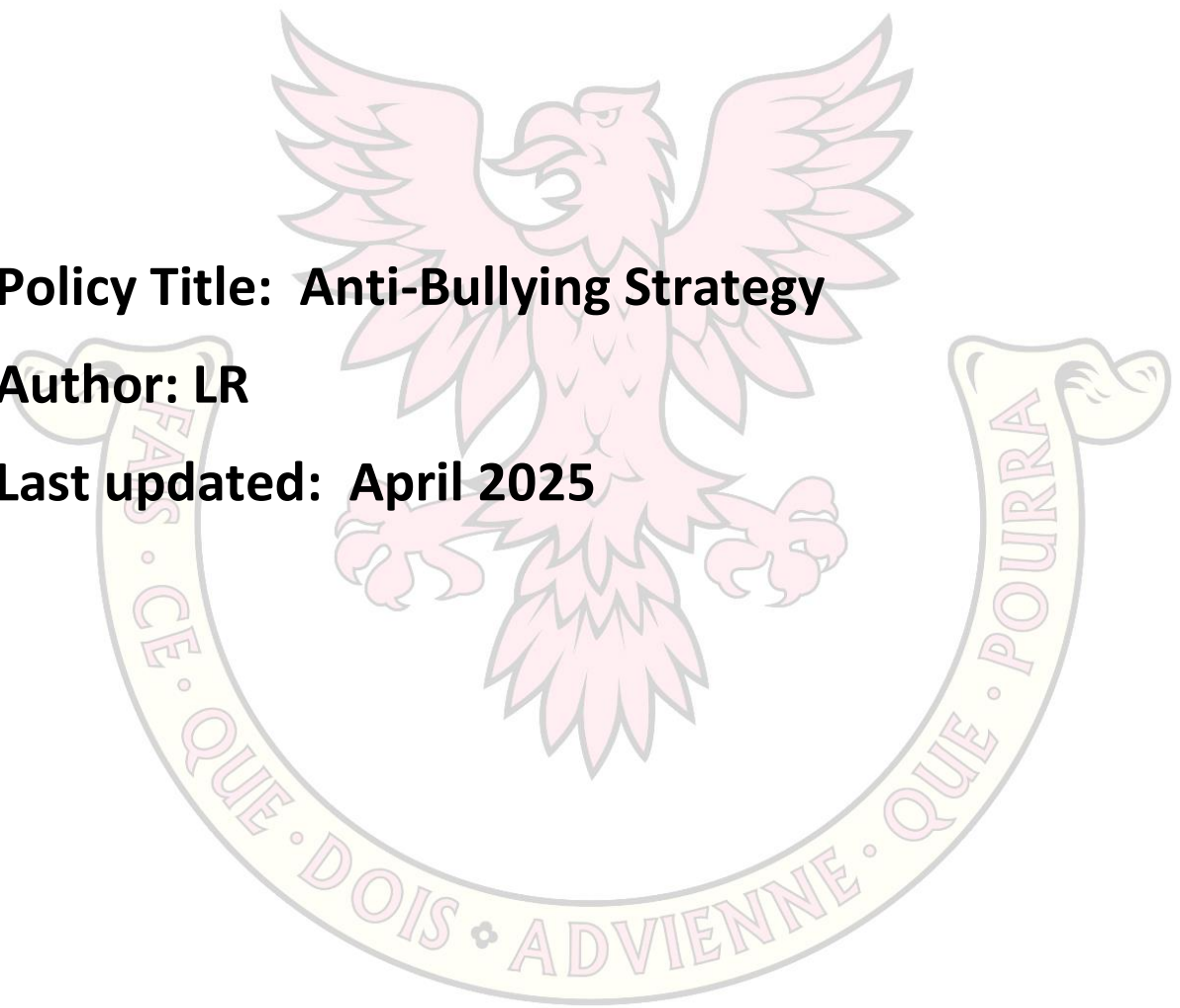


**Policy Title: Anti-Bullying Strategy**

**Author: LR**

**Last updated: April 2025**



## **Anti-Bullying Strategy**

### **The Whole School Policy including EYFS, Boarding and Senior School**

Hall Grove School is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, any pupil should feel able to tell, and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

With the expansion of Hall Grove School to include a senior section (Years 9, 10 and 11), the Anti-Bullying Policy has been revised to reflect the social and emotional development of older pupils and the complexities of adolescent peer relationships.

