



Hillcross Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission, Vision and Culture

At Hillcross we enable our children to think differently, aim high and achieve.

Through our school culture of high aspiration, embracing challenge, collaboration, shared responsibility and respect for each other, we aim for Hillcross to be the number one school of choice for the local community. Our outstanding practice in all we do alongside our dynamic and ambitious curriculum provides all our children with rich opportunities and experiences for high quality learning and wider personal development.

Statement of Intent

At Hillcross Primary School we are committed to providing an environment where every person has the right to be themselves, feel included and be able to learn in a safe and happy environment. Everyone at our school is equal and treats each other with respect and kindness. We embrace and teach British Values and children's rights (UN convention) as these are very important to our development and the manner in which we react to and treat others. Article 2 (non-discrimination) states, 'The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.'

The well-being of all pupils and staff is a key priority therefore bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously, because bullying is destructive and can cause physical and emotional harm to those involved. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect, so pupils who choose to bully others, will be given appropriate consequences (in line with our **Behaviour Policy**).

At Hillcross Primary School, we acknowledge that, although rare, bullying behaviour does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. If bullying does occur, incidents are dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with this policy. Senior leaders will be involved in supporting the child, staff and the families involved in reaching the best possible outcome. This will include a full investigation into what has happened and will include information from all parties involved, including bystanders or witnesses to the events.

To be fair to all parties involved, the school will consider allegations of bullying as 'alleged' or 'perceived' incidents of bullying until a full investigation has been completed and an outcome substantiated.

Whatever the outcome, all parties will be supported to find ways to resolve and restore issues to ensure that everyone has a positive experience ongoing. Appropriate consequences will be given in line with the Behaviour Policy and the situation will be closely monitored to ensure that the impact of any agreed intervention is having the desired effect. If needed, further interventions will be considered until the situation is resolved.

In line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2020, bullying behaviour is considered a safeguarding concern as such behaviour often includes physical and emotional abuse, even if this is not intentional. As such incidents of bullying may result in action being taken in line with our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.



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Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to try to prevent any behaviour deemed as bullying from occurring and to provide a framework within which to effectively manage incidents of bullying that do occur, no matter how rare.

Bullying thrives in cultures where name-calling, unwanted touch, rumour mongering and disrespect go unchallenged and can be fuelled by prejudice (an unfavourable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason). At Hillcross, we work hard to maintain a culture where prejudice and hatred is not accepted. These prejudices could include be homophobic, racist, targeted at faith, sexist and disablist. We want to enable our pupils to become empathetic, responsible citizens and to prepare them for life. By following this policy, the school will continue to develop a positive, caring ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that we continue to be a safe and secure environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

A key way this is achieved at Hillcross is through the promotion of our school values and our focus on equality to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community. Whole school initiatives (e.g. yearly anti-bullying weeks, Habits of Mind reward system, staff training, celebration assemblies, whole school collective worship assemblies, Rights Respecting Schools etc.) and proactive teaching strategies (Personal, Health & Social Education lessons, circle time, Philosophy for Children etc.) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.

This approach is most effective when parents and the school work together and where positive attitudes and behaviours are modelled at home and at school.

This policy also links closely to our promotion of the shared British values identified by the government as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- **Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.**

The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2), Preventing and tackling bullying guidance 2017 and The Children Act 2004.

All members of the school community (governors, staff, pupils and parents/guardians) have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs, and to take appropriate action swiftly. This will require open communication by all. We are committed to improving our school's approach to tackling bullying and regularly monitor, review and assess the impact of our preventative measures.

1. What Is Bullying?

At Hillcross our definition of bullying is:

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.

Bullying can take many forms, and there are four categories of bullying:

1. Verbal Bullying – This includes teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, and taunting.



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2. Social Bullying – Often referred to as relational bullying, social bullying happens when someone is trying to deliberately hurt another’s reputation. This includes spreading rumours, repeatedly excluding someone, and telling other children not to be friends with someone.
3. Physical Bullying – This includes hitting, pushing, tripping, stealing possessions, and sexual assault.
4. Cyber-Bullying – Cyber bullies use the internet (social media, mostly) to target their victims. Rumours and insults can quickly spread through social media, and it’s nearly impossible to eradicate them.

