a Safeguarding Concern

Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and can cause significant emotional and psychological harm.

Where bullying involves, or may involve, abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, discrimination, significant threats, coercion or other safeguarding concerns, staff must follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL and recorded using the school's safeguarding recording system.

Safeguarding procedures take precedence where the nature or seriousness of an incident indicates that a child may be at risk of harm

6. Equality and Prejudice-Based Bullying

Hollywell Primary School is committed to equality and inclusion. We will not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination relating to a child's actual or perceived protected characteristics or those of someone with whom they are associated.

This includes behaviour relating to:

- age, where applicable;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- race, including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

Staff should also remain alert to bullying arising from other aspects of children's identity, circumstances or vulnerability, including SEND, being looked after or previously looked after, being a young carer or socio-economic circumstances.

Prejudice-based incidents will be recorded and monitored so that leaders can identify patterns and take appropriate action.

7. Where can bullying take place?

Bullying is not confined to the school premises. It also persists outside school, on the journey to and from school, in the local community, online and may continue into Further Education. The school acknowledges its responsibilities to support families if bullying occurs off the premises.

8. Online Bullying

Online bullying can be particularly intrusive because it can take place at any time and can reach a wide audience quickly.

Examples may include:

- sending abusive, threatening or intimidating messages;
- posting offensive or discriminatory comments;
- deliberately excluding someone from online groups;
- sharing photographs, videos or information intended to embarrass or humiliate someone;
- impersonating another person online;
- spreading rumours;
- manipulating or threatening another person;
- creating offensive content about another person; or
- encouraging others to participate in bullying.

Children are taught how to behave safely and respectfully online through the curriculum and wider safeguarding education.

Where online bullying outside school affects a pupil or the school community, the school will consider what action it is appropriate to take.

Parents/carers will be supported and advised where appropriate.

9. Signs and Indicators

Children experiencing bullying may not always report it directly.

Possible indicators can include:

- becoming withdrawn, anxious or unusually quiet;
- changes in friendships or behaviour;
- reluctance or refusal to attend school;
- increased absence;
- deterioration in learning, concentration or engagement;
- unexplained injuries or damaged belongings;
- changes in eating or sleeping;
- becoming distressed after using a phone or device;
- avoiding particular places, activities or children;
- seeking greater proximity to adults; or
- changes in emotional wellbeing.

These signs do not necessarily mean that bullying is occurring, but staff should remain professionally curious and explore concerns appropriately.

10. Reporting Bullying

Children are encouraged to report concerns to any trusted adult.

They may speak to:

- their class teacher;
- a teaching assistant;
- a midday supervisor;
- the Head Teacher or another member of SLT; or
- any other trusted adult in school.

Children are also encouraged to report bullying that they witness involving someone else.

Parents/carers should report concerns to the child's class teacher in the first instance, unless the seriousness or nature of the concern makes it appropriate to contact a member of SLT or the Head Teacher directly.

All concerns will be taken seriously.

11. Responding to Reports of Bullying

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated involving all parties. There may be a period of monitoring following a report of bullying if it is necessary to gather further evidence.

The following steps will be taken when bullying is suspected or reported:

1) Respond and record

Any report or suspicion of bullying will be taken seriously and responded to promptly. A clear account of the concern will be recorded on MyConcern and shared with the Head Teacher/appropriate member of SLT. Where

a member of staff does not have access to MyConcern, the school's agreed safeguarding recording procedure will be followed.

2) Establish what has happened

The Head Teacher or an appropriate member of SLT will oversee the investigation. Information will be gathered from the children involved and, where appropriate, from witnesses and relevant staff. Children will usually be spoken to separately initially so that their individual views can be heard.

The record on MyConcern will be updated to show the information gathered, actions taken, decisions made and outcomes.

3) Consider safeguarding immediately

At all stages, staff will consider whether the behaviour may constitute child-on-child abuse or another safeguarding concern.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL will be informed without delay and the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. Safeguarding action will not be delayed while an investigation into bullying takes place.

4) Inform relevant staff and monitor

Relevant staff, including class teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors, will be informed on a need-to-know basis so that appropriate support and monitoring can be put in place.

Where necessary, particular times, locations or interactions will be monitored to establish whether the behaviour has stopped and to prevent further incidents.