#### **Key Principles for Senior Pupils**

In addition to the school-wide expectations for behaviour and mutual respect, the senior school provision will:

- Recognise the greater complexity of bullying behaviours that may emerge in adolescence, including social exclusion, online harassment, and coercive peer influence, including sexual harassment.
- Emphasise the importance of pupil responsibility, self-regulation, and leadership in fostering a respectful and inclusive school culture.
- Promote the development of empathy, conflict resolution, and assertiveness through targeted PSHE and tutor programmes.

This Policy aims to make clear what constitutes bullying, what can be put in place to prevent it and explain how incidents of bullying at Hall Grove should be dealt with including sanctions and support for victims of bullying. It applies here at Hall Grove and to pupils away from the main school premises, whether it be at home or, for example, at Batisborough House, on school trips or when attending sports matches at other schools. Boarding at Hall Grove follows the same values and adopts the same Anti-Bullying Strategy as the school itself.

#### **Definitions**

We define bullying using the published ABA definition. 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. Cyberbullying is any form of bullying that is carried out through the use of electronic devices. Bullying and cyber-bullying constitute child-on-child abuse.

Bullying can take place both within the school environment and outside school supervision, and can include:

- a. Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any use of violence
- b. Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- c. Emotional excluding, tormenting (i.e. hiding books, threatening gestures), being unfriendly, graffiti, related to Special Educational Needs or disabilities
- d. Sexual unwanted physical contact, harassment or abusive comments
- e. Discrimination in any form
- f. Homophobic bullying motivated by a prejudice against lesbian gay or bisexual people

g. Online/Cyber use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, email, social networking sites, apps, text messaging & photographs, deliberately to upset someone else.

h. Protected Characteristics within the 2010 Act refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their age, disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or gender preference or reassignment.

A common excuse for bullying is passing it off as “banter”. Banter is only acceptable when the feeling of playfulness is mutual between the victim and the aggressor. Banter is to be regarded as bullying if students are repeatedly ‘joking’ with an individual, who is not included in the joke. If the victim is repeatedly feeling under attack and inferior, this is bullying and it needs to be stopped.

### **Policy Objectives**

Bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on a child. It can be a barrier to learning and have serious ongoing consequences for their mental health. The prime objective of this strategy is to try to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that bullying of any kind does not happen, but that where it is known to have taken place, steps are taken as soon as possible to deal with it.

The key aspects of our policy are Prevention and Intervention.

All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should understand what bullying is. All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported. Staff should be alert to children who may be vulnerable or at particular risk from bullying. For example, shy children, those with small friendship groups, children who have poor social skills and those whose special qualities are over-inflated at home. Children with SEND may also be at risk.

All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

As a school we take bullying seriously, whether physical, emotional, or psychological. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

Staff are trained to look for early signs of bullying.

The pupils of Hall Grove range in age from three to thirteen years, but this unpleasant form of human behaviour is generally unmistakable to an experienced onlooker, whether the aggressor is three or six feet tall. Sometimes, however, it can go unnoticed, even in a small school like Hall Grove; staff should be aware that this may occur.

The urge to dominate may be expressed through physical or verbal violence, mockery or the manipulation of general opinion in order to isolate a victim. This can be based on religious, racial, cultural, sexual/sexist, special educational needs and disability, homophobic or gender prejudice, or because a child is adopted or is a young carer. Cyber-bullying, through the increased use of technology and online material (eg. social media, gaming, mobile phones, text and other types of messaging, photographs, emails), can occur at all times of the day and give little respite to the victim. Whilst mobile phones are not permitted in school, the Anti-Bullying Strategy and Discipline, Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy still apply to conduct outside of school.

Where incidents of bullying, including cyber-bullying outside of school, are reported, they will be investigated and acted upon in accordance with this Policy and the Discipline, Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy which includes details of the school’s power to search pupils and seize property which may be relevant to a disciplinary matter. This would include a mobile phone brought into

school against the school rules. A separate Online Safety Policy has been drawn up with guidance for parents and staff and the part they play in safeguarding the pupils at school and at home.

To minimise the incidence, and for the school community to gain an understanding of the effect of bullying, Hall Grove uses various educational elements to increase awareness. These include PSHE, projects, stories, literature, historical events, assemblies, drama, current affairs, class curriculum, mentoring, group discussions etc. Opportunities are taken wherever possible to increase awareness of bullying across the school in all areas of the curriculum. The curriculum also looks to build resilience in pupils to protect themselves and others, promote and understand the differences between people and avoid prejudice-based language. For example, in the Performing Arts, the music of different cultures and countries is explored and how this music is affected by prejudice including racism. TPR lessons consider different religions and cultures. Please see 'Supporting British Values at Hall Grove School' document for further details and examples.