Bullying is:

- Any **deliberate**, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people
- It is **repeated** over a period of time **to the same person/people and by the same person/people** and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves
- Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s
- Behaviour that is targeted and selective, and can be **direct** (physical or verbal) or **indirect** (e.g. being ignored or online). Physical and verbal bullying may include racist, homophobic, religious, stereotypical or sexual actions or comments
- **Remember STOP** can be used to define bullying – Several (not 7!) **Times On Purpose**
- ‘Baiting’ is a form of bullying, whereby a person intentionally antagonises another person repeatedly by saying or doing things to annoy them. It is done to cause the person to react negatively, so that they get into trouble.

Bullying can be:

- **Direct** – when the bullying is done directly to the person/ people
- **Indirect** – bullying that happens behind someone’s back (spreading rumours, whispering, making signs, stealing or damaging things or online where it could be made available to other individuals, groups or to greater public domain)
- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone, using words or people’s names to represent something negative or untoward
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone’s things
- **Racist** (belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another) - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture, ethnicity, religion etc.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments, this includes homophobic bullying - because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality, as well as gender related issues based on **sexual orientation** and / or **gender identity**.
- **Online/cyber** - setting up ‘hate websites’, sending offensive text messages, e-mails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones, email or other forms of on-line communication
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their **disability or special educational needs**

No form of bullying will be tolerated and all incidents will be taken seriously and fully investigated.

Bullying is NOT:

- **Not including someone** – It is not considered bullying if someone does not want to play with another child or not inviting someone to a party. However, repeated and deliberate exclusion can be considered bullying (see Social Bullying above).
- **Accidental physical harm** – A child might unintentionally bump into, hit or trip another child. It is not bullying if it is not deliberate or if it rarely happens.



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- **Disliking someone** – Some children do not get along. Verbally or non-verbally communicating this or starting rumours is unacceptable, but a clash of personality is not bullying unless the behaviours of the children involved fit the criteria above.
- **Wanting to be in control** – Some children like to take on the role of leader. Whilst having someone else direct your play can be frustrating, it is not bullying unless the actions of the person meets the criteria above.
- Joking about, or with someone -Is not considered bullying unless the child has been previously made aware that their comments are perceived as inappropriate, hurtful or offensive by others.
- Arguments – We all argue from time to time, and arguments will inevitably happen at school. We cannot all agree with each other all of the time.

While the above behaviours are not ideal, they are not bullying. Conflict and drama are not always bullying, and there is a distinct difference. Bullying is deliberate and repetitive.

What is cyber-bullying?

- Due to the rapid development of, and the widespread access to technology, 'virtual' bullying is now more of a concern. This type of bullying can occur in or outside school and can happen at all times of the day. The reason this type of bullying can be even more worrying is because it has a potentially wider and larger audience, and can be forwarded at the click of a button.
- Staff can, if authorised by the head teacher, examine files or data (related to bullying) on electronic devices such as mobile phones and delete these if appropriate in accordance with the amended Education Act 2011.
- Where an electronic device has been confiscated (due to reasonable grounds of suspecting it contains evidence in relation to an offence), it must be handed on to police as soon as reasonably practicable.

Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

Hillcross Primary School is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are. At Hillcross, we have some children who have special educational needs or disabilities and like all children, they should be protected and kept safe. We are aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying, and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

High attaining learners, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

At Hillcross we learn about, and celebrate differences and ensure that everyone supports these children with barriers to their learning. We do this by ensuring everyone understands the needs of others, and the adaptive strategies put in place, so that they can participate in assisting and speaking up for others.

We do this by carefully planning in sessions, which teach the children about the needs of their peers within the class and/or school (with the child and parent's consent), so that there is a clear understanding of how a child's needs might result in them being educated or supported in a different way. This helps to eradicate any feelings of injustice and inequality. We also plan for team-based and paired learning activities and rotate children's' groupings to provide opportunities for all children to work together and learn from one another. As a thinking school and one which develops positive habits of mind, we focus heavily on social-emotional learning activities and reward positive, helpful, inclusive behaviour.

2. Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground, on the way to and from school and at home (with increasing numbers of children having access to mobile technology online bullying can reach children wherever they are).



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Although schools are only legally responsible for bullying incidents which occur on the school premises, we at Hillcross recognise that many incidents can occur outside of the school day. With this in mind, we teach children strategies to help them manage situations whenever and wherever they occur. While nothing can guarantee that our children will not be bullied online, there are many things parents can do to lessen the likelihood that it will happen and to minimise its effects if it does occur.

