Anti-Bullying Policy 2026/27

Executive Head:	**D Nearney**
Chair of Governing Board:	**D Hughes**
Policy reviewed by:	**R.Pieterse**
Date Reviewed:	**Autumn 2026**
Ratified by:	**Management Committee**
Frequency of review:	**Annual**
Date for next review:	**Autumn 2027**

This policy follows the model guidance from the latest Herts for Learning Education "Anti-Bullying Policy for Schools.

Definition and Interpretation:

1. In this policy, except where the policy otherwise requires:

Any reference to 'Nexus Herts Federation' shall be deemed to include both the Stevenage Education Support Centre and the North Herts Education Support Centre.

'Centre' shall be deemed to include both the Stevenage Education Support Centre and the North Herts Education Support Centre.

'Head of Centre' shall be deemed to include both the Head of Centre from Stevenage Education Support Centre and the Head of Centre for North Herts Education Support Centre.

Document Control/ Review Sheet

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
001	HCC Model Policy adopted	08/10/2025
002	Reviewed, all references to Tootoot removed, as not used by NHESC Separate Mobile Phone Policy	01/09/2026

At the Nexus Herts Federation we believe; '*Everyone has the **right** to feel safe all of the time.'*

Statement of Intent

- At the Nexus Herts Federation we work very hard to create and maintain a family atmosphere. We very much reward the behaviours that we want to see, with a huge emphasis on kindness. We take every precaution to enable our students to feel safe, however we acknowledge that there may be incidents of bullying. By preventing and tackling bullying efficiently, our Federation can help to create a safe environment, to enable students to learn and reach their full potential. The Federation will meet the legal requirement for all Centres to have an anti-bullying policy in place.

Aim and Objectives of the policy

- The Federation will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that students stay safe as stated in The Students Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2) and The Students Act 2004.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/carers will understand what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the Federation's policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/carers will know what the Federation's policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/carers will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole Centre initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PHSE [Personal, Health & Social Education] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the Federation to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the Federation environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

Our Federation is committed to the following principles to prevent and respond to bullying. Our Federation:

1. **listens** - all pupils and parents and carers are listened to and influence strategies and approaches to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.
2. **includes us all** - all pupils, including those with SEND, are included, valued and participated fully in all aspects of school life.
3. **respects** - all school staff are role models to others within the school in how they treat others.
4. **challenges** - all forms of discriminatory language – including disablist language – is challenged taken seriously
5. **celebrates difference** – difference is actively and visibly celebrated and welcome across the whole school. Partake in anti-bullying weeks.
6. **understands** - all school staff, pupils and parents and carers understand what bullying is and what it isn't.
7. **believes -** all pupils, including disabled children and those with SEN, and their parents and carers are acknowledged, believed and taken seriously when reporting incidents of

bullying.

8. **reports bullying** - all pupils within the school and their parents and carers understand how to report incidents of bullying
9. **takes action** - we respond quickly to all incidents of bullying. Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with SEN, participate fully in decisions made about them and help to formulate appropriate action to respond to incidents of bullying.
10. **has clear policies** - our school's anti-bullying policy reflects these principles and is embedded within other school policies. They are widely and actively promoted to school staff, pupils and their parents and carers.

What Is Bullying?

The Federation has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is: Pupils are bullied for a variety of reasons including:

- Ethnic background, religion or culture.
- Disability, special educational needs or being particularly able, gifted and talented.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender (including sexualised bullying).
- Size, appearance or health conditions.
- Social or economic status (poverty, class).
- Age/maturity.
- Home circumstances – certain groups such as pupils in public care, or young carers, or those with same sex parents/carers or whose parents/carers have mental health difficulties may be particularly vulnerable.

Bullying is any deliberate, consistent, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour, any act of repeated behaviour, by an individual or group, to deliberately hurt another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online,
either physically or emotionally, that causes fear, unhappiness or insecurity These include;

- Name calling - referring to race, sex, sexual orientation or appearance
- Imbalance of power
- Intimidation - a direct or threatened attack
- Demeaning - putting down the victim in front of others
- Extortion - in order to gain something from the victim
- Exclusion - when others intentionally leave someone out
- Cyberbullying - to use any form of technology to bully another member of the Centre
- Derogatory language
- Prejudice views

What is banter?

The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks.'

- Friendly banter- When there is no intention to hurt and everyone knows the limits.
- Ignorant banter- 'Crosses the line' with no intent to hurt. Will often say sorry.
- Malicious banter- Done to humiliate a person often in public.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is any form of bullying, using technology which takes place online or through smartphones, using social networking sites. There are different types of cyberbullying.

