

**Diss High School**  
**Anti-bullying Policy 2024-25**



**Due to be reviewed: - October 2025**

## **Introduction**

Diss High School has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. Every pupil has the right to learn in a safe environment and to have any concerns dealt with quickly and robustly.

This policy has been written in accordance to the Department for Education's (DfE) document: Preventing and Tackling Bullying <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying> .

## **Definition of Bullying**

Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts, threatens, or frightens another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying is differentiated from a friendship issue by:

- A deliberate intention to hurt, threaten, frighten or humiliate.
- Repetition.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves. This power imbalance can be present amongst friends.

There is no specific guidance around how long the behaviour must be repeated for it to be classed as bullying but we would work on anything that had happened more than "once or twice over a period of a week". One off incidents (especially physical incidents or those classed as hate crime) will be dealt with robustly however the incident is categorised. Deliberately harming someone online is always classed as cyber-bullying.

Bullying can be:

- a. Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or other violence)
- b. Emotional (unfriendly, excluding or tormenting)
- c. Verbal (name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing)
- d. Cyber (all areas of internet or electronic communication)

Or involve one of the nine characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010, for example:

- e. Racist (racist taunts, graffiti or gestures)
- f. Sexual (unwanted physical contact or abusive comments)
- g. LGBT+ phobic (focusing on the issues of sexuality and gender)

What does bullying look like?

- Name calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making offensive comments
- Physical assault, taking or damaging belongings
- Offensive graffiti

- Gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- Excluding people from groups with intent.
- Unwanted physical contact
- Following/intimidating

This is a non-exhaustive list and cases that fall outside these categories will be dealt with by the Pastoral Team in the spirit of this policy.

Comments made by a bully may regard age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, racial harassment, language or physical abuse but, again, this is not an exhaustive list.

Staring at someone or giving them “evil/ bad/nasty looks/smirks” is often subjective and hard to prove but can be considered bullying if accompanied by other actions and where there is clear evidence.

Bullying can affect both pupils and staff. This policy and procedure applies to the bullying of pupils by pupils inside and outside of school. Allegations about the bullying of pupils by staff will be dealt with under the school’s Safeguarding Policy and Disciplinary Policy. Allegations of bullying of staff by pupils should be reported to the relevant Head of Year. They will then discuss this with the Headteacher.

Other related policies and procedures include the Behaviour and Safeguarding policies.

### **How can bullying be reported?**

- Students can report by:
  - Informing the form tutor – during form time or when convenient to do so
  - Informing the Head of Year at an appropriate time.
  - Filling out a student report form on the students intranet page on the school’s website. <https://disshighschool.sharepoint.com/sites/schoolhomepage>
  - Speaking to any member of the Safeguarding Team – details on the school’s website
  - Speak to one of our Year 11 Mentors.
  - Tell an adult or ask an older student for help.
- Parents can report by:
  - Emailing the form tutor in the first instance. Where parents do not have the form tutors email address, please email [office@disshigh.co.uk](mailto:office@disshigh.co.uk) who will be able to direct the email to the form tutor. Please give full details of the incident and any names of pupils.
  - Phoning the school – Call 01379 642424 and leave a message for their child’s form tutor in the first instance.
- Staff can report by:
  - Informing the relevant Form Tutor in the first instance who will investigate and arrange appropriate support.
  - Completing a report on CPOMS – this will be reassigned accordingly by the Safeguarding team.

### **What actions are taken if an allegation of bullying is made?**

1. Allegations are given to the Pastoral team to investigate. They will speak to the pupil and get a full written statement. Statement sheets are available in the school reception. Statements must always include dates, name of victim, signature of those writing the statement. Ideally, the following details should also be given wherever possible: the name of the bully (if provided), dates, times, locations and names of witnesses. All bullying events must be recorded on CPOMS (as well as Go4Schools where appropriate).
2. To be considered bullying, unkind behaviour has to have been repeated. If it is a one-off, then it is deemed a friendship issue (recorded on Go4Schools) and appropriate action taken to resolve the

issue.

