Hampton Court House

Anti-Bullying Policy

Last Updated: August 2026

Next Review: August 2027

Reviewed by ACB

Contents

1. Aims and Purpose of the Policy 3
2. Equal Opportunities 3
3. What is Bullying? 4
4. Tackling Bullying in School 5
5. Bullying and Safeguarding 5
6. Bullying and the Law 5
7. Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying 5
8. Our Strategy for Countering Bullying 6
9. Anti-bullying policy and SEND pupils 7
10. Countering Cyber-Bullying 7
11. Dealing with Bullying 8

Reporting, Recording and Investigation 8

Staff 8

Pupils 9

Parents 10

Governing Body 11

1. Aims and Purpose of the Policy

This policy has been written with regard to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, particularly Part 3, paragraph 10; the DfE advice Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017); Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026; the Equality Act 2010; the Education and Inspections Act 2006; and the Children Act 2004. It should be read alongside the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Agreements, SEND Policy, Equality Policy and Complaints Procedure.

At Hampton Court House School (hereafter known as Hampton Court House or HCH), we expect each pupil to work together with the staff to prevent any form of bullying. If a pupil is being made unhappy by another pupil – or if a pupil witnesses an incident in which a pupil is being unpleasant to another – then we expect that pupil to report this immediately to a teacher. Pupils are regularly reminded (through assemblies and tutorials) of the anti-bullying policy.

In turn, all our staff know that incidents of bullying against pupils and themselves are unacceptable. Up to date information ensures they understand what bullying is, what behaviours victims might exhibit, and what procedures they should follow should bullying occur.

Preventing and responding to bullying forms part of HCH's wider safeguarding and behaviour arrangements. This policy applies to all pupils from Early Years to Sixth Form, while on the school site, during remote education, on school transport, trips and activities, and where conduct outside school or online affects a pupil's welfare, the orderly running of the school or the school community.

Hampton Court House is committed to a safe, inclusive culture in which bullying, harassment, discrimination and child-on-child abuse are not tolerated. All concerns will be taken seriously, responded to promptly and handled in a proportionate, child-centred way.

The school will raise awareness of the policy to staff through training, including, and ensuring:

- the principles of this policy are understood including reporting and recording arrangements.
- legal responsibilities are known.
- action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, including in relation to cyberbullying.

The school will invest in specialised skills to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) pupils.

Records of bullying are kept centrally using CPOMS, reports are run half termly and shared with SLT. The reports are used to help us identify patterns of behaviour, particularly by protected characteristics of pupils, allowing us to take appropriate action.

2. Equal Opportunities

In line with our Behaviour Management policy, all pupils are expected to meet the high expectations of behaviour set. We aim:

- to create an environment where every child and adult feels safe and secure.
- to ensure that everyone in the school understands what bullying is and is not.
- to ensure that everyone in the school is aware of how to deal with bullying if it occurs.

- to promote a culture where every child understands it is their responsibility to report bullying if they see or experience it.

3. What is Bullying?

HCH recognises that learning to understand and manage conflict is an important part of growing up. Bullying is not simply a 'falling out'. Research shows that experiencing bullying can have a significant impact on a child's life well into adulthood. To ensure we are able to prevent bullying, act quickly when it takes place and avoid misidentifying bullying, it is vital that schools and other settings have a shared definition of bullying. Which the school believes to be:

"Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online."

ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE - Definition of bullying

This definition should be understood by the whole school or setting including parents, young people, and all staff.

Bullying usually involves repetition, intent to hurt and an imbalance of power. The imbalance may be physical, social, psychological, identity-based or technological, and may arise from popularity, group size, age, status, access to information or the ability to remain anonymous online. A single harmful incident may not meet the definition of bullying, but it will still be challenged, recorded and addressed under the Behaviour or Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as appropriate.

Bullying may be direct or indirect, overt or subtle, and may occur face to face, through third parties or online. It can include:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), taunting, name calling
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, gossiping, saying unkind things about the victim's family
- Online/cyber: abusive or intimidating messages; exclusion from online groups; impersonation; sharing, editing or threatening to share images, videos or personal information; malicious posts, rumours or polls; discriminatory content; or using gaming, messaging, social-media or AI-enabled tools to humiliate, target or harass.