The school must avoid opportunities for bullying through careful staff supervision and through ensuring that risks in key areas in the school are always minimised through proactive staff presence. Staff duties are carefully designed, and classroom areas are generally 'out of bounds' when not supervised. A classroom and changing room protocol exist and this is regularly enforced by staff. Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones into school.

Staff can refer to the Anti-Bullying Strategy for guidance, and behaviour of individual pupils is regularly highlighted through full staff and section meetings. New staff are requested to read the Staff Handbook. Safeguarding training (including Bullying) is regularly given to all staff. Staff should be aware that, in extreme cases, serious bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **Prevention**

Hall Grove encourages good behaviour through a combination of high expectations and an ethos of discipline, mutual respect and understanding of the effect of our actions on each other. The likelihood of bullying is diminished considerably if pupils feel themselves to be subject to school discipline even when adults are not present in person. Movement between lessons, queuing, waiting for Staff to arrive, distant corners of the changing rooms - all are times of uncertainty, when standards of behaviour may slip. Supervision must be taken seriously by all Staff, whether officially on duty or simply passing by. At break, it is essential that Duty Staff are mobile, visible and vigilant, taking an interest in the children's games and watching their patterns of play. If this job is done properly, unpleasant incidents will be fewer and the need for an unwelcome degree of regimentation can be avoided. It is a major responsibility. This duty of supervision must also be balanced, as children grow up, by pupils becoming increasingly responsible for their own actions, learning the difference between right and wrong.

Pupil use of computers and the Internet in school is carefully monitored by the Network Manager, who will immediately react to key word prompts and discusses any irregularity with the Deputy Head Pastoral. Pupils and parents are offered guidance regarding the use of the Internet, computers and, age-appropriate software and social networking sites. The Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL team are the first points of contact and will discuss with the Headmaster as necessary. Further guidance can be found in the school's Online Safety Policy.

PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Education) lessons, Assembly and SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) guidance all aim to promote British values and respect for the community at Hall



Grove. We are also mindful always of the responsibility to be alert to any steps that might lead to radicalisation and to involvement in terrorism (Prevent Strategy). RSE is embedded throughout the school and promotes good relationships.

Parents are made aware of the Anti-Bullying Strategy which is available on the school website and should feel confident that in reporting any incident of bullying to the school, it will be taken seriously. Pupils know how to report bullying and know that they will be listened to, and incidents investigated and acted upon.

Each pupil's school diary in Years 3 - 8 contains a Code of Conduct, Complaints Procedure and translation of the School motto, a copy of which follows. The Pre-Prep classes (Pre-School – Year 2) display their school rules which relate to the school values.

#### School Values

Be kind and Gentle  
Be Honest and Truthful

Be Hard Working  
Be a good listener

Be respectful  
Be Polite and Thoughtful

#### Code of Conduct:

Always...  
be aware of your actions  
respect others

Never...  
cause hurt  
spoil a chance to learn  
make community life difficult  
damage or take property

In an emergency:  
find an adult calmly but quickly

#### Complaints procedure:

You must make your feelings known if...

you are being bullied  
you have been treated unfairly or harshly  
your property has been taken or damaged

You might choose to speak to a member of Staff, such as your Form Teacher, Study Tutor, Deputy Head Pastoral, Head of Boarding, School Nurse or Headmaster. Take a friend with you for support if you wish. You may well find that the Staff are aware of your problem or that there is a simple explanation.

You may use the telephone in the School Office. Next to the phone are the numbers for Childline (0800 1111), NSPCC (0808 800 5000) and the ISI Boarding Inspectors

(02077766000). The School's Independent Listener is Dr Robert Furness who can be contacted on 07899 923819.

Do not be afraid.

If you do not tell someone, they will never know.

### The School Motto:

Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra

which means.... Do your duty, come what may.

### INTERVENTION

Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and is not acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating by educating the perpetrator at a level appropriate to their age and understanding. Throughout, it must be plain that no form of harassment or violence is tolerated in the school, whatever provocation is claimed as justifying it. Equally important is the message that all must be willing to speak up when they know that wrong is being done, acting as active bystanders. The school aims to support both the bullied and the bully at all stages.

