High Grange

Adaptive thinking, **C**ommunication, **E**motional wellbeing, **I**ndependence

Promoting Wellbeing & Safety		
Anti-Bullying Policy		
Last Update: **November 2025**	Responsible: **Alex Patrick**	• Page: **1 of 12**

This policy promotes ACE because;	
	This policy promotes adaptive thinking by teaching pupils safe ways to solve conflicts and seek help early. It fosters respectful communication through clear reporting routes and restorative dialogue. It also strengthens emotional wellbeing and independence, building resilience, self-advocacy and coping strategies for safe navigation of school and the wider community.

Contents

In writing this policy High Grange School have taken regard of the following resources: -

- Department for Education (DfE). Keeping children safe in education (statutory), effective 1 September 2025
- DfE. Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, 4 July 2017
- DfE. Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff, 19 February 2024
- DfE. Use of reasonable force in schools, 15 January 2025
- DfE. Searching, screening and confiscation in schools, 19 July 2023

- DfE. School suspensions and permanent exclusions (statutory), 19 August 2024
- DfE & OHID (formerly PHE). Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing: a whole-school or college approach, 2021
- DfE. Mental health and behaviour in schools (departmental advice), 2018
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS). Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings, March 2024
- DfE. Teaching online safety in schools, 12 January 2023
- DfE. Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges (digital and technology standards)
- DfE. Working Together to Safeguard Children (statutory), December 2023 Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).
- Technical Guidance for Schools in England (Equality Act 2010), updated 22 September 2023
- Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA). 10 principles to reduce bullying of pupils with SEND, 2023

1. Statement of Principles

High Grange School recognises and affirms the right of all children and the adults who access our school, to work in an environment free from bullying and harassment. The children at High Grange School have a right to feel safe and happy while they are at school. It is the responsibility of the High Grange School staff, working in collaboration with pupils' and young people's families to ensure that this is the case.

- High Grange School will provide a culture of treating everyone with respect, regardless of their ethnicity, social group, gender, age, sexual orientation or disability.High Grange School will ensure that policies in place aimed at preventing bullying are implemented, and that any incident of bullying is addressed with sensitivity and in a timely manner (24 hours). High Grange School is sensitive to any signs of bullying and will ensure that all children and young people are listened to.

- High Grange School will try to help both the person who has been bullied and the person who is bullying

- High Grange School will ensure that children/young people and their parents and carers know what they should do, and to whom they can talk if they believe that someone is being bullied.

Parents may be concerned about their child being bullied at High Grange. It is clearly detailed in this policy how High Grange School intends to prevent bullying from occurring.

We actively prevent and challenge prejudice-based bullying, including that related to protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).

At High Grange School due to the nature of the children's/young people's autism and associated difficulties, we recognise that some of our pupils and young people may: -

- Find it difficult to resist bullies;
- Be more isolated, not have many friends
- Not understand that what is happening is bullying;
- Have difficulties telling people about bullying

2. Our aims

Our aims are:

- To provide a secure environment in which pupils can report incidents confidently
- To show all pupils that targeting, harassment and bullying is taken seriously
- To enable staff to respond calmly and confidently to targeting, harassment and bullying incidents
- To reassure pupils that the school will protect and support all parties whilst the issues are resolved
- To provide long term and positive programs of personal development where it is required
- Through a restorative approach allow pupils to reflect upon their decisions and actions whilst have a 'working reality' of how this may impact on themselves and other later in life.

3. What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group that is repeated and intentional, and which causes physical or emotional harm. It can be face-to-face or online and is often motivated by prejudice or perceived difference (for example relating to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, disability including autism, being in care, or caring responsibilities). Staff will not dismiss harmful conduct as "banter" or "horseplay"; early intervention sets clear behaviour expectations.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it

can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

4. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating, or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

All members of staff will receive training on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'what is bullying' section of this policy; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer
- Being on their phone routinely
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

Parents / Carers will also be invited to appropriate training sessions or staff will update parents with information via the schools termly newsletter or the schools website in order to educate them on the signs and symptoms of bullying / cyberbullying, and will be advised to report to the Principal, Head Teacher or Deputy Head if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Staff will report incidents to their line manager or the Principal / Headteacher for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Pupils will report incidents to a trusted member of staff.

Where offensive content is posted online targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who has posted, it is known to the school, the Principal / Headteacher will request they remove it directly.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

Incidents involving "sharing nudes or semi-nudes". Staff must not view or forward imagery, must not ask a pupil to delete it, and must pass the concern to the DSL immediately. The DSL will follow UKCIS *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes* advice, including risk assessment, containment, decision on police involvement, and support for pupils and families.

The school may search, screen and confiscate items where there are reasonable grounds, following DfE guidance. Any search of a device, access to data, retention or deletion of data will be justified, necessary and proportionate, recorded, and conducted by authorised staff with a witness, with the DSL informed.

