



North Leamington School

Anti-bullying Policy

MARCH 2024

Approval and Review

This Policy is reviewed in discussion with staff and governors.

Effective from: March 2024

Approved by: NLS Local Governing Body

Review Date: March 2025

Review Leader: Deputy Headteacher

Introduction

1. Core Purpose

Commitment: We are committed to providing a friendly, caring and safe environment for all our students and for all those adults who work in our school.

Opportunity: All our students have the right to learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere, and the staff have the right to go about their professional duties without intimidation or undue pressure.

Respect: Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. If bullying does occur, however, all students and parents/carers should be able to report this freely and to know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Excellence: We actively discourage students from being passive 'bystanders' in this context: any student who knows that bullying is taking place is expected to act responsibly by informing staff.

2. Aims

Our aims are:

- to reduce the incidence of all forms of bullying and prejudice related incidents at NLS
- to encourage all NLS students to develop a respectful approach to social relationships

3. Policy Principles

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the child. (Keeping Children Safe in Education, KCSiE, DfE, 2023)

4. Objectives and Desired Outcomes

Our objectives and desired outcomes are:

- All NLS governors, staff, students and parents/carers should share a clear understanding of what constitutes 'bullying'
- All NLS governors, staff, students and parents/carers should be fully aware of the school's Anti-bullying Policy
- All NLS staff, students and parents/carers should follow the school's Anti-bullying Policy closely and consistently when bullying is reported
- All NLS students and parents/carers should be able to have confidence in the school's Anti-bullying Policy and should be assured that they will be fully supported when bullying is reported.

5. Bullying

At NLS we define bullying ***as a behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.***

Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice, difference or perceived differences and may involve an imbalance of power. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them physically, verbally or online.

6. NLS Code of Conduct

In the context of Anti-bullying, the School's Behaviour and Engagement Policy, with its emphasis on 'Respect for others', provides all students with a helpful framework on which to base their social relationships.

Examples of different Forms of Bullying (which may also be known as 'child on child abuse'):

- **Physical:** any form of physical intimidation or assault, such as pushing, hitting, kicking, extortion or theft of property
- **Verbal:** spreading rumours, name-calling, humiliation, abusive or menacing comments
- **Psychological:** being unfriendly (e.g. excluding from group), tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings), making threatening gestures
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical attention or contact (i.e. harassment), sexually abusive or explicit comments
- **Homophobic, transphobic or biphobic or LGBTQ+:** verbal or physical abuse focussing on the issue of a person's sexuality
- **Racist:** verbal or physical abuse focussing on a person's colour, ethnic heritage, culture, nationality or religious identity
- **Online/Cyber:** any form of abuse or intimidation made by means of computer technology, e.g. mobile phone messages, video clips of actual bullying, MSN messaging, text-messaging, internet abuse.
- **Disabilism:** verbal or physical abuse which is as a result of an individual's physical or mental disability.
- **Other:** any form of abuse or intimidation which may not be specifically cited above, including discrimination against any protected characteristic as defined by law.

Prejudice related incidents are logged and monitored by senior leaders and may be reported using our internal systems such as CPOMS and Go4Schools.

7. Anti-Bullying Strategies at NLS

The school employs a wide variety of direct and specific anti-bullying strategies, as follows:

- Direct responsibility for, and coordination of, the NLS Anti-Bullying Policy by a senior member of staff
- Daily consistent adult contact with an allocated Form Tutor for each student to support with concerns
- A broad curriculum which develops students' understanding of respect through content, discussion, dedicated events, projects and assemblies
- NLS will commit to creating an ethos of good behaviour where students treat one another and school staff with respect
- Provide effective staff training whereby all staff have a clear understanding of the principles of the school's policy, how to manage incidents of bullying and where to seek support
- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and that they are aware of the procedures to follow if they feel that their child is being bullied
- Embedding Restorative Practice with staff and students

- Availability of the school's Student Support & Engagement Team and wider IEN (Individual Educational Needs) Faculty staff to support students
- Reinforcement of NLS Anti-bullying Policy by Year Leaders and Form Tutors in Assemblies, Tutor Time, PSHE and RSE curriculum.
- Reinforcement of positive social relationships in all lessons (e.g. by encouragement of group/team work) and exploration of relevant issues in specific curriculum areas (e.g. PSHE, RSE, R.E., Citizenship, Drama, Dance, English)
- Staff Duty system, involving all teaching staff and teaching assistants, ensuring staff and student visibility in all parts of the school at all times; Senior Staff duty (Headteacher, Deputies, SAHT, AHT) on local roads and car parks before and after school each day
- Lunchtime Clubs (safe, supervised games)
- 'Quiet Areas': Library, Learning Support room and Nurture room
- Continuous, close liaison with external agencies such as the Safer Neighbourhood Team and, where appropriate, the Police
- Close liaison with our feeder primary schools to identify vulnerable children and support accordingly through transition to NLS
- Close liaison with an established network of senior staff at all local schools and senior staff in other key local agencies, e.g. Children's Services

8. Responding to incidents of bullying

All concerns related to bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. We recognise that students who are being bullied may not report it. However, there may be signs and indicators which our staff are trained to be aware of when monitoring students' wellbeing. School staff will be alert to signs of bullying and will act promptly and firmly against it.

The primary aim of punitive sanctions must be to put a stop to the bullying and to prevent any continuation of it. Consequences must be tempered with the determination to keep the emphasis on a cooperative, problem-solving approach and to reinforce parental ownership and responsibility with regard to modifying the behaviour of a perpetrator of bullying behaviour. Initially, therefore, the school's approach will be to reinforce both to the perpetrator and their parents and to reinforce the school's expectations regarding positive social relations and respect for others (Restorative Practices).