Parents can:

- Keep themselves up to date with online safety (please also see our online safety policy, read the regular updates provided and do come along to our online safety workshops.)
- maintain open and honest communication with the school
- teach about Internet safety and cyber-bullying
- build your child's self-confidence
- establish enforceable rules
- and keep the computer in a central easily monitored location

3. Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviours, that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go into the school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence (where this is not normally the case)
- becomes volatile, impulsive or overactive (where this is not normally the case)
- starts stammering/stuttering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to underperform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

It is important to remember that these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and investigated as soon as possible. These are only guidelines as children can display signs of needing help in many different forms.

4. Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

At Hillcross we are committed to dealing with all forms of bullying quickly and effectively. If a **pupil** is being bullied, they are encouraged not to retaliate, but to tell someone they trust about it such as a friend, family member or trusted adult. They are also encouraged to report any bullying incidents in school – we cannot deal with situations



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we are not aware of. Communication is key to ensuring that we continue to be a school where there are very limited instances of bullying.

Children (or their trusted person) should report all bullying allegations and incidents to a member of staff. (Please refer to the Child version of the Anti-Bullying Policy). They are also encouraged to keep a factual (white hat) log of events, so this can be shared with staff. This will be very useful when adults are investigating the accusations. This will help children/parents to be able to refer to specific dates, times and events. The more we know, the better we can deal with the situation. An example of a log is attached in Appendix 1 but children could use a diary, or other strategy of their choosing.

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at Hillcross Primary School. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. Upon hearing an allegation of bullying, staff will:

1. Make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe. Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
2. Record the initial allegation on a Behaviour Form and inform a member of SLT.
3. A member of SLT will fully investigate the incident. All parties involved will be given the opportunity to provide their point of view and explain what happened. This will enable staff to gather a true reflection of an incident. Every party should be (and feel) listened to. It is important that investigations are not influenced by children's previous behaviour and that those involved do not have preconceived ideas or make judgements without carefully investigating each situation. Pupil voice should show that all children feel listened to by all adults and that investigations are fair and objective.
4. Parents will be kept informed, and will be involved in the process, as appropriate.
5. All conversations that take place as part of an investigation will be recorded on a Hillcross Note and kept with the original Behaviour Form where the alleged bullying was first raised. A folder will be created so that all information relevant to the incident can be easily referred to, during the investigation and in the future.
6. Once the investigation is complete, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will review all evidence with the Senior Leader involved to reach a conclusion. The outcome may be one of the following:
 - i. There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion so the allegation cannot be upheld;
 - ii. The allegation is not substantiated by the evidence;
 - iii. The allegation is substantiated in part or in full (a meeting to discuss solutions and subsequent actions will be arranged, but personal details relating to other children involved will not be shared).

The school will adopt a problem solving approach to the issues identified. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying. This will involve meeting individually with each family involved so that everyone shares the responsibility for supporting the children to resolve the problem. This includes the victim/s of bullying, the child/ren engaged in bullying behaviour and those children who have assisted, reinforced or been a bystander in a bullying situation.

Although bullying rarely happens at Hillcross, we always work from the premise that 'it could happen here'. It is important for everyone involved to keep in mind that we are dealing with young children and children who engage in bullying usually do so because of negative experiences they themselves have had. There are many reasons why people bully - they may themselves feel insecure, lack confidence or have low self-esteem; they may have difficulties at home; they may have been bullied themselves; they may feel their friendships and family relationships aren't very secure; they might be pressured by their friends/peers to behave in a certain way; they might want to be in the 'cool' group; they may think it is 'just a bit of fun' and they don't realise how much it hurts others; or it makes them feel powerful or respected. Whatever the reason, children who bully also require support to address the challenges that they may be experiencing so that they can change their behaviour. It can be hard to do but we encourage children, parents and staff to try to walk in their shoes and understand their feelings too.



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Staff will support children who have been engaged in bullying behaviour to help them understand and change their behaviour and appropriate sanctions will be applied in line with the school's behaviour policy. If necessary, an 'Individual Behaviour Plan' will be initiated and this will involve specific rewards and sanctions, as governed by the plan. Where necessary the school will also involve the support of external agencies such as The Virtual Behaviour Service, CAMHS or an Educational Psychologist. Safeguarding is of utmost importance at Hillcross and where there are concerns raised in relation to behaviour issues, action will be taken by the designated safeguarding leads in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. If necessary and appropriate, other agencies such as the Vulnerable Children's Team or police will be consulted.

In order for bullying situations to be resolved, it can be beneficial for all parties involved to meet together, but this can and will only happen with the child/ren's consent and if it is deemed necessary and helpful.

