

The Heath School  
Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

## **1. KEY OBJECTIVE**

To promote a safe environment, encouraging positive relationships where all children feel safe and free from harm. To ensure a unified approach is practiced across our school when dealing with bullying behavior.

## **2. RATIONALE**

The Heath School is committed to ensuring that every member of the school community is safe from bullying and are able to participate in school life to the full.

Students and staff at The Heath have the right to be:

- treated with respect, courtesy and kindness at all times
- accepted and valued as an individual
- safe and secure in school, during extra-curricular activities and between school and home

We as a school promote the following principles in relation to anti-bullying:

- We will not tolerate bullying under any circumstances and we will challenge any bullying, prejudice and discrimination at all times recognising and respecting the difference and diversity of our community
- We expect good behaviour from all students and expect staff to model good behaviour
- We value education and the right of each individual to learn and work in a safe environment
- We expect each individual to take responsibility for their actions, understanding how their actions affect others.

## **3. WHAT IS IN THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY?**

Our policy sets out the rights of all stakeholders in relation to bullying.

It contains definitions of bullying and the different forms bullying may take. It also contains information on how to communicate concerns, procedures to deal with allegations and proactive and reactive strategies to combat bullying.

Our policy takes into consideration consultation with stakeholders, as well as guidance that exists, data available and training undertaken. The policy will be subject to regular review to ensure it conforms to the latest guidance.

It reflects current practice within the school. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff and stakeholders. This policy is supported by and links closely to other policies and protocols such as the School's Behaviour for learning Policy, Attendance – Policy, Acceptable Use Protocol and The Heath-MAT-Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy all of which safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THE ANTIBULLYING POLICY**

Bullying is an unacceptable behaviour. As a school we recognise that bullying exists, as it does in all schools, and many young people are involved at some time.

The Heath is committed to creating a calm, co-operative, safe environment where young people can learn, socialise and talk about their worries, confident that an adult will listen and will offer help. We encourage an environment where all members of the community feel secure, valued and respected. This is part of our endeavor to develop community cohesion.

- Students will be protected from bullies at school and as far as possible when travelling to and from school and when taking part in extra-curricular activities.
- Students, parents and staff need to know that action will be taken, and that any incident, both physical and verbal will be handled promptly, discreetly, sensitively and consistently.
- Bullying and bullying behaviour will be recognised and acted upon.
- Both bullies and victims will be supported as appropriate.
- The Education and Inspection Act 2006 outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyber-bullying. The Principal has the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable to regulate the conduct of students when they are off site'. Some cyber-bullying activities could be a criminal offence.

The school is also committed to E-Safety, Cyber Safety and combating misuse of technology. This relates to the Acceptable Use Policy which is regularly reviewed and helps to prevent Cyber Bullying.

This policy also notes that it covers the bullying of school staff, whether by students, parents or other staff.

## **5. DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is behavior by an individual or group, usually repeated over time that intentionally harms another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. It is distinct from random acts of aggression and unpleasant behaviour.

Bullying can take different forms:

- Physical; e.g. Hitting, kicking, scratching, causing physical harm.
- Verbal; e.g. Name calling, insulting, hurtful remarks
- Indirect; e.g. Spreading malicious rumours, excluding individuals from social groups, family feuds brought into school.
- Cyber; e.g. All areas of internet, such as email and social media misuse; mobile threats by text messaging & calls; misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera & video facilities
- Racist; e.g. Racial taunts, nicknames, graffiti, gestures
- Homophobic Bullying; e.g. Because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality
- Hate Crime
- Peer on Peer abuse

## **6. TYPES OF BULLYING**

**Anyone can practice bullying behaviours/be a bully.**

Some people know that they are bullying others and they mean to bully, i.e. there is intent. However, some people bully others without recognising the impact of their actions. Similarly, a victim of bullying might not recognise what is happening to them and that bullying behaviour has a very insidious effect that affects a person's self-esteem, confidence and well-being.

A one-off incident may not comprise bullying. A characteristic of bullying is that in its different forms/behaviours it happens again and again over a period of time.

Instances of bullying tends to have the following common characteristics:

- **Repetitive and persistent.** Bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.
- **Intentionally harmful.** The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.

## The Heath School Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

- **Involves an imbalance of power.** Bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some case an imbalance of power may mean that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse requiring implementation of safeguarding procedures.

This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to special educational needs or disability (SEND)
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation.
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual and transphobic bullying.
- Cyber bullying.

### **6.1 Cyber-bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

For further guidance on Searching students please refer to The Heath's Behaviour for Learning Policy.

### **6.2 Prejudiced Based Bullying**

A prejudice based bullying incident is any incident which is or is perceived to be, by the victim or any other person, one which is motivated by an individual's protected characteristic, or perceived characteristic.