3. Staff investigating allegations must refer to any previous entries on Go4Schools and CPOMS and for friendship issues/alleged bullying of the victim along with any previous friendship issues or instances of bullying for the reported bully. This is essential in ascertaining if there are any patterns within the behaviour, and thus inform decisions on whether the new allegation should be deemed bullying.
4. If deemed bullying:
  - a) Further written statements, if required, to be taken from those named as victims, perpetrators and witnesses. If cyber bullying, then evidence of this (e.g. screen shots) will be asked for and saved
  - b) Depending on the information gathered, the situation can be addressed in a number of ways, depending on severity of actions and whether it has happened before. The options include making those involved aware of the consequences of their actions and likely consequences if it continues, a meeting with all the people involved (this may be a formal Restorative Justice (RJ) meeting) or separate restorative discussions with those involved. The problems and a way forward need to be identified, acknowledged and a strategy to move forward agreed. If there are to be consequences, they should follow the school's Behaviour Policy.
  - c) The situation should be monitored by a named person, checking how the situation has changed with all parties in the future. This will either be the Form Tutor or another member of the Pastoral Team. If evidence shows there are still concerns, further actions may need to be taken. After any follow up actions are taken, notes of what has been done are to be recorded on CPOMS.
  - d) The incident and actions should be recorded on CPOMS, with all actions detailed. If the perpetrator is known, then information must be recorded under the 'Bullying' category on CPOMS.
  - e) Parents of the victim and perpetrator should be contacted to make them aware of the incident, actions taken and then be kept informed.
  - f) Bullying is deemed a safeguarding concern will also be reported to our safeguarding team via CPOMS– for example if clearly ongoing sexist abuse, targeted cyber bullying, clearly on-going harm to the victim.

### **Review and report on incidents**

All incidents of bullying or perceived bullying that are dealt with should be recorded on CPOMS. If it is felt that an incident has not been handled according to this policy, or unsatisfactorily, please contact the Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour in the first instance by contacting the school at [office@disshigh.co.uk](mailto:office@disshigh.co.uk).

Subsequently, if you wish to submit your concerns as a formal complaint please, refer to the school website for our complaints policy.

## **What are the possible sanctions for bullying?**

This depends entirely on the severity of the case and will be decided after investigation and interviews/statements with those involved.

In cases where intent is uncertain or where things have been reported quickly we like to take a restorative approach to bullying – seeking apologies, resolution and then “checking in” again frequently. We know that many victims of bullying fail to report for fear of causing a fuss and things getting worse. We encourage the bullies to show empathy wherever possible in order to reduce the likelihood of them engaging in similar behaviour in the future.

Where the bullying has been clearly very unkind and the intent is clear we will use the sanctions stated in the school Behaviour Policy. These include detentions or Internal Exclusion (IEU) as a sanction. Our decisions will always take into account wherever possible the intent, the severity and duration of the bullying and the level of remorse shown. Repeated cases, physical bullying, hate crime and cyber-bullying (including comments online, setting up of chatrooms, improper use of pictures, etc.) could lead to Internal Exclusion and, in extreme cases, suspensions from school. Permanent Exclusion could be considered in very extreme, repeat cases.

The parents of the victim of bullying and the perpetrator will be contacted by the member of the pastoral team dealing with the incident.

Bystanders and those encouraging fights or disputes are also punished as part of this policy and the school Behaviour Policy.

In all cases of applying a sanction, we will take into account any special educational needs (SEN) the pupil involved may have.

## **Restorative approach to bullying**

Students who are investigated and sanctioned for bullying will be provided with resources to complete whilst serving their sanction. Further education surrounding the impact of bullying on others will be discussed with the student through a reflective meeting with the Head of Year, or the Behaviour Lead.

## **Liaising with the police**

We will liaise with the police on any of the issues below:

- Violence or assault (including sexual assault)
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages or other on-line communications
- Hate crimes
- Bullying outside of school
- Cyber-bullying Cases of racist/phobic bullying will be recorded and reported as required by Norfolk County Council and in our position as an inspiring School of Sanctuary

Parents will be informed by the safeguarding team as soon as possible when the school is required to liaise with the police. This information will be recorded on CPOMS.

