Hednesford Valley High

Anti Bullying Policy

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1. Rationale

Hednesford Valley High School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, nurturing and respectful environment where all students feel valued, protected and supported.

The school maintains a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in all forms. We recognise that bullying can have a significant impact on emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, engagement and achievement.

This policy aims to:
• Prevent bullying and discriminatory behaviour.
• Promote a culture of kindness, respect and inclusion.
• Ensure all students feel safe to report concerns.
• Provide clear procedures for responding to incidents.
• Support both victims and perpetrators appropriately.
• Promote restorative, attachment-aware and trauma-informed approaches.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:
• Education and Inspections Act 2006
• Equality Act 2010
• Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
• Behaviour in Schools Guidance 2024
• Working Together to Safeguard Children
• Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance
• DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying Guidance
• Children and Families Act 2014
• SEND Code of Practice 0–25

The school recognises its responsibilities under safeguarding, equality and anti-discrimination legislation.

3. Definition of Bullying

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

Bullying may include:
• Physical bullying.
• Verbal abuse and name-calling.
• Emotional bullying and social exclusion.
• Racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying.
• Disability-based bullying.
• Prejudice-based bullying.
• Cyberbullying.
• Child-on-child abuse.
• Sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour.

Bullying behaviours may occur face-to-face or online.

4. Child-on-Child Abuse

The school recognises that bullying can form part of wider child-on-child abuse.

This may include:
• Sexual harassment.
• Sexual violence.
• Online abuse.
• Sharing of nude or semi-nude images.
• Initiation or hazing behaviours.

• Harmful sexualised behaviour.
• Physical abuse between peers.

Such behaviours will never be dismissed as ‘banter’, ‘part of growing up’ or harmless behaviour. Concerns will be managed through safeguarding procedures and may involve external agencies where appropriate.

5. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying includes the use of technology to intentionally upset, threaten, embarrass or target another person.

This may include:
• Social media abuse.
• Sharing images or videos.
• Group chat intimidation.
• Fake accounts.
• Online threats.
• Sexualised online behaviour.
• Malicious comments or rumours.

The school may investigate incidents occurring outside school where they impact on students’ wellbeing, safety or education.

6. Emotional Coaching and Trauma-Informed Practice

The school recognises that behaviour is a form of communication and that some students may require additional support with emotional regulation, social interaction and relationship building.

Staff use emotional coaching and restorative approaches to:
• Help students identify and regulate emotions.
• Support repair following incidents.
• Promote empathy and reflection.
• Maintain safe boundaries and expectations.
• Build positive relationships.

Consequences will remain fair, proportionate and consistent whilst taking account of SEND, communication needs, attachment needs and trauma experiences.

7. Reporting Concerns

Students, parents/carers and staff are encouraged to report concerns immediately.

Students are encouraged to:
• Tell a trusted adult.
• Use restorative support systems.
• Speak to pastoral staff.
• Report concerns online or in person.

Staff will:
• Listen carefully and take concerns seriously.
• Record incidents appropriately.
• Inform safeguarding staff or senior leaders where required.
• Monitor patterns and follow up concerns.

8. School Response

The school will:
• Investigate all concerns promptly.
• Support victims and address safety concerns.
• Apply appropriate consequences.
• Use restorative practice where appropriate.
• Involve parents/carers.
• Monitor ongoing concerns.
• Refer to external agencies where required.

All incidents will be recorded and monitored to identify patterns, trends and vulnerable groups.

9. Consequences and Support

Responses to bullying may include:
• Restorative conversations.
• Reflection work.
• Detentions.
• Internal isolation.
• Risk assessments.
• Behaviour support plans.
• Support from pastoral teams.
• Parent/carer meetings.
• Suspension.
• Referral to external agencies.
• Police involvement where appropriate.

Support will also be provided for students displaying bullying behaviours where underlying safeguarding, emotional or social concerns are identified.

10. Vulnerable Students

The school recognises that some students may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:
• Students with SEND.
• Looked after children.
• Young carers.
• Students experiencing mental health difficulties.
• Students with protected characteristics.
• Students who have experienced trauma or adverse childhood experiences.

Staff will ensure reporting systems and interventions are accessible and appropriate for all students.

11. Bullying Outside School

The school may respond to bullying occurring outside school where it impacts on the safety, wellbeing or education of students.

This includes:
• Online bullying.
• Public transport incidents.
• Community-based incidents.
• Bullying during educational visits.

The school will work collaboratively with families, external agencies and the police where appropriate.

12. Prevention and Education

The school actively promotes anti-bullying through:
• PSHE and RSHE curriculum.
• Assemblies and enrichment activities.
• Anti-Bullying Week.
• Student voice activities.
• Emotional literacy work.
• Online safety education.
• Staff training.
• Restorative and emotional coaching approaches.

Students are taught about respect, diversity, equality and positive relationships.

13. Monitoring and Review

Bullying incidents are monitored by senior leaders and safeguarding staff to identify patterns and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

The school will regularly review:
• Incident trends.
• Vulnerable groups.
• Student voice.
• Attendance and wellbeing data.
• Safeguarding concerns.