



# Anti-Bullying Strategy and Statement

## Nottingham Free School



**Approved by:** TILT

**Date:** Sept 2023

**Expires:**

31 August 2024

## **Introduction and aims**

Bullying in any form will not be tolerated in any schools within our Trust.

## **Purpose**

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive students can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or student, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child be best able to benefit from the opportunities available at the school.

The Trust is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. Bullying is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. As such, everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all students and all staff have a duty of care to ensure our students are protected from harm, and this includes bullying.

## **Principles**

We will:

- Adopt a definition of bullying that is agreed across the Trust.
- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur.
- Raise awareness of bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect.
- Seek to involve all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Promote positive action to prevent bullying through our PSCE and pastoral programme, related activities and through curriculum opportunities.
- Provide support for all members of the school community that may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying.
- Provide appropriate training for both staff and students to support the implementation of the policy across the School.
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality, and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds.
- Pay due regard for those students with SEND who may be at higher risk of peer group isolation and can suffer a disproportionate impact of bullying. Students with SEND may have difficulties with communication and it is important that staff are aware of changes to behaviour or mood. Injuries may not be consistent with their SEND but could be related to incidents of abuse or bullying.

## **Definition of bullying**

There may sometimes be misunderstanding about the meaning of the term 'bullying'. Oneoff incidents, whilst they may be very serious and must always be dealt with, do not fall within the definition of 'bullying'.

We define bullying as persistent or repeated, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone.

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- It is repeated over time.
- There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour.

It can be:

Verbal Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, harassment, body shaming

Emotional Being unfriendly, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures or actions). Inappropriate 'looks' or body language designed to intimidate or exclude from groups, games or activities.

Physical Pushing, kicking, shaking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence that may cause physical harm. Unwanted physical contact including an 'invasion of personal space', This includes the threat of violence or the encouragement of physical harm towards another.

Prejudiced Racial / sexual / homophobic taunts, graffiti, gestures, comments on identity / culture / beliefs. Unwanted physical contact or threats / harassment

Sexual Unwanted physical contact, sexual harassment or sexual comments, remarks, jokes. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent including forcing someone to strip or touch themselves sexually. Rating appearance and derogatory remarks. Upskirting designed to obtain images of buttocks or genitalia which can cause distress, alarm or humiliation. In extreme cases, rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault / violence.

Online All areas of internet use such as email, social media and internet misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls, sharing of consensual or non-consensual nude or seminude images (sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) Misuse of associated technology;

i.e. camera and video facilities. Taking photos without consent and sharing on social media

Hazing or initiation rituals which may involve harassment, abuse or humiliation, this can be online or in person.

### **Cyber-bullying**

To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim.

The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be.

Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSCHE) education, and other subjects where appropriate.

All staff, governors and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training.

The school also sends information on cyber-bullying to parents so that they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected.

In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, all schools will follow the processes set out in their anti-bullying strategy and the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.

The DSL will report the incident and provide the relevant material to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable, if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that possessing that material is illegal. They will also work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying. The Head Teacher is ultimately responsible for the well-being of all students and staff.

All staff, students and parents should be made aware of the individual schools anti-bullying strategy and policy alongside awareness being raised of the issues associated with bullying.

### **Staff**

All staff will:

- Treat each other respectfully
- Foster in our students' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our students.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to appropriate class teacher or House Office (SSA, tutor or Senior Tutor).

### **Students**

We expect our students to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the student who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances. Witnessing bullying without acting or reporting it will be regarded as offering tacit support for the bully and effectively joining in with the bullying. Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:
- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.
- Not use bullying tactics themselves as retaliation.

## **Parents**

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Taking appropriate responsibility for the use and misuse of technology, including social media
- Advising their children to report any bullying to a member of staff and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other students.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken; whilst helping to foster confidence, assertiveness and negotiation skills to deal with unkind behaviour
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, trying to ascertain the truth. • Speaking respectfully when talking to all members of college staff

All schools will have their own Anti-Bullying Charter / Strategy, these include but are not limited to:

- ☐ How pupils, parents and staff can report incidents of bullying
- ☐ How the school investigates allegations of bullying
- ☐ Whole-school proactive strategies to prevent bullying
- ☐ How the school trains staff and governors in preventing and handling bullying

## **Creating a positive learning environment**

- The Trust School Behaviour Policy explains how positive behaviour in school is used to create an environment where students take responsibility for their own and each other's well-being.
- Curriculum opportunities in class are used to raise awareness about bullying and our antibullying policy, create an anti-bullying ethos and encourage students to manage their relationships positively with others.
- We use the SMSC and British Values programme to develop social and emotional skills such as empathy and the management of feelings, thereby providing continuity from primary to secondary education.
- Assemblies and tutorial time are also used to promote awareness of the negative consequences of bullying.
- The Trust also believe in raising awareness through the Anti-Bullying week events, which provides a direct link to school experiences.
- Whenever possible, Trust schools will endeavour to work with feeder schools, parent/carers and students to create the best possible learning environment for every pupil.
- We aim to provide understanding and tolerance of all our differences and encourage our students to disown bullying in any form. Transitional visits by staff and peer mentors into primary schools ensure continuity and coherence in our approach to behaviour, particularly bullying.

