



HANFORD PREP

Policy & Procedures in Response to Bullying (Anti-Bullying)



Executive Summary

This document outlines the comprehensive policies and procedures established to address and prevent bullying within Hanford Prep. It underscores the commitment of the School to create a safe and supportive environment for all pupils.

The policy aims to foster a culture of respect and inclusivity, ensuring the well-being and holistic development of every pupils.

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Introduction

Hanford is a boarding and day school for girls aged 7 to 13. It prides itself on its genuine, relaxed family atmosphere and the good behaviour and manners of the girls.

Aims of the School

The aims of the school, as set out in the website are:

- **Fulfilling Potential** - To recognise the breadth of academic capabilities and requirements and enable each girl to do the very best that she can.

- **Nurturing Talent** - To provide the opportunity, encouragement and support for each girl to pursue and expand her interests both within and beyond the classroom.
- **Valuing Individuality** - To recognise that each girl develops at her own speed, with her own interests, abilities and needs; and to maintain the flexibility to respond accordingly.
- **Encouraging Respect** - To help the girls to look beyond themselves, to learn about living with others, being part of a wider group and taking care of each other's needs.
- **Cherishing Childhood** - To provide the time, the opportunity and the environment for free play.

Statement of Intent

Hanford has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and is committed to creating an environment that prevents bullying as well as ensuring that bullying is tackled should bullying occur. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to report their concerns 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 a member of staff.

Parents will be involved and pupils made aware of the part they can play in preventing bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

Bullying in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Hanford. Bullying hurts and should not be dismissed as 'banter'. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening, or undermining someone.

It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's unprovoked and usually repeated over a long period of time. The school recognises that boarders who are being bullied (offline) cannot escape their bullies for long periods of time as they do not go home very often and therefore staff monitor closely each pupil and offer support where needed. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain (whether physical, psychological or emotional) and serious distress to the victim and can be seen in any of the following in isolation or in combination. Between pupils, this frequently falls into two main categories:

- Physical and psychological hurt or
- Emotional hurt.

Pupils who may be at risk

Any child can be bullied for any reason. If a child is seen as different in some way or seen as an easy target they can be more at risk. This might be because of their:

- race or ethnic background
- gender
- sexual orientation

Or it could be because they:

- appear anxious or have low self-esteem

- lack assertiveness
- are shy or introverted.

Popular or successful children are also bullied, sometimes because others are jealous of them. Sometimes a child's family circumstance or home life can be a reason for someone bullying them.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can take different forms. It could include:

Physical bullying:

- hitting, slapping or pushing someone
- verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping or threatening someone

Non-verbal abuse:

- hand signs or text messages

Emotional abuse:

- threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone
- undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours
- controlling or manipulating someone
- making silent, hoax or abusive calls

The following types of bullying are also **hate crimes**:

- racial, sexual, transphobic or homophobic bullying
- bullying someone because they have a disability.

Cyber-bullying

Mobile, Internet and wireless technologies have increased opportunities for misuse through 'cyber bullying'. Hanford works hard to make pupils and parents aware of the dangers of this modern type of bullying and the consequences of misuse. E-safety education is embedded in school policy and practice.

Cyber bullying is bullying through text messages, picture/video clips via mobile phones, silent calls or abusive messages with mobile phones, emails, social websites, chat rooms, instant messaging (IM – an internet-based form of bullying) and the use of personal websites or online polling sites. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone

Cyberbullying can include:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll

- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Access to the internet is restricted and supervised; technology use is supervised by teaching and pastoral staff and monitored through the use of screening software. See [Appendix 6](#).

Signs and Symptoms

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

- is frightened, crying, trying to absent herself from school
- doesn't want to go on school trips
- feigns illness
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant from lessons or keeps visiting the Surgery
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions that are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has possessions that are continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

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

Impact of Bullying

Bullying is serious and can cause psychological damage and even suicide, (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour). At its worst, bullying has driven children and young people to self-harm and even suicide. Children that are bullied:

- may develop mental health problems like depression and anxiety
- have fewer friendships
- aren't accepted by their peers

- are wary and suspicious of others
- have problems adjusting to school, and don't do as well.

Bullying can seriously damage a young person's confidence and sense of self-worth, and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. It can lead to serious and prolonged emotional damage for an individual. It should be remembered, however, that those who are responsible for bullying or witness bullying can also experience emotional harm - and the impact on parents and school staff can also be significant.