5) Inform parents/carers

Parents/carers of the children involved will normally be informed where bullying is established or where the seriousness or nature of the concern warrants this.

The school will communicate appropriately with families while maintaining confidentiality. Information relating to another child, including sanctions applied to them, will not normally be shared.

6) Take appropriate action

Where bullying has taken place, appropriate consequences will be applied in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy. The response will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour and will take account of factors including:

- the impact on the child;
- whether behaviour has been repeated or persistent;
- the age and understanding of the children involved;
- SEND or other additional needs;
- any discriminatory or prejudicial element;
- previous concerns or interventions; and
- any safeguarding considerations.

Bullying is unacceptable and consequences will reinforce the school's expectations of being Ready, Respectful and Responsible.

7) Support the children involved

The child who has experienced bullying will be provided with appropriate support and reassurance.

The child who has displayed bullying behaviour will also be supported to understand:

- what happened;
- the impact of their behaviour on others;
- why the behaviour was unacceptable;
- what needs to change; and
- how they can make better choices in future.

Depending on individual need, support may include solution-focused work, ELSA or other pastoral support, work around friendships or social understanding, a circle of friends, individual intervention or involvement from external agencies.

8) Consider restorative approaches where appropriate

A restorative approach may be used where it is appropriate, safe and likely to have a positive outcome.

A restorative meeting will not be automatic, and a child who has experienced bullying will not be required to participate in a face-to-face restorative meeting where this may cause further distress or create an inappropriate power imbalance.

Where the incident constitutes or may constitute a safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures will take precedence.

9) Follow up and review

There will be appropriate follow-up with the child who has experienced bullying and with their parents/carers to check that:

- the bullying has stopped;
- the child feels safe;
- agreed actions have been implemented; and
- no further support is required.

The effectiveness of actions and any further decisions will be recorded on MyConcern.

Where parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the school's response, they will be directed to the school's Complaints Procedure.

10) Off-site, online and serious incidents

Where bullying occurs outside school, including online, the school will consider what action it is appropriate to take where the behaviour affects the wellbeing or safety of pupils or has an impact on the school environment. Where appropriate, the school may liaise with parents/carers, other schools, external agencies or the wider community.

Some behaviours may also constitute a criminal offence, for example violence, threats, repeated harassment or intimidation, or hate crime. Where necessary and appropriate, the police will be contacted.

Early Help and/or other appropriate services will be considered where a child or family would benefit from additional support.

12. Supporting Children Who Have Experienced Bullying

Support will be matched to the individual child's needs and may include:

- regular check-ins with a trusted adult;
- opportunities to talk about what has happened;
- reassurance and pastoral support;
- support with friendships and relationships;
- ELSA, Drawing and Talking or other appropriate pastoral provision;
- reasonable adjustments or changes to arrangements where appropriate;
- work to rebuild confidence and self-esteem;
- involvement of parents/carers; and
- referral to external services where additional support is required.

The child's views will be considered when deciding what support is appropriate.

13. Supporting Children Who Display Bullying Behaviour

The school recognises that simply applying a consequence may not prevent bullying from happening again. Children who display bullying behaviour will therefore be supported to:

- understand what happened;
- understand the impact of their behaviour;
- take responsibility for their actions;
- develop empathy;
- identify factors contributing to their behaviour;
- learn alternative ways of managing relationships, conflict and emotions; and
- make appropriate changes to their behaviour.

Support may include individual work, pastoral intervention, social and emotional support, work with parents/carers or referral to other services.

Appropriate sanctions may be used alongside support in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

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Appropriate sanctions may be used alongside support in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

15. Restorative Approaches

Restorative approaches can help children understand the impact of their behaviour and repair relationships. However, a restorative meeting will not automatically take place following a bullying incident.

Where appropriate and following consideration of the needs and wishes of the child who has experienced bullying, a restorative approach may be offered.

Restorative meetings will not be used where they may:

- cause further distress;
- place inappropriate responsibility on the child who has experienced bullying;
- reinforce an unsafe power imbalance;
- compromise a safeguarding investigation; or
- otherwise, be inappropriate because of the nature or seriousness of the incident.

Where restorative work is appropriate, questions may include:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking or feeling at the time?
- Who has been affected?
- How have they been affected?
- What needs to happen to put things right?

- What can be done differently in the future?

Where an incident constitutes or may constitute a safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures will take precedence.