## **Bullying Log**

All incidents of bullying are logged on BROMCOM and CPOMS to allow tracking, monitoring and evaluation. This will in all instances include:

- Incident details
- Action taken including sanctions applied
- Resolution
- Staff involved

This information will be used by the Senior Leadership Team and Pastoral Teams for:

- Sharing of good practice
- Ensuring parity in dealing with incidents
- Identifying where bullying is a factor in non-attendance at school
- Exclusion data relating to bullying

## **Sanctions**

Will be issued in line with the behaviour policy

## **Complaints**

If a parent or member of staff is not satisfied with the steps taken as a result of a bullying, the complaints procedure is the same as for other complaints.



## **Nottingham Free School Anti-Bullying Strategy 2023-24**

At Nottingham Free School, we believe that all children and young people should learn and play/socialise in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We are committed to promoting equality, diversity and an inclusive and supportive environment for students and staff, which affirms the rights of individuals to be treated fairly and with respect. All adults and students should recognise that bullying is an anti-social behaviour, which affects everyone and will not be tolerated. We recognise that the impact of bullying can have a long-term effect on a student's well-being and attainment. We believe that the most effective way of minimising bullying is to nurture positive relationships and to model kindness consistently, as demonstrated through the ethos of the school and our key school values. We are committed to ensuring that all of our students feel safe and are ready to learn.

### **Definition of Bullying:**

We follow the DfE and Anti-Bullying Alliance definitions of bullying, which define bullying as:

***'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'***

### **Context of Nottingham Free School and students**

Nottingham Free School was the first free school to be established within the city of Nottingham, eventually opening its doors to fewer than 90 students in September 2014. Although NFS initially opened its doors to fewer than 90 students, it quickly established its reputation and became the school of choice for many of the families living within its catchment area. Whilst we do not have feeder schools, the majority of our cohort derives from 3 mains schools in Sherwood. This means that many of our students already have established friendships. We quite often have students who are the sole person from their primary school and we have a high intake of students with SEN especially with autism.

Within this context, we recognise that our students may:

- Have had previous bullying concerns from their primary school which may continue to us
- Those with SEN need struggle socially to adjust to our diverse population

Within the context of the school environment, we recognise that:

- Our building is specially designed for 650 students. There is no need for students to go outside (except for PE) to transition to other lessons. This means that all 650 students are contained in one building which lessens the opportunity of space between students.

- There are only 2 sets of toilets in the building (there is a non gender toilet too) and these can contribute to some unkind behaviours if not monitored.
- Our premises has a small outside space which on a KS3 lunchtime can be very busy. The lack of space can contribute to some unkind behaviours

#### **Aims:**

- The DfE and Anti Bullying Alliance definition of Bullying is understood and adopted by all staff working at or with Nottingham Free School
- Nottingham Free School will recognise that the voices of pupils, parents, staff, Governors and partner agencies are important and will obtain their views, in relation to Anti-Bullying
- Staff will consistently and firmly challenge inappropriate interactions, including prejudice based and aggressive language
- All staff will know and use an agreed approach to managing incidents of bullying
- All pupils and staff understand the importance of using inclusive and nonderogatory language
- Bullying incidents will be recorded carefully and analysed to look for trends and patterns
- Training for staff will have a high profile. It will be carefully planned, regular and relevant
- Governors and Trustees will be well informed about Bullying

#### **Recommendations:**

- A Strategy Action Plan be drawn up to address priority development areas • Strategy Action Plan development areas are included in the SIF

### **Nottingham Free School Anti-Bullying Strategy Action Plan**

The Action Plan is ordered under 6 priorities:

1. Data Collection
2. Consultation with students
3. Work with students
4. Support for parents and carers
5. Support for staff in their role in Anti-Bullying
6. Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the impact of the strategy

Priority 1: Data Collection				
Outcome	Action	By Whom	By When	Resources
Bullying data is correctly identified and is mapped on the bullying log.	HoY to log all incidents of unkindness on the bullying log.	HoY	Daily basis	Bullying log BROMCOM



Logging of bullying incidents on BROMCOM and CPOMS and the outcome.	HoYs are the only staff who log bullying incidents on BROMCOM and CPOMS with the appropriate sanction attached.	HoY	Daily basis	BROMCOM
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Priority 2: Consultation with students				
Outcome	Action	By Whom	By When	Resources
Students are aware of the new anti-bullying policy and Strategy. They have made a contribution to the action plan.	KGR to meet Antibullying Ambassadors to share updated strategy and to discuss any amendments to policy	KGR JTO	By October half term	Policy Strategy
Gain a better understanding of students' understanding of bullying, how they perceive bullying and their experience of bullying at Nottingham Free School	KGR/JTO and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to discuss with student focused groups Students explore their own definitions and experiences of bullying alongside this definition.	KGR JTO	By October half term	Policy Strategy
Staff consistently and firmly challenge inappropriate interactions including prejudice based and aggressive language	Through student focus groups, discussion of staff consistently address unkindness and derogatory language when it is used by students.  HoYs to monitor data on BROMCOM to support staff consistency	KGR	By October half term	BROMCOM