Differences are celebrated at Hampton Court House; anything which negatively focuses on differences is bullying and is wrong.

Prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying includes behaviour connected to an actual or perceived protected characteristic or other aspect of identity or circumstance, including:

- race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; disability or SEND; pregnancy or maternity; age; marriage or civil partnership, where relevant; or association with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- It may also target appearance, health, family circumstances, socioeconomic background, caring responsibilities, adoption, being in care or any other perceived difference.

As per the Department of Education guidance, Bullying "is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care, or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences."

4. Tackling Bullying in School

Tackling the issue of bullying matters in school because:

- bullying makes pupils unhappy and affects their self-esteem and confidence.
- pupils who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their schoolwork and will fall behind.
- some pupils avoid being bullied by not going to school.
- pupils who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour might copy this anti-social behaviour.
- bullying can have negative life-long effects on a child.
- the school is responsible for providing a safe learning environment for all pupils.

5. Bullying and Safeguarding

Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse and serious bullying, including cyberbullying, may constitute emotional abuse. Sexual violence, sexual harassment, abuse in intimate personal relationships, sharing nude or semi-nude images, upskirting, physical assault and initiation or hazing are safeguarding concerns and must not be dismissed as banter or treated only as bullying. Staff must report these concerns immediately to the DSL or a Deputy DSL and follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. A bullying incident will be managed as a child-protection concern whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

6. Bullying and the Law

There is no one strict legal definition of bullying, however, some forms of bullying are illegal, and it may be necessary for the school to report the incident to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails, or text messages.
- sexual offences, malicious communications, stalking, coercive or threatening behaviour, and the non-consensual creation or sharing of intimate or manipulated images may also be criminal offences.
- hate incidents or hate crimes motivated wholly or partly by hostility or prejudice relating to disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. A hate incident is not necessarily a criminal offence; the school will seek advice or report to the police where a crime may have been committed.

7. Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school

- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stuttering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- asks for money and starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has money continually 'lost'
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong
- gives improbable excuses to any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated and reported via the CPOMS portal to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8. Our Strategy for Countering Bullying

HCH promotes values which promote co-operative, caring behaviour and reject bullying behaviour. Staff should reinforce these values regularly, and at specific times after any incident, if required.

Bullying is discussed and prevented:

- by being part of the PSHE curriculum, which includes the recent updates to RSE, and through the promotion of children's personal, social and emotional development in the EYFS
- within PSHE lessons, the topic of anti-bullying is explored through a variety of strategies including, but not limited to, paired or group discussions, dramatic role plays, pupil leadership, independent projects, presentations, story time, published literature, film and TV studies. Discussions take place regularly throughout the school on the differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.
- during specific activities, such as in the annual Friendship Week, Anti-Bullying week
- at assemblies focused on bullying
- during Circle time, e.g. friendships, conflict resolution, assertiveness and trust
- through Student Council/Student voice the school aims to create an open culture

9. Anti-bullying policy and SEND pupils

Children with SEND or communication needs may be more vulnerable to bullying, may show distress differently, and may find it harder to recognise, explain or report what has happened. Staff will not assume that behaviour is explained by a child's SEND. Reporting and investigation will be made accessible through reasonable adjustments such as a trusted adult, visual prompts, communication aids, additional processing time or alternative ways to give an account. Responses and consequences will take account of individual needs without lowering expectations that every pupil is safe and treated with dignity. The SENDCo and DSL will be involved where appropriate.

10. Countering Cyber-Bullying

The school follows current DfE online-safety and safeguarding guidance, including Teaching Online Safety in Schools and KCSIE 2026. Technology can facilitate abuse at any time and can make harm persistent, scalable and difficult to escape.