5. Prevention

High Grange School follows the DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying guidance which states that prevention is equally as important as the response to incidences of bullying. We have a committed whole school approach to: -

- Listen carefully, take bullying seriously and deal with it quickly by implementing agreed consistent responses.
- Ensure a framework exists for staff and pupils, which will support them and provide them with an effective and workable approach to dealing with issues of bullying.
- Create a positive, caring ethos in High Grange School in which pupils and young people are accepted as valued individuals regardless of age, gender, status and ability, SEN, LGBTQ+.
- Demonstrate respect for others by seeking to influence them from a basis of good personal relationships and the use of personal skills rather than by the use of power and use of threats of punishment.
- Every pupil has a 'keyworker and form group of consistent trusted staff they can confine in
- High Grange School – monitor low level behaviours on the school pod system
- Bullying is logged on school pod and an immediate SLT notification is generated
- PSHE curriculum that educates pupils about 'difference'
- Behavioral incidents of concern are tackled before pupils experience repeated incidents of being hurt either physically or emotionally
- High Grange School has a zero tolerance of bullying
- The schools SLT respond on the same day or within 24 hours of where staff raise a concern that continued or similar behaviors could turn into a 'bulling issue'
- Strategic areas of the school are staffed during lunch times where pupils are closely monitored and supervised
- Lunch clubs ensure that there are structured activities so pupils can engage in activities of their choosing
- High Grange School's parent liaison officer communicates with parents regularly. Direct communication between the school and parents and carer's ensure open lines of communication are maintained. All incidents are communicated to parents / carers either within the school day or at the end of the school day by the parent liaison officer / form tutor / keyworker or SLT

At High Grange School there is a strong emphasis on the promotion of positive and appropriate relationships between peers, as part of the development of appropriate social interaction skills. Inappropriate and unkind behaviour is addressed immediately by staff through de- brief and discussion with those concerned. In addition, High Grange School aims to prevent and deter cyber –bullying through the following strategies:

- The school has a mobile phone charter that pupils follow
- Access to the internet on school computers is supervised

The school's mobile phones expectations are implemented in line with DfE guidance (February 2024) and our Behaviour Policy; breaches attract proportionate sanctions.

6. Emotional and Physical symptoms linked to bullying

It is often hard to spot children who are experiencing targeting, harassment and bullying. By its nature it is an insidious activity that usually goes on out of sight of staff. The victim is often reluctant to come forward because they feel that 'telling' might only make matters worse for themselves and make the situation worse. The following symptoms might be an indication that a pupil is being bullied:

Emotional

- Lost confidence
- Loss of self-esteem
- Irritability
- Aggression
- Panic attacks
- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts

Physical

- Sleeplessness
- Nausea
- Shaking
- Heart racing
- Laziness
- Skin complaints
- Stomach aches
- Migraines and headaches

7. Why People Bully?

People bully for lots of different reasons. Some of these may be: -

- They may be scared;
- There are family problems;
- They have seen others bully;
- They are being bullied themselves;
- They feel out of control;
- They are being abused;
- Bullying is seen as a way of surviving;
- They feel insecure and unimportant;
- To gain acceptance;
- Issues related to prejudice/racism;
- Not liking yourself/wanting others to feel as bad as you do;
- To belong to a particular group or gang;
- They are taking their feelings out on others;
- They do not understand/appreciate the feelings of others;
- They have no friends and feel lonely;
- They always want their own way;
- A way of seeking attention/help;
- Not feeling respected or listened to.

8. Action Plan

"A 'one size fits all approach' is unhelpful when supporting children with a range of SEN and disabilities who experience bullying." (DCSF Safe to Learn September 2008)

The level of a pupil's/young person's cognitive development; their learning difficulties; the very specific nature of their difficulties in perceiving someone else's viewpoint or experience, and additional difficulties they have in the recognition and management of their emotions requires us to take a slightly different stance to the behaviours associated with bullying.

Some behaviour that pupils/young people exhibit may be intentional, however, there are times when the pupil/young person is unaware that their behaviour has the same impact as deliberate bullying although this was not their intention. It is important that this distinction is recognised, and staff address incidents through an educative route, if appropriate, rather than a disciplinary one.

- All children at High Grange School know the school's expectation regarding good behaviour and discipline.
- Staff will sign this policy to demonstrate that they have read and understood the policy.
- This policy is reviewed annually (or sooner if guidance changes). Bullying data is reviewed termly by the DSL and SLT to inform prevention.

- Positive Behaviour Risk Assessments are completed for all children/young people, that will include the risk of being bullied.
- Incidents of bullying will be addressed immediately or as soon after the incident as possible, within 24 hours of being reported
- Bullying will be discussed regularly with the children/young people to encourage openness. Staff will help the children/young people to understand that it is ok to tell and that they will receive help and support if they do.
- Incidents of bullying will be discussed with the staff team in handovers to ensure a constructive and consistent response. Bullying will also form part of the discussions in children's/young people's meeting and pupil council meetings, if deemed appropriate.
- Children's resilience plans will always include ways of working with a child/young person if s/he has a history of being bullied.
- Where bullying is felt to be a more serious concern, relevant professional/family members will need to meet (see Section 6, What will Happen if Someone is Being Bullied?) to discuss a way forward.
- All incidents and responses will be clearly recorded through the school's school pod Depending on the nature of the incident, an incident form may also be required and supporting documentation outlining the school's actions.
- Staff will always intervene to prevent/point out bullying behaviour, and assist the child/young person to develop alternative ways of behaving
- Staff will provide advice and support to children/young people to develop strategies in coping with situations where they may be bullied
- The school will hold restorative chats/conference as required. They will be chaired by SLT or an appropriate identified staff member.

