



HEARTWOOD

LEARNING TRUST

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO ALL TRUST SCHOOLS/ACADEMIES
WITHIN THE HEARTWOOD LEARNING TRUST

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Policy Updates

Date	Page	Policy Updates
October 2021	Whole policy	New policy
November 2022	5	Updated policy to reflect dates of new DfE policy and terminology
November 2022	8	Restructured responsibilities to include the Trust Board
November 2022	20	Added appendix A for localised use
November 2023	Whole policy	Policy updated inline with new Scheme of Delegation
December 2023	5	1 - Updated legal framework inline with current legislation and applicable Trust policies
December 2023	13	10.9-10.10 - New points added re: cyberbullying reporting
April 2024	Whole policy	Policy updated inline with DfE Guidance
April 2024	5	Heartwood Learning Trust's Vision and Values added
April 2024	20	Appendix removed - anti bullying procedures are to be released as a stand-alone document
January 2025	4	Introduction added in line with other Trust Policies
January 2025	6	1 - Legal Framework updated to reflect applicable legislation, guidance and policies

Introduction

Heartwood Learning Trust is an inclusive and collaborative Church of England multi-academy trust serving church, community and alternative provision schools. This policy is guided by our Christian ethos and the visions of our Trust and its schools/academies. We share a clear vision – to create schools where children and young people thrive, as we help them prepare to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

For us, a place to thrive means much more than a place simply to be comfortable. Instead, our aim is to develop schools and an educational offer which enable each pupil to flourish academically, practically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Statement of Intent

We believe that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive and inclusive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. Heartwood Learning Trust (HLT) is committed to enabling all our pupils to flourish and thrive, to live life in all its fullness.

Bullying of any kind can have devastating effects on the personal mental health and wellbeing, identity formation and self-esteem of any child or young person. This can have an impact on socialisation and academic achievements. We educate all members of our community about the dangers of bullying and how to treat one another with respect and to 'love your neighbour as yourself'. Any form of bullying is totally unacceptable in the school/academy. We treat bullying as a serious offence and deal with any bullying complaints firmly, fairly and promptly.

This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying. These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school/academy's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school/academy.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school/academy's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the Trust's Behavioural Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school/academy staff and parents/carers.

All staff, parents/carers and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school/academy. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school/academy.

Our Trust Vision

To provide environments where children and young people can thrive.

Life in all its fullness - a place to thrive

Our ambition as a fully inclusive Trust of Church of England schools/academies, including an ecumenical Anglican/Methodist school/academy and community schools/academies, is for all our learners to flourish and to thrive in all aspects of their academic and personal development on their personal spiritual journey; to experience “life in all its fullness”, through our Trust values of Respect, Teamwork and Kindness.

Our Trust vision is closely aligned to the Church of England Vision for Education, of ‘life in all its fullness’ at its heart, for the common good of the whole community. We wish as a Trust to;

- Educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills: enabling our learners to build confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge and developing talents in all areas of life.
- Educate for hope and aspiration: to enable renewal, to support our learners to cope wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding learners to achieve their academic and personal goals.
- Educate for community and living well together: a core focus on positive respectful relationships in our schools/academies, working in partnership in our communities and flourishing together.
- Educate for dignity and respect: for all our learners to respect the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

Our Trust vision is also aligned to the York Diocesan Board of Education (YDBE) vision of seeking to build flourishing communities in schools/academies, parishes and homes. We are part of the wider family of Diocesan schools/academies, churches and communities in the Diocese of York and enjoy working collaboratively together to further enhance the academic and personal development of young people.

Our Trust Values

Respect, Teamwork, Kindness



A respectful and inclusive community, with a culture of thankfulness and appreciation, where we celebrate equality and diversity.



High quality first teaching across all of our schools, in every learning session, without exception.



A broad and balanced educational offer which develops all pupils academically, practically, emotionally, socially and spiritually, leading to great outcomes.



Resilient, sustainable and ethical leadership at all levels of the organisation.

1. Legal Framework

- 1.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - Malicious Communications Act 1988
 - Public Order Act 1986
 - Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
 - Communications Act 2003
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Crime and Disorder Act 1998
 - Education Act 2011
 - DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
 - DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
 - DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
 - DCMS, DSIT, and UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- 1.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:
- Behaviour Policy
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy
 - Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy
 - Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy
 - Equality Policy and Objectives
- 1.3 For **our Church of England schools**, we incorporate the Church of England guidance including;
- Valuing all God's Children, 2019
 - Church of England Vision for Education, 2016
 - Fruits of the Spirit, a discussion paper on Character Education, October 2015
 - Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership, Leadership of Character Education, September 2017

2. Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:
- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
 - **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.

- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or groups.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

2.2 Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted
- Pupils who are looked after
- Post looked after pupils
- Pupils with a Social Worker
- SEND pupils
- Pupils suffering from a health problem
- Pupils with caring responsibilities
- Pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds

2.3 Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+
- Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

3. Types of Bullying

3.1 Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

3.2 Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Discriminatory bullying: Bullying based on a person's 'relevant protected characteristics' such as: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person’s gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Sexual violence and harassment: This can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focuses on another person’s disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual’s disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual’s disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily consists of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone - usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socio-economic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents/carers’ occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived “quality” of their clothing or belongings.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The **Trust Board** is responsible for:

- Evaluating this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- Oversight of the overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the Trust adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the Trust is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Appointing a **Safeguarding Link Trustee** who will work with the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** and the **Director of Safeguarding** to ensure the policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are managed effectively.

4.2 The **Local Governing Committee (LGC)** is responsible for:

- The monitoring of this policy in the school/academy setting.
- Ensuring that the school/academy adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.

- Ensuring the school/academy is inclusive.
- Analysing any local bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Appointing a **Safeguarding Link Governor** who will work with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and the **Director of Safeguarding** to ensure that the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.

4.3 The **Headteacher/Principal** is responsible for:

- Keeping a detailed log of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members and maintaining up-to-date records.
- Ensuring that follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

4.4 **Pastoral Leads** are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents/carers where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents/carers when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- Offering emotional support to victims of bullying.
- Alerting the relevant members of staff regarding any incidents of bullying.

4.5 **Teachers** are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the **Pastoral Leads** of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying.

4.6 **Parents/carers** are responsible for:

- Informing their child's **Pastoral Leader** or **class teacher** if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in any way.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

4.7 **Pupils** are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.

- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

5. Statutory Implications

- 5.1 The school/academy understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility 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.
- 5.2 The school/academy understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The **Headteacher/Principal** will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the **Headteacher/Principal** understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.
- 5.3 Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:
- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
 - The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
 - Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
 - Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes.

6. Prevention

- 6.1 The school/academy will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.
- 6.2 All members of the school/academy will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it. All staff members will receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- 6.3 **For Primary Schools/Academies only;** All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the Primary Relationships and Health Education Policy.

- 6.4 ***For Secondary Schools/Academies only;*** All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the RSE and Health Education curriculum, in line with the Secondary Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy.
- 6.5 Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated through various lessons. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- 6.6 A safe place, supervised by a teacher, will be available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone. The teacher supervising the area will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.
- 6.7 Pupils deemed vulnerable, as defined in section two, will meet with a designated member of staff on an agreed basis to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly. All staff will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.
- 6.8 Before a new pupil joins the school/academy, particularly when this happens in-year, the pupil's form tutor/class teacher and the **DSL** will implement a strategy to prevent bullying from happening.
- 6.9 Where a new pupil is deemed vulnerable, this strategy may involve further observation or intervention.
- 6.10 The school/academy will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.
- 6.11 The school/academy will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

7. Signs of Bullying

- 7.1 Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:
- Being frightened to travel to or from school
 - Unwillingness to attend school
 - Repeated or persistent absence from school
 - Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
 - Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
 - Decreased involvement in school work
 - Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
 - Missing possessions
 - Missing dinner money
 - Asking for extra money or stealing
 - Cuts or bruises
 - Lack of appetite
 - Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile device

- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

- 7.2 Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.
- 7.3 Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:
- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
 - They have been the victim of abuse
 - Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress
- 7.4 If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's form tutor/class teacher, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

8. Staff Principles

- 8.1 The school/academy will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.
- 8.2 Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.
- 8.3 Staff will always respect pupils' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless the pupil has given consent, or there is a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the **DSL** immediately.
- 8.4 Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and perpetrator in the months following an incident to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9. Child-on-Child Abuse

- 9.1 The Trust's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** outlines the Trust's stance on addressing peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the Trust's approach to preventing and managing instances of peer-on-peer abuse can be found within the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.
- 9.2 The school/academy will not accept any form of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

- 9.3 To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school/academy will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.
- 9.4 All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers. Staff will take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims, will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours. Staff will also be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing- or initiation-type violence.
- 9.5 Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled - this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to children’s social care services (CSCS), where the **DSL** deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

10. Cyberbullying

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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

