



Anti-Bullying Policy

In this policy any reference to Halton School includes Halton Pre-School

Adopted by Full Governing Body: *September 2025*

Date of Next Review: *September 2027*



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour and Child Protection policies

Aim:

The aim of the Halton School Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that all pupils can learn and fulfil their potential in a supportive, structured and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school not only affects an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Halton School; it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that there is an ethos of good behaviour and respect so that pupils feel safe and secure within the school. Parents should be clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and should be aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents should feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child; they should reinforce the value of good behaviour at home. All pupils should understand the School's approach and be clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

If bullying does occur, all pupils should feel confident to tell someone and know that the problem will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *telling* school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. Only if all issues of bullying are addressed, will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

We aim to ensure that relationships between adults and pupils in school are mutually respectful and that communication between home and school is open and honest. We work hard, as a staff, to foster excellent relationships with all of our school community and to provide an effective pastoral support system for all of our pupils. Pupils should know that they can approach their teacher, or any adult with whom they feel comfortable, and that staff will listen and act fairly. Adults are available for pupils to talk to informally throughout the school day and proactive elements are planned into the curriculum, equipping pupils to deal with situations that make them uncomfortable.

Halton School will not tolerate any violent or abusive action against staff. Only by engaging in a mutually respectful dialogue can school and parents work together to encourage high standards of behaviour in school.

Statutory Duty of Schools:

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. The Education Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents. This extends to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools also have a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils' (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2011). Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by pupils ('Safe to learn' DCSF 2007). The school has taken regard of the DFE advice to schools in 'Preventing and tackling bullying' September 2022.

The Equality Act 2010

A key provision in The Equality Act 2010 is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) April 2011 which covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Maintained schools and Academies are required to comply with the PSED.

Scope of the Policy

The scope of this policy includes:

- bullying of pupils by pupils within school
- bullying of and/or by pupils outside of school, where the school is aware of it, including online/cyber bullying
- bullying of staff by other staff members, pupils or parents within or outside school

Allegations about bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the school's Safeguarding Policy.

This policy has links to the following school policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable use policy (internet safety)
- Child Protection policy
- Complaints procedure
- Equality statement

Definition of terms:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (including cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and 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. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously the school's first priority but we recognise that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. 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.

In line with STEPS, the Local Authority approved approach to behaviour, we aim to create a safe, well-disciplined environment at Halton School and work on early intervention to help to set clear expectations of behaviour, helping pupils to understand what is and what is not acceptable and to help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Certain behaviour, whilst not acceptable within the school's Behaviour Policy, would not be considered bullying. This includes

- name calling which is two way
- incidents where both pupils have equal power e.g. a fight or an argument
- a one-off incident, which may be upsetting but is not part of a persistent behaviour
- actions where those involved are not aiming to cause upset and where they are unaware of the consequences
- re-grouping of friendships, where this is not done to exclude an individual

The school robustly investigates all incidents of unacceptable behaviour; unacceptable behaviour which is not classed as bullying will be dealt with under the School's Behaviour Policy and the consequences of such behaviour will be made clear to the pupil/s concerned.

Identifying and dealing with concerns about bullying:

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming anxious and withdrawn, becoming aggressive towards siblings or friends, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lack of concentration or truanting from school. Any concerns about pupils should be logged on CPOMS and staff should be vigilant in identifying patterns over time. Pupils must always be encouraged to report bullying in school, including incidents outside of school and online.

Procedures:

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- All incidents of bullying or threats of bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible and investigated fully and fairly. This also applies to staff who feel they are being bullied by pupils, parents or other members of staff.
- In all cases of bullying a clear account of any incidents will be recorded, logging action, impact and next steps; this will be logged on CPOMS under 'negative behaviour' / 'bullying'
- All relevant staff will be informed and behaviours monitored, as appropriate, to ensure that the bullying does not persist
- Each case of bullying will be dealt with on an individual basis and parents will be informed as necessary. If a child's name is recorded in the Incident file three times in a half term the parents will be notified as a matter of course.
- All pupils involved will be provided with continuing support and attempts will be made to help the bully or bullies change their behaviour
- 'Consequences' will be used as appropriate; should the incidents of bullying become serious, and it is considered appropriate by the school, the police will be consulted together with the Local Authority.

Outcomes:

- The aim will be to reconcile both parties and to agree a satisfactory method of moving forward
- After incidents of bullying have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored in an appropriate manner to ensure that a recurrence of the bullying does not take place
- Consequences may be applied in school, for example: official warnings to cease offending, loss of break time, temporary internal exclusion at break times, exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- In serious cases suspension or exclusion may be considered in line with County Guidelines & Procedures.