If students do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, the school will take stronger measures to deal with persistent bullying. A broad range of sanctions may include the following:

- change of seating within a classroom
- restorative conversations
- temporary or permanent removal from a class/group (Tutor group or teaching group)
- withdrawal of lunchtime/breaktime privileges
- intervention courses (managing emotions, social skills etc)
- allocation of a key worker within school to support students

- assessment and/or support from our SEND / IEN team including the SENDCO
- limiting movement to specific areas on school grounds
- detention/s
- withholding participation in school trips/visits or sports events
- engaging the support of other schools' Learning Support Units
- meeting with parents and carers as necessary
- risk assessment or safety plan
- arranging a Governing Panel to address continued concerns about behaviours
- any other strategies as outlined in the school's Behaviour and Engagement policy
- engagement of the Police, Safer Neighbourhood Team or other outside agencies as appropriate
- fixed period of time at another school including an Offsite Direction
- fixed-term suspension; permanent exclusion

In severe cases of bullying, e.g. serious physical assault or the repeated 'targeting' of an individual, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher may exclude the perpetrator and inform the Chair of Governors, prior to consideration by a meeting of the Governors' Disciplinary Sub-Committee.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Monitoring: The Deputy Headteacher with the overview of safeguarding will monitor the NLS Anti-bullying Policy. The Deputy Headteacher will have the overview of a central record of incidents which have been recorded and investigated.
2. Monitoring of performance against expected outcomes will be done through:
 - recording the number and types of bullying incidents
 - Student and parent voice
 - The effectiveness of the NLS Anti-bullying Policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher in liaison with School Governors. In exceptional circumstances the policy may be reviewed after a shorter time interval.

10. Working with Students

1. NLS students should feel able to approach any member of staff in order to report a bullying incident and should feel confident that the member of staff will deal with the issue as a matter of priority, either by investigating the incident her/himself or by informing a more appropriate member of staff, depending on the circumstances.
2. It is vital that all staff involved in following up a bullying situation in this way act with urgency: the aim is to achieve a 24-hour 'turn-around' (depending on the situation), including involvement of parents/carers.
3. When a student goes to a member of staff to report a bullying incident, that member of staff should not make any assumptions about the incident being reported to them: they should listen carefully and take note of the precise details involved and of the specific behaviour causing distress. Where possible, students should be encouraged to give a written account of events, and the member of staff should attempt to corroborate this by seeking appropriate witnesses. (Note – this may take time to complete.)

4. Information gathered by any member of staff should be recorded accordingly and passed as soon as possible to relevant Year Leader. It is essential that one of the senior staff then takes direct responsibility for ensuring that the bullying behaviour does not continue during that school day and that the student(s) concerned are able to go home safely.
5. The senior member of staff taking responsibility should contact home within a reasonable time frame to inform all parents/carers of the relevant events and of the steps being taken to investigate them and to follow up. Follow-up should include further contact after an agreed period of time with the parents/carers of both the victim and the perpetrator in a bullying incident, for instance to check that the bullying has not resumed.
6. The opportunity to receive 1-to-1 support from the available professional staff at NLS can be offered to any student involved in a bullying incident, should it be felt necessary or useful by the senior member of staff overseeing the follow-up to the incident. This might apply, for instance, to students who are seen to have very low self-esteem or to be particularly vulnerable.
7. It also needs to be said that the very small minority of students who show little respect for staff and who regularly disrupt particular lessons cause a great deal of stress to both staff and students. If a student refuses to cooperate with reasonable staff requests and/or is aggressive with staff, this should also be construed as bullying and dealt with in accordance with the procedures above, as appropriate.
8. Any incidents which are reported to staff which raise a safeguarding concern will be addressed in line with the school's Child Protection Policy. The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Ms H Jones.
9. Child on child abuse may take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

North Leamington School staff work in line with practice outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and recognises the importance of not dismissing sexual violence, child on child abuse or sexual harassment towards all members of our community as "banter". This will be addressed in line with our Behaviour and Engagement policy.

11. Working with Parents/Carers

1. All parents/carers will be made aware of the school's Anti-bullying Policy as part of their induction as new NLS parents/carer and will be signposted to the school website to read a fully copy of this document.
2. All NLS parents/carers will be given reminders of the school's advice regarding how to deal with bullying situations, particularly how to recognize the 'symptoms' of such a situation and who to inform at the school.
3. All parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to attend meetings at the school in relation to bullying issues and to modifying the behaviour of the students concerned.
4. Parents/Carers will be offered support in addressing incidences of bullying at regular opportunities such as Parents' Evening, Open Evening and Rewards Evenings where a College Leader will be available to offer advice and support.

12. Working with Staff

1. These issues are in addition to those set out above.
2. The school's Student Support & Engagement Team and Form Tutors / Year Leaders are readily accessible to all students as a 'listening ear' for students reluctant to inform a teacher of a bullying issue or incident. They will also follow up with direct support for both the victim and the perpetrator in cases where it emerges that the students caught up in such incidents would benefit from some help engaging with such issues as self-esteem, social skills, peer pressure and the emotional challenges of life.
3. All staff will receive regular and specific training regarding the school's Anti-bullying Policy, to be led and coordinated by a senior member of staff.

Links with other policies

This policy must be used in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour and Engagement policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion policy
- Online Safety policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Child Protection Policy and associated statutory documents
- SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan