TALBOT HEATH SCHOOL *"Honour Before Honours"*

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURE (PUPILS)

Date adopted: 3rd November 2026

Date for next adoption: Autumn Term 2027

Reviewed by: FGB

As a school, we will make reasonable adjustments to this policy, in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equality Act (2010), for students with SEND.

This is a whole school policy and includes Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding
- Curriculum
- Behaviour
- Exclusions
- Supervision

At Talbot Heath the school ethos is to foster mutual respect and understanding. Young people have a right to feel safe in school. Our policy extends beyond the campus. Any reported bullying outside the school premises will be investigated and if bullying is found to have occurred, the perpetrator of bullying may be disciplined when she is on school premises under the lawful control of the staff. This includes cyber bullying. Within the curriculum, pupils throughout the school are taught about the seriousness of bullying and understand the nature of it, the process to be followed should it occur (including support measures) and the fact that the school is a 'telling school' with a 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying.

Staff are trained with regard to the school's anti-bullying policies and procedures as part of the annual safeguarding training. Staff record all reports and incidents of bullying, and immediately inform the Deputy Head-Head of Junior and Deputy Head DSL who instigate the school's procedure and inform the Head of School. The Head of School may meet with pupils and parents if the investigation brings to light incidences of bullying that will result in serious sanctions, including temporary or permanent exclusion.

Our Online safety lead is responsible for ensuring that the school's online safety curriculum includes cyber-bullying. External agencies, such as the Community Police Safer School's team also deliver sessions on cyber-bullying as part of the school's PSHE programme. Pupils are taught to develop resilience with regard to online safety. Filters are in place (see ICT, Mobile Equipment and Digital Citizenship Policy) to prevent pupils accessing inappropriate sites.

Statement of intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Any behaviour which could be termed as "bullying" is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. At Talbot Heath our policy aims to prevent bullying.

It is therefore important that we create a culture and communication network where children and young people are easily able to confide in staff if they are being bullied.

It is our belief that the perpetrator of bullying needs help just as much as the child being bullied and we endeavour to help both children with the co-operation of parents. No one deserves to be a target of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are displaying bullying behaviour need to learn different ways of behaving.

What is Bullying?

Definition of Bullying from the Anti-Bullying Alliance "*The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face to face or online."*

Bullying is behaviour which results in pain, distress or fear to the target of bullying. Bullying can be motivated by prejudice, race, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional:** being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical**: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racial:** racist taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Religious**
- **Cultural**
- **Special Education**: negative or abusive comments towards anyone who has special needs or a disability and appears to be 'different' either physically or mentally
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic**: because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal**: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Cyber:** use of texts/ internet email or social networks/ telephone calls to
- send unpleasant messages/ images

Signs and Symptoms

We recognise the seriousness of bullying in causing psychological damage and even suicide.

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

- Feels unwell in the morning
- Cries him/herself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins truanting
- Reluctant to make the journey to school - Is frightened of walking to or from school, doesn't want to go on the school/public bus, begs to be driven to school
- Changes his/her usual routine
- Unhappiness

- Unexplained behavioural changes e.g. moody, bad tempered, aggressive or withdrawn, anxious, lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions or money going “missing”
- Wanting extra pocket money for no particular reason (to pay perpetrator of bullying)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is displaying bullying behaviour towards other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate many other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

The school will therefore:

- ensure that all staff have access to the anti-bullying policy and procedures
- ensure that ample opportunity is given for pupils to express their viewpoints, be it in a classroom situation or in a social situation. This is evident in the curriculum, where all subjects now incorporate such skills, and also in the general social situation within the school. They are encouraged to develop empathy and apply it in every aspect of their lives and to develop self-discipline in their behaviour towards others.
- address anti-bullying issues via the curriculum particularly within PSHE lessons, in form time and in assemblies during the year
- take very seriously the need to adopt anti-bullying strategies ensuring that it protects the child or young person being bullied.
- have a clear rota of supervision at break, lunch and after school activities (often opportunities for bullying occur in ‘social’ time)
- Make it clear what sanctions there are for bullying.

Sanctions that may be used include an after-school detention, an exclusion for a fixed period and ultimately permanent exclusion.

Other sources of written advice that staff may find useful in this area include:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Guidelines on how staff can report concerns or allegations of risk of harm to pupils
- Policy on Behaviour and DisciplineOnline Safety Policy

This policy has been written with reference to the DFE Preventing and Tackling Bullying March 2014 and supporting document.

Broad Guidelines

It is the responsibility of the school to raise awareness of bullying through staff discussions at staff meetings and reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community - Staff, Pupils, Parents and Governors to create an ethos of good behaviour

where pupils treat each other and the school staff with respect because they know it is the right way to behave.