These include:

- Sending offensive, rude and insulting messages
- Sending fake messages about someone/spreading rumours
- Getting into online arguments to get reactions and cause distress
- Hacking into someone else's account
- Tricking someone into sharing secrets and forwarding to others
- Stalking by repeatedly sending threats of harm, harassment, intimidating messages
- Threatening behaviour
- Blackmail
- Sending of images
- Baiting

Bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on a student's emotional development.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone- this could be classed as a relationship conflict. Relationship conflict can turn to bullying if not resolved. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose.

What is the definition of relationship conflict?

Students sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. We work with the students on repairing relationships, conflict resolution and building resilience.

This includes:

- Student involved being similar in power and status
- It happening occasionally and offence is accidental
- The perpetrator wants to make things right

Signs and symptoms of bullying:

- Not wanting to come to the centre
- Being frightened to walk to and from the centre
- Becoming withdrawn in the class or from family and friends
- Becoming unwilling to take part in student/centre activities
- Change in progress or behaviour at the centre
- Changes in eating habits
- Unexplained crying (e.g. at night)
- Feeling ill in the mornings or more than usual
- Begin truanting
- Bullying others
- Self harming
- Suicide attempts or suicide

How we deal with bullying:

We endeavour to operate a 'no blame approach', which is focused on finding a solution rather than applying the blame. We use restorative justice as one of our approaches.

Staff seek to identify incidents of bullying and log these separately from behaviour incidents.

Reported incidents should be logged, discussed in daily briefing and recorded on CPOMS.

We offer support and counselling to all involved, avoiding the labels of 'victim' or 'bully'. By encouraging understanding, the students can offer their own solutions to this very serious problem.

If a student engages in bullying on the:

1. First occasion - a warning is given and the incident written up.
2. Second occasion – a letter is sent home and 1-1 offered to explore behaviours. 1-1 is also offered to the victim. Again, the incident is noted and recorded
3. Third occasion – a sanction is administered which could involve a loss of break/detention/exclusion and a meeting with the parent is set up. The third incident is also logged that all staff are aware of those involved.

Discretion is used over the time frame for these actions but certainly the log lasts per half term. All incidents and actions are logged and recorded on CPOM's.

The Anti-Bullying Lead for Stevenage ESC's is Amy Sawyer. For North Herts ESC it is Kate Robinson. Our Link Governor is Sally Glossop.

All staff are responsible for identifying, responding to and managing bullying incidents and by reporting and recording incidents promptly.

Staff are advised to:
Step 1- Secure the safety of those involved.

- Safeguard
- Is anyone in immediate danger?
- Report and record
- Assure the pupil

Step 2 -Stop the behavior reoccurring.

- Identify the group roles (Ringleader, reinforcer, defender, assistant, target, outsider)
- Address the behavior needs to stop
- Work with all in the group (resolution based- restorative work, circle times, problem solving)

Step 3 -Whole school learning.

- What has it taught us
- Is this an issue throughout the school? Do we need to run a staff training?
- Refresh the policy

Students are advised to:

- Report incidents to a trusted adult/or record on the app/or box in the Atrium – in form time once a week this is a comment box lesson.
- Keep a record of incidents
- Report incidents of cyberbullying to social media sites

- Keep evidence of cyberbullying – We are trialling an App to further strengthen this.
- Can report bullying to peer mentor From October 2020

Parents/carers are advised to:

- Look for unusual behaviours in your child
- Talk to your child about what's happening
- Reassure your child
- Stay calm and positive
- Speak with the Centre – they will keep you updated with the work and involvement needed
- Report

If you see someone else being bullied:

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation
- Don't be made to join in
- Get help or report to a trusted adult
- Encouraged the person to talk to someone they trust
- Report

Ignoring bullying is unfair to the victim and may look like you are on the side of the Bully. Take action!

Home to school transport

Bullying during the use of to and from school in school transport is treated as any other bullying incident.

Signs and symptoms of bullying:

- Change their usual route to school
- Refuse to travel by shared transport
- School refusal
- Change in mood when arriving
- Not wanting to leave school at the end of the day

How we deal with bullying on home/ school transport:

We will work with transport staff to have a consistent approach to bullying whilst travelling to and from the centre. See above with how bullying incidents are treated.

Linked policies:

The following policies all relate to the Anti-Bullying Policy:

- Behaviour
- Esafety
- Equality
- Safeguarding

Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Questionnaires completed by the whole school community, together with surveys, focus groups, children's and parents'/carers' comments posted in the 'Worry' box and bullying incident forms will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Following an annual review any amendments will be made

to the policy and everyone informed. An annual report will then be issued to governors and parents and carers and the policy will be distributed to all parents.

Useful links

Childliine:

- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- BullyUK: www.bullying.co.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS):
- www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
- https://voddenreport.com/
- https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-parents-and-carers/bullying-athttps://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-parents-and-carers/bullying-at- school/bullying-on-school-journeys/school/bullying-on-school-journeys/