Pupils, or staff, who have been bullied will be supported by:

- an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher/line manager or member of staff of their choice
- reassurance about steps that the school will take to prevent recurrence
- continuing support to restore self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened and the reasons for involvement
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change behaviours
- informing parents or guardians, where appropriate, to work with the school to help change the attitude of the pupil

Whole School approach:

In line with STEPS, the Halton School values underpin the ethos of the school and aim to promote a culture of positive behaviour where success is celebrated and pupils treat one another and school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. This should extend beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including school visits and travel to and from school. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others will be reinforced by staff and pupils should understand the need to set a good example to their peers. From Pre-school onwards pupils work on Halton and Modern British Values.

The school raises awareness of the nature of bullying through work in PSHE, discussion in assemblies and areas of the curriculum, as appropriate, and regularly participates in national and local initiatives such as Anti-Bullying events. Regular sessions on internet safety and cyber bullying are timetabled for all classes.

Pupils are helped to understand what constitutes bullying, including cyber bullying, and how to respond to it; this includes that witnessing bullying, but not reporting it, is helping the bully and allowing the bullying to continue. The school aims to make it easy for pupils to report bullying; they are assured that they will be listened to and supported and that incidents will be addressed. Pupils should also feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school, including cyber-bullying.

The school will also work to help the pupil who is bullying to change his or her behaviour and give them strategies to form effective friendships based on mutual trust. This will be tailored to individual pupils, but can include circle time activities, social skills small group work and acknowledgment of positive behaviour.

Whole staff discussion and training in dealing with bullying happens at regular intervals. All incidences are investigated and dealt with appropriately as soon as staff are made aware; thorough records are kept. Whole school and class assemblies are regularly used to ensure that pupils understand that there is a 'zero tolerance' to bullying from the school.

Parents will be encouraged to report concerns about bullying and to support the school in tackling it. Trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating. Most concerns about bullying will be resolved through discussion between home and school. However, where a parent feels their concerns have not been resolved, they are encouraged to use the formal Complaints Procedure which can be found on the Halton School website.

Staff who feel they are being intimidated or harassed by a parent/parents have the right to ask for a member of the Leadership Team to be present at any meeting between them and the parents.

What a parent should do if they suspect their child is being bullied:

- Talk calmly to their child
- Reassure their child that informing was the right thing to do
- Make a note of what their child says about what they have seen or experienced
- Make an appointment to see a member of staff as soon as possible – usually the class teacher in the first instance
- Explain the problem their child is experiencing or has witnessed or the concerns they have
- Explain to the child that any further incidents should be reported to an adult immediately
- Work with the school in addressing the concerns and participate in monitoring meetings
- Keep any written messages which have been sent online as these may be used as evidence

What a witness of bullying or a child being bullied should do:

- Tell an adult they trust so they can help the child and deal with the problem
- If they are too scared to tell an adult, they should tell a friend and get that person to accompany them to tell an adult
- Keep any written messages which have been sent online as these may be used as evidence

What a parent should do if their child is bullying others:

Many children may be involved in bullying at some time or other. Often parents are unaware that their child is involved in bullying until contacted by the school. Children bully for a variety of reasons such as copying the behaviour of others, trying to be part of a group, being unaware that what they are doing is wrong, acting out aggressive feelings when they are going through difficult times.

What parents can do to stop their child from bullying others:

- Talk with their child, explaining that what they are doing is unacceptable and makes others unhappy
- Show their child how they can join in with others without bullying
- Make an appointment to see their child's class teacher; explain to the teacher the problems their child is experiencing and discuss how all parties can work together to stop the bullying
- Regularly check with their child how things are going at school

- Give their child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people
- Where a pupil is involved in bullying others outside school, e.g. in the street or through the use of the internet at home, parents will be asked to work with the school in addressing their child's behaviour, for example restricting/monitoring their use of the internet/mobile phone

If a child is identified as bullying the school will:

- Deal with the incident/s appropriately in line with the Behaviour Policy
- Contact the parents/carers so they are aware of what has happened and can support the school in its action
- Explain to the child the consequences of their behaviour and help them to empathise with others
- Support the child to amend their behaviour so that bullying is not repeated
- Support the child in forming positive friendships and developing self esteem
- Ensure that the child is not labelled as a bully and that positive changes in behaviour are recognised

Role of the Governors:

Governors are keen to ensure that Halton Community Combined School is a safe learning environment where all pupils are able to reach their potential. This policy is reviewed every two years.

Policy date: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2027