Priority 3: Work with students
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Outcome	Action	By Whom	By When	Resources
Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to attend Diana Award training and to implement actions from the training	<p>Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to present their strategy to staff during briefing.</p> <p>Students and staff to develop an Action Plan to be ratified with SLT, shared across the whole school and incorporated into the Anti-Bullying Strategy</p>	KGR/JTO	Nov 23	<p>Diana Award</p> <p>Student antibullying action plan</p>
	Ambassadors to lead on Antibullying week assemblies			
Students and school staff to participate in Anti-Bullying Week 2023 'Make a noise about bullying'	<p>Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to take a lead role in working with HoY/JTO to plan activities for Anti Bullying week.</p> <p>Student focus groups to create a resource, display board or celebration book of their activities during Anti Bullying week</p> <p>Representatives from the student focus groups to help deliver assemblies during this week.</p>	KGR JTO HoY	November	<p>Anti-bullying alliance</p> <p>Anti-bullying Week resources</p>

Students to understand what they can do if they are experiencing bullying and how to access help at school	Through student focus groups, to discuss the current arrangements in place for any student or staff member to report incidents of bullying.  Students to design a range of ways for students to report bullying and seek help if they are being bullied.	KGR JTO	By October half term	Policy Strategy Plan
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Priority 4: Support for parents and carers

Outcome	Action	By Whom	By When	Resources
Wider community participation in Anti Bullying week	Family activities shared with parents and carers. Families encouraged to take part in Anti-	KGR JTO HoY	November	Anti-bullying alliance
	Bullying week activities			

Gain a better understanding of parents' understanding of bullying, how they perceive bullying and their child's experience of bullying	<p>Questionnaire to parents and carers</p> <p>Invitation to parents' forum/coffee morning to discuss perceptions of bullying</p> <p>Short presentation and discussion of school definition of bullying and Anti-Bullying Strategy</p> <p>Request feedback from parents</p> <p>Feedback to be used to give parent voice to Anti-Bullying Policy and strategy</p>	KGR JTO HoY	December	Questionnaire Parent resources
Parents will have access to high quality information and advice materials to be able to support their children	<p>Parent information leaflet on bullying to be sent to all parents and carers.</p> <p>Information to be sent to parents/carers to help them access the Anti-Bullying Alliance online Information and advice tool for parents and carers</p>	KGR JTO	December	Information leaflet for parents and carers on bullying

Priority 5: Support for staff in their role in Anti-Bullying

Outcome	Action	By Whom	By When	Resources
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KGR and JTO to be lead staff on Anti-Bullying	Staff will implement good practice with ideas and strategies	KGR JTO HoY	December	The Diana Award, AntiBullying
Ambassador training	<p>to support work in school.</p> <p>Ongoing support from the Diana Award will be available to Anti-Bullying Ambassadors once trained</p> <p>All staff know who their Champions for Anti Bullying are</p>			Ambassador training Diana Award staff guide Diana Award student Ambassador guide
All staff will know and use an agreed approach when managing incidents of Bullying	<p>Anti-Bullying Alliance Top tips for teachers to be shared with all teachers</p> <p>A flow chart in place detailing action to take when bullying is suspected or evident. This is shared with staff and regularly discussed during HoY meetings and individual student planning/strategy meetings</p> <p>Agreed strategies and scripts in place to support staff in managing incidents of bullying</p>	KGR JTO HoY	December	Flow chart

Parents will have access to high quality information and advice materials to be able to support their children	<p>Parent information leaflet on bullying to be sent to all parents and carers.</p> <p>Information to be sent to parents/carers to help them access the Anti-Bullying Alliance online Information and advice tool for parents and carers</p>	KGR JTO	October	Information leaflet for parents and carers on bullying
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Priority 6: Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the impact of the strategy				
Outcome	Action	By Whom	By When	Resources
The school to monitor the success and effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Strategy action plan	<p>Evaluation after events e.g. parents coffee morning, Anti-Bullying week to determine the short term/immediate success of the event R</p> <p>Review of AntiBullying Actions</p> <p>Evaluation in the school SIF to determine the long term benefits of development work within the AntiBullying strategy and further development required</p> <p>Data review to monitor on going incidents of bullying and to plan intervention for individual students and cohorts as needed</p>	KGR JTO HoY	Every half term	The Diana Award, Anti Bullying Ambassador training Diana Award staff guide Diana Award student Ambassador guide