The Equality Act identified the following Protected Characteristics: -

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Race/Ethnicity
- Religion/Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Transgender
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marital/Civil Partnership Status

Prejudice based bullying can take many forms including:

## The Heath School Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

- physical attacks such as physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti and arson;
- threat of attack including offensive letters, abusive or obscene telephone calls, groups hanging around to intimidate, and unfounded, malicious complaints;
- verbal abuse, insults or harassment - taunting, offensive leaflets and posters, abusive gestures, dumping of rubbish outside homes or through letterboxes, and bullying at school or travelling to and from school;
- cyber bullying, such as social media

### **6.3 Hate Crime**

A hate crime is any **criminal offence** that is motivated by hostility or prejudice based upon the victim's:

- disability
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- transgender identity'
- Appearance

The Heath will decide where, if any incidents fall into the above category and are of a sufficiently serious nature, whether further action involving the Police may be warranted.

### **6.4 Bullying outside the school premises**

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". 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 Centre. This also includes when students are taking part in a school related activity such as a school trip or sporting fixture.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on.

The school will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

## **7. PREVENTION**

As a school community we treat each other with respect and tolerance, developing positive relationships to ensure we are all happy, safe and make progress. We aspire to develop students who are considerate, honest, polite and helpful. We encourage them to do this by valuing the school rules and expectations. (See Behaviour for Learning Policy)

Our response to tackling bullying will not start at the point at which a member of the school community has been bullied. We will be proactive in our efforts to prevent bullying. Incidents or issues which could provoke conflict may be dealt with by using restorative techniques in an attempt to prevent bullying occurring.

### ***7.1 Proactive strategies for the school can involve:***

- Promotion of a positive school ethos and good behaviour
- Promoting respect for all members of the school community
- PSHE lessons supporting pupils in understanding what bullying is and how to combat it, encouraging pupils to problem solve. Through PSHE, children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and things that are worrying them.
- Antibullying assemblies, activities during anti-bullying week and 'e' safety week
- Peer Mentoring system (Including student ambassadors)
- The use of restorative techniques
- The Heath will also address bullying through displays, peer mentoring and the School Council.
- Parents, carers and staff know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Everyone is encouraged to report all incidents of bullying including cyber-bullying.
- Bullying should be immediately dealt with, and appropriate action will be taken.
- All cases should be recorded using class charts and CPOMS or via email and passed on to the appropriate Progress Coordinator, Assistant Progress Coordinator or appropriate SLT link.
- Parents of identified bullies and victims will be notified and involved in the resolution of the issue.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.

### ***7.2 The Curriculum***

We ensure that in all aspects of school life there is an emphasis on the importance of relationships, emotional well-being and a community ethos, also valuing diversity.

We endeavor to ensure that all members of the School community:

- Value one another
- Give frequent praise, encouragement and support
- Celebrate success and share problems

# The Heath School

## Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

### **7.3 Supervision**

As a school we ensure that all areas of the school are adequately supervised and staff are vigilant. Safe spaces such as the Centre for Student Intervention (CSI) are available for vulnerable students to use during breaks and lunchtimes. Students are given opportunities to take responsibilities and demonstrate initiative (peer mentors, school council, celebration assemblies).

### **7.4 Training**

We as a school recognise and ensure that staff and Governors receive the latest appropriate training and guidance on behaviour and anti-bullying legislation, responsibilities and strategies.

### **7.5 Communication**

- We as a school are aware of the need for open communication between stakeholders. All sections of the school organisation must understand its role and responsibilities. We understand the need to ensure this policy is a living document, known and understood by all.
- Our Home/School agreement seeks to establish an active partnership between parents, staff and governors. Parents know that the School acts to prevent bullying and not just deal with bullying incidents.
- We have an Induction process for students. Every effort is made to ensure that students transfer to the Heath with ease, and are comfortable in their new surroundings and are clear about how to communicate any concerns.
- Mid-year arrivals are reassured that bullying is not permitted and shown where to go for support.
- Our staff do not wait for bullying to be proved before it is acted against. A positive, caring ethos demands a Prevention of Bullying Policy in operation throughout the school, focusing on embedding a positive ethos.
- As a School we make it clear to everyone that bullying is not tolerated and reinforce that message at every opportunity.

## **8.Procedure**

### ***8.1 Reporting a suspected case of bullying***

If you have the slightest suspicion that a student is becoming a victim of bullying, please bring the matter to the immediate attention of a member of staff.

The Progress Co-ordinator for the year group will investigate the incidents referred to them and, if necessary, involve the Behaviour Liaison Coordinator, Assistant Progress Coordinator and/or student's Form Tutor.

### ***8.2 Responding to a report of bullying***

We as a school recognise the need for a prompt response to an incident that appears to be bullying. The following list of actions could be used by staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the incident:

- Discuss the incident with the victim using patience and understanding.
- Listen carefully. Allow the victim or reporter of the incident to tell their story.
- Provide appropriate support for the victim, ensuring they aren't at risk of immediate harm.
- Record events using exact wording at every stage on a statement form.
- Try to establish what type of bullying is taking place and where, how often the bullying is occurring, who is carrying out the bullying and how the victim is responding to the bullying
- Advise the victim not to hit out at the bully or bullies or retaliate as they themselves may end up being accused of bullying.
- Discuss options to resolve the situation, agree actions, advise the victim of what happens next.
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses where possible.
- Arrange to speak with the alleged perpetrator, to be able to define the experience from each person's view.
- Record events using exact wording at every stage on a statement form.
- If it appears to be bullying, make the unacceptable nature of the behaviour clear to the bully, ensuring the act is separate to the person.
- Try to enable the bully to see things from the victim's position.
- Explain clearly the potential consequences of bullying behaviour.
- Record the incident on class charts and CPOMS for both the perpetrator/s and the victim/s, including action taken.
- Speak with the parents/carers of all of those involved in the incident(s) where appropriate.
- Think ahead about supporting both victim and bully. Restorative techniques may be used if appropriate.