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

- 10.3 The school/academy will not accept any form of cyberbullying. The school/academy views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in section 12 this policy if they become aware of any incidents.
- 10.4 All members of staff will receive training on an annual basis on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

- 10.5 Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'Signs of 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
- 10.6 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
- 10.7 Parents/carers will be sign-posted key to information in order to educate them on the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying, and will be advised to report to the **Headteacher/Principal** if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.
- 10.8 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
- 10.9 Staff and pupils will be instructed not to directly or indirectly respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Instead, evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. via taking screenshots. Staff must report cyberbullying incidents to their line manager for the incident to be investigated and appropriate support to be provided. Pupils will be instructed to report incidents of cyberbullying to a trusted member of staff.
- 10.10 Where offensive content is posted online that targets a staff member or pupil, they will be encouraged to use any reporting mechanism available on the website/social media platform to request its removal. If the person who posted the offensive content is known to the school/academy, the **Headteacher/Principal** may contact them directly to request that they remove the content.
- 10.11 The school/academy 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 section 13 and section 14 of this policy.

10.12 In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school/academy has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools/academies and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. In these cases, the processes outlined in the Trust's Behaviour Policy will be followed at all times.

11. Procedures

11.1 When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to the designated First Aider for first aid on the extent of their injuries
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews
- A witness is used for serious incidents
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture
- The **Headteacher/Principal** will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete
- All pupils involved are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils

11.2 Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

12. Sanctions

12.1 If the **Headteacher/Principal** is satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. In line with the Trust Behaviour Policy and local procedures, the **Headteacher/Principal** will inform the perpetrator of the type of sanction to be used in this instance, e.g. detentions or service-based activities, and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

12.2 If possible, the **Headteacher/Principal** will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

- 12.3 Parents/carers are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.
- 12.4 All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions, and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future.
- 12.5 The school/academy will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school/academy's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.
- 12.6 The designated Pastoral Lead will informally monitor the pupils involved over the next half-term.
- 12.7 The school/academy will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour, and will not exclude pupils unless as a last resort - where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school/academy will act in line with the Exclusion Policy.

13. Support

- 13.1 In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:
- Emotional support and reassurance from school/academy staff
 - Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken
 - Liaison with their parents/carers to ensure a continuous dialogue of support
 - Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent/carer or a member of staff
 - Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents/carers to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online
 - Discussion with their parent/carer on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents/carers)
- 13.2 The **Headteacher/Principal** will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Victims will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school clubs or activities.
- 13.3 Staff, particularly the **DSL**, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional therapy.
- 13.4 The school/academy will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend a mandatory counselling session to assist with any

underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. The school/academy will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

14. Follow-up Support

- 14.1 The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by a designated member of staff for a reasonable amount of time. One-on-one sessions to discuss how the victim and perpetrator are progressing may be appropriate. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence will be arranged with parents/carers.
- 14.2 Pupils who have been bullied will be offered continuous support. The **DSL** will hold a formal meeting, on a monthly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped - these formal meetings will continue to take place once a month until the designated member of staff and victim are confident the bullying has stopped. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- 14.3 Pupils who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways and in line with the Trust Behaviour Policy and local procedures:
- Receiving a consequence for their actions
 - Being able to discuss what happened
 - Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
 - Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
 - Appropriate assistance from parents/carers
- 14.4 Pupils who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the **DSL** will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- 14.5 Where a pupil who has been the victim of bullying has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the pupil, their parents/carers, the **Headteacher/Principal** and **DSL** will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

15. Bullying Outside of School

- 15.1 Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of the school/academy, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside the school/academy in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 15.2 The **Headteacher/Principal** has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school/academy site. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the **Headteacher/Principal** the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school/academy site, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school/academy staff member.
- 15.3 Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school/ academy site. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school/academy site, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.
- 15.4 Where bullying outside the school/academy is reported to school/academy staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil

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

- 15.5 The **Headteacher/Principal** 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.

16. Record Keeping

- 16.1 The **Headteacher/Principal** will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying - this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions/outcomes.

- 16.2 The **Headteacher/Principal** and **DSL** will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school/academy, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.

- 16.3 The **Headteacher/Principal** is responsible for maintaining a training register to ensure that all staff are appropriately trained in line with the defined frequency.

17. Monitoring and Review

- 17.1 This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust **Executive Principal** and approved by the **Distinctiveness and Personal Development Committee**.

- 17.2 Any changes made to this policy by the Trust will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy.

- 17.3 The next scheduled review date for this policy is listed on the cover page of the policy.