The bullying incident and outcome will be recorded on SIMS and evidence will be kept in an incident folder containing all relevant paperwork will be kept in the Headteacher's office. Each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

5. **Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying**

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These can include:

- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing this policy (and the behaviour policy) and organising regular equalities and anti-bullying training for all members of the school community.
- Maintaining and implementing a positive behaviour management policy/school ethos where the whole school community is encouraged to model appropriate behaviour towards one another.
- Each class negotiates and writes their own class charter linked to whole school rules (these are displayed in each class).
- Displaying helpful advice and support numbers on an easily accessible board- prominently displaying anti-bullying posters and work completed during anti-bullying week and other learning sessions.
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy. Introduce improvements and initiatives based on the outcomes of these. (This is completed annually in Autumn 2)
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year and raising awareness through regular anti-bullying assemblies and PSHE lessons. These are planned for within the PSHE Progression of Skills grid. Parents will be asked to complete a questionnaire relating to anti-bullying and comment on the anti-bullying policy annually.
- Online Safety is given a high priority by all members of the school community and every opportunity to raise awareness and provide strategies to manage bullying incidents are utilised. We have a dedicated website page and weekly updates are shared with parents. Parent workshops are available annually.
- Links are made across all areas of the curriculum to raise the profile of bullying and strategies to support both victims and those who choose bullying behaviours.
- Using circle time, P4C, drama activities and role-play to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations.
- A worry box is in every classroom where children can write and post their concerns and ideas.
- Stereo-types are challenged by staff and pupils across the school.
- Staff and SLT members on duty at play and lunch times will be alerted to specific children who might have been bullied or finding these sessions exceptionally challenging.
- Working with parents and carers and in partnership with community organisations to tackle bullying, where appropriate.
- Emotional check-ins are actioned by class teachers at least twice a day to identify issues arising or individuals who might be experiencing challenges.



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- Emotional Intelligence and the vocabulary associated with a range of positive and negative feelings is being taught explicitly across the school (to ensure a common language). Each class also has an Emotional Intelligence display board and scrap book in class, to help children identify different feelings and how to manage them appropriately.
- The newly added 'Habit of Mind' rewarding children for practising and applying resilience. This is to teach children how to recover quickly from difficulties and have the ability to 'bounce back' from challenges. In order for staff to resolve these instances of bullying.

6. **Monitoring and evaluation of the policy**

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be annually monitored and evaluated. It will also be amended in light of any incidents that occur across the year where additions or improvements are identified. The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for PSHE monitors behaviour logs on a monthly basis and analyses the data in order to assess the impact of our preventative measures, and to identify patterns or trends so that these can be addressed swiftly and effectively.

7. **Training:**

At Hillcross we will ensure that all school staff, both teaching and non-teaching (including midday play leaders, the site team and admin team) receive updates and training (where appropriate) on all aspects of the Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We are committed to treating all members of the school community fairly and challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of the school community and it helps to promote equality and accessibility at our school. The curriculum is planned to be inclusive and meet the needs and interests of a full range of learners. Activities and resources will be differentiated and adult support used to ensure that children access the curriculum and make the best possible progress.

Safeguarding Commitment

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in line with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We take seriously our duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism - this includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. We work closely with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Radicalisation is recognised as a specific safeguarding issue and is addressed in line with the Government Prevent Strategy and The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Privacy Policy

Hillcross School is committed to ensuring protection of all personal information that we hold. We recognise our obligations under the GDPR and Data Protection act 2018. Our practice is documented in our Data Protection Policy.



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Written and Approved: November 2015,

Reviewed: November 2016, November 2017, December 2018, December 2019, Jan 2020, Jan 2021

Date of next review: Jan 2022

Appendix One

Sources of further information support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

Name of Organisation	Telephone Number	Website
Kidscape	020 7730 3300 (general no) 08451 205 204 (Helpline for adults)	www.kidscape.org.uk
Childline	0800 1111 (helpline for children)	www.childline.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	www.parentlineplus.org.uk
Anti-bullying Alliance	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
BBC	Not available	www.bbc.co.uk/bullying
Department for Education and Skills	Not available	www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying
Beat Bullying	0208 771 3377	www.beatbullying.org
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Anti-bully	Not available	www.antibully.org.uk
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	www.bullying.co.uk
Bully Free Zone	01204 454 958	www.bullyfreezone.co.uk
The Children's Legal Centre	01206 872 466	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Anti-bullying Network	0131 651 6103	www.antibullying.net

Be clear on timescales for responding to incidents, who you will involve, and what the different outcomes might be. How will you record incidents to establish patterns and provide evidence of action?