16. Sanctions and Serious or Persistent Bullying

Bullying behaviour may result in sanctions in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

The response will take account of:

- the seriousness of the behaviour;
- frequency and persistence;
- impact on the child;
- the child's age and understanding;
- SEND and other individual needs;
- any discriminatory or prejudicial element;
- previous incidents and interventions; and
- any safeguarding considerations.

Serious or persistent bullying may result in significant sanctions and, in exceptional circumstances, may contribute to a decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's Behaviour Policy.

17. Working with Parents and Carers

The school recognises that effective communication with families is important when addressing bullying.

Parents/carers will be encouraged to:

- report concerns promptly;
- share relevant information with school;
- avoid directly confronting another child or family;
- work constructively with school to resolve concerns; and
- support agreed strategies.

The school will communicate appropriately with the families of children involved while respecting confidentiality and data protection requirements.

The school cannot normally share details of sanctions or confidential information relating to another child.

Where a parent/carer remains dissatisfied with the school's response, they may use the school's Complaints Procedure.

18. Prevention

Preventing bullying is a whole-school responsibility.

Hollywell promotes positive relationships and respectful behaviour through:

- our expectations of being Ready, Respectful and Responsible;
- a strong culture of safeguarding and belonging;
- PSHE and RSHE;
- assemblies;
- online safety education;
- Anti-Bullying Week;
- Safer Internet Day;

- class discussions and pupil voice;
- School Council;
- teaching about healthy friendships and relationships;
- teaching children how to recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination;
- social stories and targeted support where appropriate;
- ELSA and Drawing and Talking;
- staff modelling respectful relationships;
- staff training;
- clear behaviour expectations; and
- working in partnership with parents/carers.

All staff, including midday supervisors and adults working in before- and after-school provision, have a role in preventing, recognising and responding to bullying.

19. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head Teacher and SLT will monitor bullying incidents to identify:

- repeated incidents;
- pupils repeatedly involved;
- locations or times where bullying is more likely to occur;
- online patterns;
- prejudice-based or discriminatory incidents;
- patterns affecting pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities; and
- whether actions and interventions have been effective.

This information will inform safeguarding, behaviour, curriculum and pastoral provision.

Governors will receive appropriate information about bullying as part of their oversight of safeguarding, behaviour and pupil wellbeing.

20. Links to Other Policies and Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality Information and Objectives;
- RSHE/PSHE Policy;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Staff Code of Conduct; and
- relevant Trust policies and procedures.

Evaluation and Review

Evaluation and review ensure that the policy remains responsive to changing need while continuing to protect our children from bullying. The information collected from monitoring and from any policy feedback provided by staff, families, pupils and governors is used to review and update the school's antibullying approach.

The policy will be re-affirmed each year following staff discussions and relevant comments from other interested parties.

As part of our on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we at Hollywell Primary School have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour:

- Be involved in discussion about writing school rules.
- Take ownership of the formation of class rules at the start of each year.
- Take part in the National Anti-bullying week in November and internet safety week in February each year, involving all children in discussions about acceptable behaviours and ensuring all children know what procedures should be followed.
- Have regular school assemblies focussed around PSHE themes of bullying, friendship and expected behaviour.
- The school will have a clear behaviour policy that rewards positive behaviour.
- The school rules will be clear and straightforward and focus on positive attitudes.
- PSHE/Citizenship lessons and cross curriculum.
- Children are encouraged to help perpetrators and victims reflect upon their actions.
- Both children and parents will be made aware of how to use the internet safely and of the possibilities of cyber bullying.
- The role of the School Council will be high profile throughout the school. Each class (Y1-6) will have two members – one voted on by their peers.
- Class circle time or equivalent discussion time sessions (supported by PSHE materials) will focus on relationships, managing feelings and friendships.
- Social stories.
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as cyber bullying and internet safety as well as regular newsletter articles related to online safety.
- Open and honest reporting systems in class and across school.
- Counselling/Play therapy e.g. through our class TAs, ELSA and Drawing and Talking Leads.
- Support for all school staff and training and development for all staff including those involved in lunchtime and before and after school activities.
- Support for parents/carers through parent groups, information events/information on our website, clear vision and ethos and through the promotion of an open-door policy.
- Staff training around curriculum delivery of RSHE related areas.
- Encouraging all staff to model expected behaviour.

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