Pupils are taught the dangers and risks of inappropriate internet usage, how to spot the signs of cyberbullying and what to do if they feel they are a victim of cyberbullying. This happens within both PSHE and Computer Science lessons, where positive use of the internet is also taught to pupils. The school provides external speakers and off timetable days in addition to provide extra support and information on this issue. Cyber-bullying is also covered within assemblies and form time activities. We also provide information and support to parents in order to assist them in further supporting their child(ren).

Incidents of cyber-bullying will be tackled following the same procedures outlined within this policy, and treated of equal importance.

Pupils are taught to use age-appropriate services, privacy and reporting tools safely, to avoid forwarding harmful content, and to seek help rather than retaliate. Parents and carers are reminded of platform age requirements and are signposted to current online-safety guidance.

Pupils and parents should preserve relevant evidence where safe to do so, for example screenshots, URLs, usernames, dates and times, but should not download, copy or forward nude or semi-nude images. Such images must be reported directly to the DSL and managed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school may respond to bullying outside school, including online conduct, where it affects a pupil's welfare, relationships within school, the school community or the orderly running of the school. Action will be proportionate and may involve parents, the DSL, the local authority, platform providers or police.

All parents will be fully informed throughout the investigation.

The school uses the Senso internet filtering system to flag up and block any inappropriate websites accessed on the school network.

11. Dealing with Bullying

Reporting, Recording and Investigation

Pupils may report to any trusted adult in person or through the school's available reporting routes. Parents should contact the Form Tutor in the first instance unless the concern is serious, involves safeguarding, or the pupil would be placed at further risk; in those cases, they should contact the DSL or relevant Head of School directly. No pupil will be penalised for making a good-faith report, even where an investigation does not substantiate bullying.

The member of staff receiving a report will listen calmly, avoid promising confidentiality, record the child's own words and immediate safety needs, and pass the concern promptly to the appropriate pastoral lead. Safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL or a Deputy DSL. Records will be made on CPOMS; behaviour consequences may also be recorded on ePraise.

The school will assess immediate risk; speak separately with those involved and relevant witnesses; consider online or other evidence; check previous records for patterns; establish whether behaviour is bullying, another behaviour concern or a safeguarding matter; agree proportionate action and support; communicate with parents where appropriate; and set dates for review. Staff will protect confidentiality as far as possible and will not use mediation or restorative work where it is unsafe, unwanted or could place responsibility on the child who has been harmed.

Staff

A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Staff are trained, and expected, to be alert to children who may be vulnerable and at risk from bullying. This includes children with protected characteristics.

Staff agree that they will:

- follow the procedures laid down in the Behaviour Policy, including implementing the various consequences
- never ignore suspected bullying
- not make premature assumptions but will listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling it like it is
- aim to adopt a problem-solving approach
- follow up incidents of bullying to ensure that it has not resumed
- be vigilant at all times, but particularly at unstructured times such as breaks, lunchtime and lesson changes.

As outlined in our Behaviour Policy, the following consequences may be issued to perpetrators of bullying:

These are recorded in ePraise and/or CPOMS:

- Lunchtime or after school supervision
- Sent to a senior member of staff or another classroom
- Reflection with a senior member of staff
- Suspension from a club, team, or sporting event

- Internal suspension (a day off timetable with a senior member of staff to reflect on the incident) and a meeting with parents
- Fixed term exclusion and a reintegration meeting with parents
- Involvement of school's support strategies (e.g. The Head of Learning Support, an Educational Psychologist, the SPA (Single Point Access for Kingston and Richmond borough))
- Physical restraint may be needed (please see Appendix 3 in the Behaviour Policy)
- Parents invited to meet the Vice Principal Pastoral/DSL or the Principal
- Permanent exclusion with notice to the borough.

In addition, staff will support the child who has experienced bullying, the child whose behaviour has caused harm, and any witnesses. Support and consequences will be individualised, proportionate and reviewed. The school avoids labelling a child as a 'bully' or 'victim' and will use language that reflects the child's preference and the behaviour being addressed:

- responding to the inappropriate behaviour
- stressing the class and school rules, and individuals' rights and responsibilities
- awarding rewards, certificates and stickers etc to make pupils feel more confident
- public praise to make pupils feel more confident
- teaching pupils how being passive about bullying behaviour not only colludes with it but sometimes encourages it
- teaching pupils strategies to encourage positive behaviour in others

Pupils

Pupils need to be taught to refuse to comply with bullying pupils' demands, and to stand up for their friends against the bullies. Peer pressure can have great positive benefits.

Victims should be taught to:

- be firm and clear – look the bully/bullies in the eye and tell them to stop; role play can help pupils develop suitable strategies
- get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- tell an adult what has happened straight away

Bystanders/friends of the victim or bully should be taught to take an active stand against bullying behaviour by:

- not allowing someone to be deliberately left out of a group
- not smiling or laughing when someone is being bullied
- telling a member of staff what is happening
- telling the bullying pupil to stop what they are doing
- showing the bullying pupil that they disapprove of their actions
- encouraging the bullied pupil to join in with their activities or groups.

On being bullied, pupils should be taught:

- tell a teacher or another adult
- ask a friend to go with them if they are scared to tell an adult on their own
- tell their parents
- keep on speaking until someone listens
- not to blame themselves for what has happened.

Follow-up checks will take place at agreed intervals and will include the child's view of whether the behaviour has stopped and whether they feel safe. Cases will not be closed solely because a consequence has been issued. Any recurrence, retaliation or further impact will be recorded and acted upon.

The emotional wellbeing, mental health and safeguarding needs of all children involved will be considered. Support may include a named trusted adult, regular check-ins, counselling, a safe space, timetable or seating adjustments, peer support, SEND support, work with parents or referral to external services. The child who has experienced harm will be asked what would help them feel safe. Support for the child whose behaviour caused harm will address underlying needs and reduce recurrence without diminishing accountability.

Parents

Parents or carers of the children involved will normally be informed promptly and kept appropriately updated, subject to safeguarding, confidentiality and legal considerations. The school cannot share confidential information about another child, including details of consequences. Where parents raise a concern, it will be recorded, assessed and investigated in accordance with this policy.

To prevent and reduce the risk of bullying, we advise parents to consider the following:

If their child has been bullied, we advise parents to:

- talk calmly with their child about his/her experience
- make a note of what their child says, who was involved, how often it has happened, where it happened and what happened
- reassure their child that he/she has done the right thing to tell them about the bullying
- inform their child's Form Tutor and make an appointment to meet them and share as much information as possible - the more detail we have, the more we can do
- explain to their child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a staff member immediately
- not to approach the child doing the bullying or his/her family directly.

If their child is bullying others, we advise parents to:

- talk to their child and explain what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy
- discourage other members of the family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show their child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see their child's teacher to talk about the problems your child is experiencing
- give their child a lot of praise and encouragement when she/he is co-operative or kind to other people.

If parents or carers believe their child is experiencing or displaying bullying behaviour, they should contact the Form Tutor in the first instance, or the DSL/senior pastoral leader directly where the concern is serious or safeguarding related. If dissatisfied with the school's response, they may escalate the matter through the school's Complaints Procedure.

If parents find themselves as bystanders to bullying, by witnessing any bullying of, by, or between, HCH pupils taking place outside of the school, they should contact the Vice Principal Pastoral/DSL

as soon as possible to report it. They should give as much detail as possible including: the date, time, location, numbers involved, descriptions, and what was being said or done at the time if they can remember.

Parents/Carers should not put themselves at risk of accusation by any young person or another parent by trying to intervene or film any event with their mobile device. As a responsible citizen they should contact the school as soon as possible, as well as consider contacting the police immediately if they think a crime or assault is being committed.

Governing Body

The Governing Body monitors whether this policy is implemented effectively and bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable. Leaders provide anonymised reports on the number, nature and location of incidents; prejudice-related patterns; online and off-site concerns; repeat behaviour; actions taken; pupil voice; and follow-up. Records are retained and shared in accordance with safeguarding, data-protection and retention requirements. Trends inform staff training, supervision, curriculum, risk assessment and policy review.