



NESTON HIGH SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy owners/leads:	JMI
Notes:	
Statutory:	Yes
Website:	Yes
Review period:	2 Yearly

Date	Action	Comments / Follow Up
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August 2024	Policy reviewed (Hill Dickinson)	August 2026

Contents

Contents	2
1. Policy Aims and Ethos	3
2. Rationale	3
3. Defining Bullying	3
4. Education and pro-active approaches	5
5. Identifying Bullying	5
6. The Policy in Action	6
7. Steps Taken to Investigate an Allegation	6
8. Restorative Strategies.....	7
9. Resolution.....	7
10. Persistent bullying	8
11. Recording	8
12. Review	8

1. Policy Aims and Ethos

- 1.1 Neston High School is committed to 'shaping extraordinary lives', through providing a caring, inclusive and safe environment for all students so that they can learn and progress.
- 1.2 Bullying, in any of its forms, breaches Neston High School's rules of 'ready, respectful, safe' and will not be tolerated. We are committed to upholding the principle that bullying is not acceptable at Neston High School and, should bullying occur, it must cease immediately. We promote our values of aspiration, kindness and community and the understanding that our school community will have diversity amongst all its members.
- 1.3 Neston High School's behaviour policy outlines how discipline and order will be maintained at the school. This policy is supplemental to the behaviour policy and should be read in conjunction with it.
- 1.4 Neston High School wants to make it clear to all pupils and parents that bullying, in any form, is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 1.5 Those pupils found to be involved in bullying another pupil will be dealt with under the sanctions outlined in the behaviour policy.

2. Rationale

- 2.1 Every member of the school community:
 - 2.1.1 is entitled to feel valued and respected
 - 2.1.2 is entitled to feel safe and secure
 - 2.1.3 is encouraged to express their thoughts, fears and concerns without embarrassment
 - 2.1.4 has a responsibility to work towards these aims by showing concern for others.

3. Defining Bullying

- 3.1 Neston High School's Anti-Bullying Policy is informed by the law and government advice. More details on bullying and the law can be found at www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school
- 3.2 There is no legal definition of bullying. However, bullying is defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally' (DfE definition).
- 3.3 Repeated bullying usually has a significant emotional component, where the anticipation and fear of being bullied seriously affects the behaviour and wellbeing of the victim. However, a single comment can also have a very significant impact and could be regarded as bullying. Also, a person may experience the same comment from a wide range of individuals and feel undermined or distressed as a result. The impact of any comment/s or action/s on the victim must be taken into consideration. Any student who is frequently unkind may be contributing to a culture of bullying.
- 3.4 Bullying is usually:
 - ✦ repeated
 - ✦ intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally or humiliate
 - ✦ often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender, socio economic circumstances or sexual orientation
- 3.5 It takes many forms and can include (but is not limited to):
 - ✦ physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, shoving)

- ✦ verbal (e.g., teasing, name calling, insulting)
- ✦ indirect (spreading malicious information about someone, excluding someone from social groups)
- ✦ prejudicial and discriminatory (targeting students belonging to specific groups, e.g., homophobic, transphobic, racist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic or against children with special education needs or disabilities or who are perceived as different in some way or against students as a result of their physical appearance)
- ✦ making threats
- ✦ spreading rumours or malicious comments
- ✦ seeking retribution following 'alleged snitching'
- ✦ taking belongings
- ✦ provocation (e.g., throwing things in class, kicking the back of a chair, tripping in a corridor)
- ✦ cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example, email, social media networks and instant messenger platforms)
- ✦ taking photos or videos without permission

- 3.6 As per Keeping Children Safe in Education (and as amended), it is important to note that bullying falls within the definition of child-on-child abuse. Staff at Neston High School will report any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. For more information on peer- on -peer abuse see paragraphs 32-35 of Keeping children safe in education 2023 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- 3.7 Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.
- 3.8 Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence. These include:
- ✦ violence or assault
 - ✦ theft
 - ✦ repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
 - ✦ hate crimes
- 3.9 Neston High School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy sets out when Neston High School will inform the police of criminal behaviour, which could include the criminal offences described above and also others, for example, 'upskirting', which involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- 3.10 Neston High School may also report incidents to the police where, in our professional judgement, school has been or will be unable to secure an appropriate resolution for an incident or sequence of events.
- Parents and students retain the right to report any incident to the police that they believe should be reported. Neston High School will always work closely with the police, taking direction from them where appropriate.
- 3.11 If a member of staff feels that an offence has been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

- 3.12 Headteachers have the legal power to make sure students behave outside of school premises. This includes bullying that happens off the school premises, for example, on public transport or in a town centre.
- 3.13 Further to government advice and the law, Ofsted requires that schools keep records of all incidents of bullying.

4. Education and pro-active approaches

- 4.1 To promote our values of aspiration, kindness and community, we take positive action to foster an ethos of working together successfully. Strategies that promote this at Neston High School include:
- ✦ an effective transition programme (Passport to Neston) that prepares all students for secondary school and the changes they will encounter as their peer group grows
 - ✦ recognising the importance of building a culture of tolerance at the earliest possible stage
 - ✦ promoting our school ethos, through our school rules of being 'ready, respectful and safe' with tutor groups, year groups and the House System
 - ✦ promoting resilience in working with others through the curriculum model that demands students work in different class groupings during their school career
 - ✦ content in tutor time and assemblies that focuses on personal development, life in modern Britain and British values
 - ✦ supporting the holistic development of the 'whole child' through our Learning Outside of the Classroom (LOTC) programme
 - ✦ student leadership programmes
 - ✦ proactively creating opportunities for students to get to know one another
 - ✦ school council and student voice
 - ✦ supporting and empowering bystanders and/ or witnesses
 - ✦ targeting support in school for key students and groups to promote cooperation with others (ELSA, mentoring).