The DSL & Behaviour lead oversees the bullying log, monitors patterns and repeat victims/locations, and tracks prejudice-based incidents (including disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation). Termly summaries go to the Headteacher and governors.

9. What will happen if someone is being bullied?

Any concern or allegation of bullying is a safeguarding matter. Staff must inform the DSL (or a deputy) the same day, record on SchoolPod, and follow safeguarding procedures alongside this policy.

Stage 1
If staff feel that a child/young person is being bullied, they should talk to the child/young person about how s/he is feeling and what the staff can do to assist
(e.g., do they want the staff to talk to the person bullying and try and get them to stop), or what else the child/young person would like the staff to do to assist.

The staff will monitor the situation following a discussion with their leader. Ongoing monitoring will be recorded on behaviour watch and this information will be used to assess if the situation has improved or not. The child's parent/social worker will be informed.

Stage 2

If the situation has not improved, a formal meeting will be held with the child/ren concerned and any other child/young person in the school involved. This should be chaired by the Principal / Headteacher. The aim of this meeting will be to bring the bullying to an end, and to offer appropriate support and advice to all those involved. This will be done through a restorative chat or restorative conference.

Staff will then be directed to work with the child or children involved focusing on countering bullying strategies. The situation will be monitored as in stage 1, and liaison with parents/carers will continue as agreed as part of the strategy.

Stage 3
If the situation has not improved, a formal meeting will be convened with the children concerned, the School Principal and parents/carers.

At this stage the safety of the child/young person being bullied will be of paramount concern, and a plan will be developed to minimise the risk to him or her.

It is important for children/young people to understand, that, if there are a number of incidents, or an incident of great seriousness, a meeting may be called at Stage 3 without first going through Stages 1 and 2.

The situation will be monitored as in Stage 1 and 2 and a meeting will be convened to review the situation. This should be recorded on School pod which allows for pattern recognition.

10. **Bullying outside of school**

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

The Principal, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher has a specific statutory power to sanction pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, e.g. on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only sanction the pupil

on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The Principal, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

11. Additional considerations

"Learners with a range of needs including learning disability, sensory impairment and social, autism and mental health will require specific communication tools, and staff will need to check their understanding. Many children with autism, for example, are assumed to understand much more than they do."   (DCSF Safe to Learn September 2008)

The list below highlights issues to consider making sure all children/young people, by virtue of their special needs, feel confident they can report bullying and be heard.

- Is there a quiet place in school to go to and talk?
- Does the staff member understand the child/young person's communication needs?
- Can the child/young person understand the staff member?
- Are their personal communication tools available to them?
- Have they had time to calm down and fully tell what they want to?
- Does the child/young person need a trusted staff member?
- Are staff visible and available to all pupils at all times within the school day.

12. The Curriculum

The curriculum approach at High Grange promotes an ethos of respect for each other; it actively fosters empathy between pupils/young people and promotes the forging of positive relationships.

Class teachers and teaching assistants will create a caring and co-operative ethos through PSHE and citizenship education and by using cross-curricular themes. Social behaviour is taught by drawing on incidents as they occur in the daily life of the class; social skills are 'taught' in a conscious and systematic way. The school promotes 'social thinking' that is led by the school MDT.

Pupils/young people will be able to express this view through the School Council. Bullying will be discussed at School Council meetings if deemed appropriate by the pupils in the school's pupil voice.

13. Evaluation

Evaluation of this policy will be conducted on an annual basis.

In order to determine High Grange School's effectiveness in dealing with any incidents of bullying, staff will draw on:

- Parent, staff and pupil questionnaires annually
- Daily, weekly and termly review of incidents of bullying. The Headteacher and Assistant Head will sign off that all acts of bullying have been resolved termly.

This policy will be deemed to be a success if:
- Staff are more vigilant and responsive to bullying
- Fewer pupils report being bullied or that they are bullying
- More pupils would tell a member of staff if they were being bullied

In conclusion, the following points are worth re-iterating:
- Targeting, harassment and bullying does not stop of its own accord. It must be stopped by all staff acting with a common purpose, through a commonly understood set of procedures. There is no perfect system for eradicating this problem. It is every present and needs to be dealt with firmly and constructively as part of the therapeutic ethos of the school.
- Small children who are bullied end to become larger children who seek to bully others. We need to break this pattern. We need healthy traditions which can only emerge from children feeling safe within our environment. How children treat others depends very much on how they themselves are treated. We must at all times protect them from the bully.
- A successful anti-bullying policy has the spin-ff effects of a reduction in general anti-social behaviour in the school. This enhances the personal and social environment of the school. It gives the personal safety and protection to each child which is his right and which we must constantly be vigilant to maintain.
- All actions taken in response to any incident involving bullying must be clearly recorded with appropriate follow up and feedback to all parties involved.