### **What else do we do to prevent bullying?**

- We celebrate Anti-Bullying Week through form-time activities and assemblies and on our school website/social media platforms.
- Pupil voice meetings/pupil surveys are regularly completed to hear pupils' views
- Year 11 students can apply to be mentors to lower school students. This role enables them to act as ambassadors for the school mission of "Work Hard, Be Kind". Mentors are role models to the lower school and offer support in dealing with all aspects of school life, including dealing with bullying.
- All staff in school should be vigilant to the signs of bullying. These can include being unwilling or frightened to go to school (drop in attendance) or use the bus/bus waiting area, becoming withdrawn or anxious, feigning illness, marks and grades dropping, asking for money to replace "lost" money, changing eating habits, excessive spending in the canteen, no longer using the canteen, becoming aggressive or bullying others, making improbable excuses or having unexplained marks, bruises or injuries.
- All concerns about bullying, whether reported by pupils, parents or suspected by staff will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken.
- Pupils are encouraged to talk to any member of staff they feel comfortable with such as their form tutor. There are also local and national support agencies, such as Childline, that can also offer advice and support.
- Create a safe and secure environment. Any pupil should be confident that they can discuss their feelings of being bullied and expect to be listened to and helped to resolve the problems. Incidents should be reported immediately. Staff should treat pupils' feelings with respect and follow the procedures to help resolve the situation swiftly and positively. Pupils should be able to travel to and from school and move around the school, without fear of abuse, intimidation or bullying. We will continuously seek to make the school a physically and emotionally safe place.
- We create safe places for groups of students with dedicated staff e.g. LGBTQ+ Club.
- We always mark Black History Month, LGBT History Month and International Women's Day.
- We have a form time programme which tackles these themes throughout the year and encourages empathy.
- We celebrate every pupil being themselves and recognise the work of the Student Council.
- We purposefully look out for pupils whom we deem "vulnerable" to Hate Crime and build strong relationships of trust

### **Parental Responsibility**

- We can only act when we have been made aware of a possible case of bullying, therefore parents must make us aware of any concerns straight away so that we can put in place support and address the situation.
- Parents need also to be aware that not all reported cases on bullying will be deemed bullying, therefore when speaking to their child about an issue, they should be aware of the definition of bullying (at the beginning of this policy).
- Parents of a pupil who has bullied must speak to their child about reasons behind this and support the school decision on sanctions.
- Parents or carers trying to resolve bullying directly with pupils or their families can lead to problems escalating. Pupils who are found to be bullying others also need support and help to change their behaviour.

### **How the school will support parents in addressing bullying issues with their children**

Supporting parents in addressing bullying issues with their children is crucial to creating a safe and inclusive school environment. We will assist parents in this process:

- Ensuring open communication channels for parents to reach out to the school with concerns related to bullying.
- Provide parents with regular updates on anti-bullying initiatives, policies, and procedures through newsletters, school websites, or parent-teacher meetings. This ensures that parents are informed about the school's efforts to address bullying.
- Offer parents access to resources and guidance on dealing with bullying. Provide information on local support services, counselling, and mental health professionals who can assist both the child and the family.
- Clearly explain the school's bullying reporting procedures to parents. Ensure that parents know how and where to report incidents, and the expected timelines for response and resolution.
- Assure parents that their concerns will be handled confidentially and with sensitivity. Respect the privacy of all parties involved while addressing bullying issues.
- Offer mediation for parents and students involved in bullying incidents.
- Encourage parents to actively participate in the school's anti-bullying efforts. This can include joining the parent-school council or working together on anti-bullying campaigns and initiatives.
- After a bullying incident has been addressed, the school will endeavour to follow up with parents to ensure that the situation has improved and that their child feels safe at school. Monitoring is essential to prevent future incidents.
- Regularly ask parents to provide feedback on the school's anti-bullying efforts.
- We will encourage parents to promote empathy, kindness, and positive behaviour at home. Provide resources or guidance on how parents can teach their children about respecting differences and being inclusive.