1. **Individual Staff Responsibility**

- To be aware of children who seem unhappy
- To listen to, believe and support children who say they have been bullied
- To offer support strategies or advise students where they can get further advice and support
- To take reports of bullying seriously and liaise with the Head of Key Stage for Senior School pupils or Deputy Head- Head of Junior for Junior School pupils to investigate the allegation.
- To record bullying on My Concern to enable patterns to be identified.
- To liaise with form teacher and Head of Key Stage or Deputy Head – Head of Junior.
- To act as positive role models in terms of communication, showing respect, listening, problem solving
- To teach students skills of negotiation, conflict resolution, assertion and listening
- To give support to students who display bullying behaviour; teach and praise alternative ways of behaviour

2. **Form Teacher/Tutor Responsibility**

- To be aware of children who seem unhappy
- To take reports of bullying seriously and report incidents on My Concern.
- Liaise with the Head of Key Stage and/or Deputy Head DSL or Deputy Head- Head of Junior.
- To investigate with the Head of Key Stage or Deputy Head- Head of Junior. Together, speak and listen to ALL children concerned individually
- To record all details of interviews in writing on My Concern.
- To decide on and implement a course of action in consultation with Head of Key Stage, Deputy Head DSL or Deputy Head – Head of Junior.
- To support students who say they have been bullied and encourage the development of appropriate assertive behaviour
- To support students who display bullying behaviour and teach and encourage more sociable behaviour

3. **Head of Key Stage Responsibility (Senior School only)**

- To support members of the tutor team in investigating allegations of bullying
- To decide on and implement appropriate action in consultation with the Deputy Head DSL
- To ensure detailed write ups are logged on My Concern and the Whole School Bullying Log.
- Wherever appropriate to discuss issues of bullying within the curriculum by literature, drama, history, PSHE, RS

4. **Deputy Head DSL and Deputy Head – Head of Junior Responsibility**

- To support form tutors, individual staff and Heads of Key Stage
- To decide, implement and oversee an appropriate course of action in association with the Head

- To liaise with Subject Staff, the Head and Parents and outside agencies as appropriate
- To complete a My Concern update and log on the whole school Bullying log.
- To oversee anti-bullying initiatives

5. Pupil Responsibility

- To talk to a responsible adult about any incident which makes her unhappy or which she sees making another pupil unhappy
- To treat no-one in a way which could be interpreted as unkind or as bullying behaviour

6. Parent Responsibility

- To inform the school if they have reason to suspect bullying is taking place
- To co-operate with the school in investigating allegations of bullying
- To support any strategies the school may instigate to help encourage more sociable behaviour
- To support any sanctions the school may impose as a result of investigations

7. Day and Boarding

- Staff need to take seriously the concerns of our young people and to liaise with each other to support students accordingly.
- Staff need to be vigilant to act upon reports of bullying and harassment.

8. Head

- To ensure the School's anti-bullying policies and procedures are fully implemented.
- To ensure that all members of the school community feel safe and secure and are aware that there is a zero-tolerance approach in the School.

Conclusion

Implementation of the above policy should ensure that any cases of alleged "bullying" are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

Bullying by its very nature is insidious because children and young people are likely to feel that "telling" will only make matters worse for themselves and leave them even more at the mercy of the perpetrators of bullying. The target of bullying must be offered immediate support and must be made to feel that they have done the right thing in coming forward. It should be remembered that by telling someone, they have undertaken something which is very difficult.

Any strategy for dealing with bullying must ensure that it protects the child or young person being bullied. For example, it is more appropriate for a member of staff to approach the perpetrator of bullying on the basis "We know what is going on" rather than to say that it was the target of bullying who brought the matter to their notice.

When it comes to our attention that there may be bullying in school we start investigations as follows:

1. See the pupils involved individually and record their "statement" about the incident(s) being investigated. **Two staff should be present at any such interview where bullying is being investigated.**
2. If there is reason for us to believe that bullying is taking place, we then contact the parents of both parties and put our findings to them.
3. It is our belief that a child who displays bullying behaviour needs help just as much as the target of bullying.
4. We endeavour to help both pupils with the co-operation of the parents.
5. During investigations there may well be speculation among the children's peers and their parents. It is important that we are aware of this and take appropriate action to ensure that rumours are scotched and the investigation is satisfactorily concluded.
6. Careful monitoring will be undertaken by all staff of the pupils involved, discreet or overt, whichever is deemed appropriate to any given situation.

When staff confront a perpetrator of bullying, it is important that they try to include the following key features into their work:

- Be absolutely certain about the known facts. Confront the perpetrator of bullying with the allegations.
- Make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable. See perpetrator of bullying separately if appropriate.
- Be specific about sanctions if bullying does not stop.
- Follow-up to check that behaviour has ceased.

Dealing with Cyberbullying

The school has a robust programme of education with regard to online safety and cyberbullying which is delivered to pupils throughout the school. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online and how to respond in the event of cyberbullying. (See ICT, Mobile Equipment and Digital Citizenship Policy)

- The person being bullied will usually have examples of texts or emails received and
- should be encouraged to keep these to aid in any investigation. There are also additional reporting routes available through mobile phone companies, internet service providers and social networking sites.
- Some forms of cyberbullying involve the distribution of content or links to content, which can exacerbate, extend and prolong the bullying. There are advantages in trying to contain the spread of these by contacting the service provider, confiscating phones and contacting the police if the content is illegal.

- Take steps to identify the person responsible for the bullying. Steps can include:

- Looking at the school system and computer logs;
- Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- Obtaining user information from the service provider (with police involvement).

In the event that a situation is not resolved, a further meeting between pupils, staff and parents will be arranged. The Head/ Deputy Head DSL/ Deputy Head-Head of Junior will work with the parents, pupils and staff to support the target and perpetrator of bullying to bring about full resolution of the situation.

Monitoring and recording of bullying incidents

All incidents of bullying are logged and recorded. All conversations or meetings relating to bullying are documented and kept. An annual evaluation of all incidents takes place so that the effectiveness of the school's policy can be evaluated and trends identified.