## The Heath School Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

- Discuss the resulting action with parents/carers and what they can do to reinforce and support the school action.
- Arrange follow up actions within an agreed timetable.
- Inform the safeguarding lead or a member of the team if the bullying raises a safeguarding concern.

### **8.3 Applying sanctions**

Appropriate sanctions will be actioned in line with those stated in the Behaviour for Learning Policy. The sanction applied needs to be proportionate to the behaviour displayed and considered in context of the student (e.g. age, SEND, safeguarding etc.) If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved such as the police or local services as appropriate.

### **8.4 Analysis of incidents**

The school aims to analyse incident logs, behaviour in and out of lessons, complaints, student/parent and other stakeholder voice, rewards and sanctions and to respond to these appropriately.

### **8.5 Bullying of staff**

Bullying of staff, whether by students, parents or colleagues, will be responded to in accordance with school grievance policy and any incidents should be reported directly to the Principal.

### **8.6 Policy review**

We as a school continually monitor and measure the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy and practice and will make changes to bring further improvements to the procedure as appropriate. The safety and wellbeing of pupils and all stakeholders is the basis for this policy and work on anti-bullying conducted by the school.

# The Heath School Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

## Appendix 1 – Useful Information

We as a school follow the latest information, advice, legislation and guidance in all our work around bullying. This includes:

### A. Legislation

- Education Act 2002 ('Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare')
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 ('measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils')
- Education Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Equality Act 2010 - Covers 9 protected characteristics as follows:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation

Schools as public bodies have a duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations).

- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Education and Inspections Act (2006) - Section 89: "Encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular preventing all forms of bullying among pupils."

### B. Advice and Guidance

## The Heath School Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

- Department for Education (DfE) 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies' July 2017
- DfE 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance'
- DfE 'Research Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools'
- DfE 'Reducing Bullying Amongst the Worst Affected'
- Ofsted Survey of Pupils' Experiences of Bullying
- Ofsted Good Practice Examples – Homophobic Bullying
- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Website - [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Self-Assessment Toolkit
- Tackling Bullying in Schools: Mapping Approaches Literature Review
- NSPCC School Anti-Bullying Checklist
- SEAL Materials introduced from 2005 onwards.
- Stonewall – the lesbian, gay and bisexual equality charity has a range of resources to help staff tackle homophobic bullying and language in schools.

Website – [www.stonewall.org.uk/at\\_school](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/at_school)

### C. Key Ofsted Documents

- Ofsted Framework for Inspecting Schools (Updated 2018)
- No Place for Bullying (2012)
- Evaluation schedule for inspection of maintained schools and academies
- Conducting school inspections
- Grade descriptors for judgements
- Guidance grade descriptors and supplementary subject-specific guidance
- Sample self-evaluation form based on 2012 Framework
- Ofsted judgements related to bullying
- Behaviour and safety of pupils at the school
- Quality of leadership and management of the school
- Ofsted's April 2014 briefing, 'Exploring the school's actions to prevent and tackle homophobic and transphobic bullying'

The Heath School  
Anti-Bullying Policy 2025-26

## **Appendix 2 – Advice and Guidance for Parents relating to Bullying Behaviour**

Watch for signs of distress in your child, e.g.

- unwillingness to attend school
- truancy from School
- punctuality concerns
- equipment that has gone missing
- request for extra pocket money
- damaged clothing
- bruising
- take an active interest in your child's social life – discuss friendships, how free time is spent and the journey to and from school.
- if you think your child is being bullied in School inform staff immediately and ask for a meeting with your child's Form Tutor or Progress Coordinator.
- Keep a written record if the bullying persists. It will be painful but it will provide supportive evidence regarding Who, What, Where and When.
- With the behaviour liaison coordinator and/or Progress Co-ordinator, devise strategies that will help your child and provide him/her with support.
- If you require further assistance, make arrangements to meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal/s in charge of KS3/4.
- Do not encourage your child to retaliate. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's nature and contrary to the ethos of the school.

## **Appendix 3 – Advice for Students relating to Bullying Behaviour**

- If you think or feel that you are being bullied by another person or group tell an adult that you can trust, perhaps your parent or teacher. In school everything is handled sensitively and discreetly.
- If someone else is being bullied or distressed, take action. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bullying. Tell an adult.
- Never try to 'buy the bully off' with sweets or other 'presents', and do not give them money. Say "No" to the bully.
- Work out a plan of action with an adult that you trust.