5. Identifying Bullying

- 5.1 Changes in behaviour that may indicate a student is being bullied include (but are not limited to):
- ✦ unwillingness to go to school or return after a break
 - ✦ belongings suddenly going missing or being damaged
 - ✦ change to established habits (e.g. giving up extra activities, sitting inside instead of going out, changing usual routines for break and lunch)
 - ✦ diminished levels of self-confidence
 - ✦ inability to concentrate
 - ✦ anxiety, depression, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
 - ✦ repressed body language and poor eye contact
 - ✦ frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
 - ✦ reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of lessons or day
 - ✦ choosing the company of adults
 - ✦ frequent visits to a form tutor, student services or year leader

- ✦ unexplained injuries
- ✦ difficulty in sleeping, nightmares
- ✦ talking of self-harm or running away.

6. The Policy in Action

6.1 Student Action

6.1.1 Students who are experiencing bullying or have a concern regarding a friend should report their experience. They can do this by speaking to any adult at Neston High School to report what is happening. For example, their Form Tutor, Pastoral Learning Mentor, Learning Support Assistant or Raising Standards Leader. No issue is too big or small to seek help.

6.2 Parent/Carer Action

6.2.1 We will work to ensure that parents/ carers have a good understanding of issues relating to bullying.

6.2.2 If parents/ carers suspect that their child is being bullied, they should contact their child's Form Tutor for an initial, confidential discussion. In cases of cyber bullying, it may also be appropriate to inform the police.

6.3 Staff Action

6.3.1 Staff at Neston High School should be familiar with the changes in behaviour that may indicate a student is being bullied and take action if they suspect bullying in their class.

6.3.2 Staff will frequently highlight the ways in which students are bullied and seek to raise awareness of key bullying issues, such as bullying of students with SEND and Transphobic bullying. Staff will also consider the school's context and any patterns of bullying in identifying the issues to cover in this way.

6.3.3 Neston High School uses a secure online system to help with the management and recording of behavioural issues and incidents of bullying. Staff will be sensitive to the possibility of bullying and be ready to talk to any student who wants to speak to them. We acknowledge that actions following a disclosure of bullying should be discussed with the student. The agreed plan should be mindful of the fact that in some cases students who report bullying may experience further bullying as a result.

6.3.4 Staff at Neston High School will also seek to understand the causal factors of why a student has bullied another student, or group of students, in order to educate and support the perpetrator and prevent repeat occurrences.

7. Steps Taken to Investigate an Allegation

7.1 Pastoral Learning Mentors will investigate any report or disclosure thoroughly. Investigations will be treated sensitively with anonymity protected, where possible, in the evidence gathering process. An investigation may involve actions over a period of days in school and is likely to involve several of the following:

- ✦ all students cited in a disclosure will meet with a member of staff to discuss and statements will be completed as required
- ✦ statements will be completed by other students. This can include friends of the students involved in the incident or events, but it may also extend to students who may be judged by the Pastoral Learning Mentors to be independent
- ✦ seeking information from teachers or support staff

- ✦ seeking information from parents/ carers
- ✦ establishing a timeline of events, including reviewing previous events and considering whether they now form part of the current sequence being investigated.

8. Restorative Strategies

8.1 The nature of bullying means that every incident is different. Members of the Inclusion/ Pastoral Teams will use their judgement to select appropriate strategies and actions to resolve an incident. These will include some of the following:

- ✦ immediate action to secure a student's safety
- ✦ positive reinforcement to a victim that disclosure was the right decision
- ✦ sympathy and empathy
- ✦ interviewing peers separately and agreeing future actions and behaviour
- ✦ appropriate sanctions and/or contracts
- ✦ restorative conversations between peers
- ✦ offering a mentor
- ✦ informing and / or meeting parents
- ✦ additional supervision or monitoring of a student or students for a period of time
- ✦ asking relevant staff to monitor a situation and report any further concerns
- ✦ referral to school nurse or other agency
- ✦ ensuring the needs of the victim are met
- ✦ supporting and educating students who might genuinely not know or understand they have done something wrong
- ✦ consideration of and actions to meet the needs of students who have been found to be bullying others.

9. Resolution

9.1 A resolution will be reached at a point where the following thresholds have been achieved.

- 9.1.1 The student being bullied believes bullying has stopped and/or the incident has concluded and they can continue their school career feeling safe
- 9.1.2 Clear expectations for future conduct of the student who has found to be bullying have been shared and understood.

10. Persistent bullying

- 10.1 If bullying becomes persistent Neston High School will involve the parents of the bully and victim. The school may put in place one of the following sanctions until the situation has been resolved:-
- 10.1.1 isolating the bully from the victim during break/lunchtime;
 - 10.1.2 moving the bully/victim from the same lessons; and,
 - 10.1.3 in more serious cases the following may be necessary:
 - 10.1.4 involving appropriate external agencies;
 - 10.1.5 recording incidence on the Pupil File; or
 - 10.1.6 exclusion from the school.

11. Recording

- 11.1 All bullying incidents will be recorded on the school's central record for incidents of bullying. Pastoral Learning Mentors will also record their actions of investigation and restorative strategies. These records will be reviewed regularly by the Inclusion Leader, Safeguarding Teams and Senior Staff who oversee each Year group in school.

12. Review

- 12.1 All aspects of this policy will be reviewed. This will be done through:
- 12.1.1 school council
 - 12.1.2 student and parent questionnaires