A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm'. This is something that the Pastoral Care Team will consider in conjunction with Deputy Head/ Headmaster, as appropriate, with reference to the Safeguarding Policy.

All complaints of bullying will be logged on CPOMS in a child's profile whether as the victim or perpetrator.

We have adopted a four-stage procedure to deal with reported cases of bullying that occur at Hall Grove:

#### Stage One

A pupil complains of bullying, either as the victim or as a witness; or an adult, parent or staff member speaks up. The pupil's Form Teacher should be informed at once and will: investigate, hearing both sides of the story separately and call any witnesses inform the Deputy Head Pastoral and/or Head of Boarding (as appropriate) who assess the situation and decide on the procedure to be followed.

Sometimes the intended victim is a good match for the aggressor: then there is a clash of wills which is best resolved with judicious assistance which encourages mutual respect. Sometimes children unintentionally irritate each other: again, with help they may learn to coexist. In either of these cases, it may be claimed that 'bullying' is happening but use of the word should be firmly set aside, so that it can be given its full value when needed. However,

when one pupil is plainly distressed by another, the School must take action to remedy the situation. Support will always be given to the victim of any incident of bullying. A flash of temper or a moment of excessive behaviour deserves a warning; when bullying is identified, in any degree, the next stage in the four- tier procedure will be followed.

Should it be clear that bullying has not actually occurred, parties will be encouraged to make up their differences and shake hands. The Deputy Head Pastoral will keep a record of all incidents in the files of all of those involved (on CPOMS). This will then enable any pattern of behaviour to be identified. The Form Teacher will monitor the subsequent behaviour of both parties discreetly and inform the Deputy Head Pastoral and/or Head of Boarding if problems arise again.

If it is apparent that bullying has occurred, the procedure moves to Stage Two.

### Stage Two

The Deputy Head Pastoral/Section Head/Deputy Head/ Head of Boarding and/or Form Teacher will:

• speak firmly with the aggressor, making a record in his/her school diary (Years 3 – 8) or write a note in the Pre- Prep Communication Book (Pre-School – Year 2)

• give advice and reassurance to the victim

• consult the parents of both parties and enlist their support

• require the Form Teacher to monitor the subsequent behaviour of both parties discreetly and inform the Pastoral Care Team and/or Head of Boarding if problems arise again  
An account of the proceedings will be made by the Pastoral Care Team on CPOMS.

Section Heads may be asked to speak to the whole year group, emphasising the need for their cooperation in settling the matter and giving rules to be followed at times when conflict has arisen. Pupils need to be fully aware of the part they play in preventing bullying, including those as bystanders.

Each incident of bullying, including cyber-bullying outside school, is recorded electronically so that patterns can be identified, and effective approaches taken to prevent them happening again. Incidents which occur away from school are investigated, reported, and monitored in the same way.

Both parents and pupils are involved at this stage to highlight the importance of working together.

Throughout, choice of language needs to be careful, with the key word 'bully' used only when it is shown to be appropriate.

### Stage Three

If there is continuing or severe harassment, the matter should be taken directly to the Deputy Head Pastoral who will liaise with the Pastoral Care Team and inform the Headmaster. The appropriate sanction under the Discipline, Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy will be considered. The aggressor may well be put on regular Report to the Deputy Head Pastoral, with the sanction of a personal visit to the Headmaster in the case of failure to modify behaviour. The Deputy Head Pastoral/DSL will keep a record of all incidents in the (CPOMS) files of all of those involved. The formal record will be shown to the Headmaster. Parents will be kept fully informed.

### Stage Four

Unwillingness or inability to desist from aggressive behaviour will invoke the intervention of the Headmaster, who, in accordance with the Discipline, Behaviour, Sanctions and Rewards Policy, may prescribe:

separate supervision during the School day and exclusion from Boarding

suspension for a limited period

he may choose to consult external agencies if deemed necessary

exclusion

Note: there may be cases reported directly to the Headmaster (by a parent, perhaps), which he decides to deal with himself because of their urgency. Equally, if a single incident or series of incidents is sufficiently serious, it may be considered appropriate to proceed to Stage 4 directly, without the need to first complete earlier stages of the procedure.

The Pastoral Care Team will make sure that there is a record of all incidents in the (CPOMS) files of all of those involved. The Safeguarding Team will decide if a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern and take necessary safeguarding steps in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

### EYFS

Treating each other with kindness and respect starts as soon as our youngest children join Hall Grove. Pupils are expected to share and play nicely together both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers use every opportunity to teach children to be honest, helpful, and well-mannered. Children must also begin to take responsibility for their personal belongings as well as learning to respect the possessions of others.

The Head of Reception and Head of Pre-Prep oversee the day-to-day management of the behaviour of pupils within their sections. Our youngest pupils follow the Bees of Behaviour



to help them learn the school values. We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others.

If a child continues to act inappropriately, staff will write in the child's communication book and, where possible, speak with parents at the end of the day at pick-up time. We rarely need to impose sanctions but sometimes we may remove a reward for hurtful behaviour.

#### **SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WHO ARE BULLIED**

Pastoral care at Hall Grove is strong and children know that they can speak to a member of staff or the School Nurses about any issue of concern to them. Children who are being or have been bullied will be supported. It is also incumbent on the school to consider the motivations behind bullying behavior. The Pastoral Care Team will look for patterns of behaviour and consider whether they reveal any concerns about or support needs of the perpetrator.

#### **SUPPORT FOR STAFF WHO ARE BULLIED**

Hall Grove considers bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, to be unacceptable. This includes cyber- bullying. The school offers support to parents on how to help their children engage safely and responsibly with social media through parents' evenings, talks by specialist speakers and the e-Safety Policy. Whilst these are rightly aimed at safeguarding the children, the school will not tolerate behaviour by pupils, parents or others that seeks to denigrate or bully school staff via social media or any other means. Parents have a right to raise concerns about the education of their child, but they should do so in an appropriate manner.

Staff are given guidance in the IT Acceptable Use Policy in the Staff Handbook and are supported by the school in the event that an incident occurs.

Where the perpetrator is known to be a current pupil or colleague, in most cases the matter will be dealt with through the appropriate disciplinary policy. Where the perpetrator is a parent or other adult with responsibility for a current pupil, they will be invited to a meeting with the Headmaster or a senior member of staff to discuss the matter, including the appropriate way to raise a legitimate complaint through the Complaints Procedure and asking them to remove the relevant content.

In more serious cases, the school will follow the relevant DfE Guidance and its legal obligations to resolve the matter. The school reserves the right to take further action where it is considered appropriate and/or necessary to support the staff member concerned, including requiring the removal of a child from the school.

#### **BULLYING – A NOTE FOR PARENTS**

One of the most distressing experiences of parenthood is finding that one's child has been involved in a case of bullying, whatever the exact role may have been. Modern opinion rightly abhors such behaviour and all Staff and children at Hall Grove share this feeling. To

help Staff to understand what is meant by the term and what should be done when bullying is reported, a definition and procedure are a key part of the School's policies and Staff Handbook.

Every reasonable consideration will be given to all children involved and a second member of Staff will be present during investigation if circumstances allow. The four-tier procedure is intended to give a fair hearing to all, a fresh view at each level without loss of continuity and a sense of redress for the victim and of learning for the perpetrator. In the sad case of a child being unwilling or unable to respond to these efforts, the Headmaster reserves the right of suspension or even exclusion.

The School claims no higher source of wisdom but will endeavour to exercise common sense in the interests of the children in its care. The children themselves develop their own common sense through regular pastoral contact with their Form Staff and their own knowledge through relevant parts of the Personal, Social, Health, Education (PSHE) programme, which emphasises the responsibilities of the individual as a member of the community. Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones or cameras to school. Any photography sessions are supervised. These responsibilities are summarised in the Code of Conduct in the School Diary. Below it comes the School's Complaints Procedure, which clearly states anyone's right to identify anti-social behaviour and call for help.

#### A Final Word

Hall Grove aims to be a happy school where all children feel secure and where there is an atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance, and support. Fulfilment of this aim will make incidents of bullying rare in our school, but we must always be ready to acknowledge that it can happen; even here.

Reviewed September 2023 LR

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents: Dfe guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE), Dfe Statutory Guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships, and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (2019), Dfe Advice for Schools: 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges, Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017), Safeguarding Policy, SEND Policy, ICT and Acceptable Use Agreement Year 3 &4 (and 5 – 8), ICT and Acceptable Use Policy for Staff and Governors, The Equality Act (2010), Equal Opportunities Policy, and Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017) Guidance, Behaviour Policy, Dfe Non-Statutory Guidance : Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (2016), e-Safety Policy, Cyber-bullying Guidance – Childnet , Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying (2014), and Hall Grove Online Safety Policy.