Any bullying complaints will therefore be dealt with very firmly and promptly - and support provided as necessary to all those affected.

Staff Guidance

Bullying of a pupil by a teacher takes different forms but usually involves deliberate humiliation. The Staff Handbook sets out clear guidelines as to the behaviour which is expected of staff:

“Staff are expected to treat all girls, other staff, parents and visitors to the school with courtesy and consideration. Behaviour which is deliberately humiliating or demeaning is unacceptable - and will not be tolerated.”

All staff at Hanford believe that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive caring environment without the fear of being bullied.

It is also recognised, however, that within the school there are some pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well-disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying.

Pupil Guidance

Every pupil is encouraged to understand that:

- any form of bullying is **WRONG** and must not be tolerated under any circumstances. (This covers all ages and could be from pupil to pupil, adult to pupil, pupil to adult and adult to adult.)
- everyone has the right to be an individual
- if they witness bullying, they should try to intervene – or find someone else who can bring it to a stop
- if they are the victim of bullying, they should find someone to talk to – preferably an adult – straight away: immediate support will be both available and noticeable
- teachers at Hanford take all reported incidences of bullying very seriously indeed and will deal with bullies very firmly.

Building self-confidence and developing an individual's self-esteem is an integral part of the PSHE curriculum and enables an individual to refuse to allow the bully the upper hand.

Hanford staff will always help at any time. If the individual cannot talk to teaching or pastoral staff, we encourage girls to talk to sixth form, nursing staff, cleaners, parents, etc.

Pupils should use Steps 1 – 3 'Three Different Routes for Action' if they have a problem, i.e.:

Step 1: talk to friends, parents, members of the Committee (or other senior girls), the school nurses, boarding staff or indeed any adult.

Step 2: if the problem persists, talk more formally to a member of staff e.g. a form tutor, pastoral tutor, Deputy Head or the Head.

Step 3: if the situation is still unresolved, there are three types of action to be considered, each becoming progressively more serious i.e.

- a) monitoring of the situation by the Deputy Head, Head of Boarding and the Head
- b) informal complaint
- c) formal complaint

Staff & Pupil Training

Girls may be reluctant to report bullying for fear of repeat harm and because of a concern that “nothing can be done”. It is important, therefore, that Hanford staff show that they can support girls to prevent harm, that bullying is not tolerated, and that there are solutions that work.

Girls may not report bullying because they may feel it is something within them that is at fault. Girls therefore need to receive a clear message from the staff that nobody ever deserves to be bullied. It is important that Hanford demonstrates that the bullying of any member of the school community will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively.

Girls with learning disabilities or communication difficulties may not understand that they are being bullied or may have difficulty in explaining that they are being bullied. Members of staff should look out for signs of bullying and act if they suspect a child is being bullied.

Staff and pupils are made aware of bullying issues through regular training, staff discussion and through staff and pupil discussion and through pupil to pupil discussion. Action is also taken to reduce the risk of bullying at times and in places where it is most likely to occur. This is supported by topics covered in the PSHE programme, school and chapel assemblies, the curriculum, the form and pastoral tutor programmes.

The school expects high standards of behaviour at all times and encourages courtesy and respect between all at the school whether staff or pupils. Staff are explicitly expected to model behaviours that inculcate these values (see Staff Handbook). If sanctions are required, these will be given in accordance with the school’s policy for Discipline, Behaviour and Exclusions.

Procedures

In cases of bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on MyConcern and, if necessary, in the girls’ individual files. In serious cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

A bullying incident will be treated as a Child Protection concern where there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm’. In such cases, the school will report its concerns in accordance with the Child Safeguarding Policy. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Outcomes

The bully (bullies) may be asked to apologise, and this must be genuine.

The Behaviour Policy covers how sanctions will be managed.

If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

Hanford recognises the importance of creating an environment in which:

- positive behaviour is encouraged
- children are made aware of the harm caused by bullying and
- they are given the tools to deal with bullies appropriately

As and when appropriate, Hanford may employ any of the following methods to prevent bullying:

- writing a set of school rules / pupils' charter
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays in drama club
- having discussions in PSHE lessons, or tutor time, about bullying and why it matters
- form and pastoral tutor guidance and
- guidance from the Deputy Head or Head

Role of The Committee

Hanford's Committee plays an important role in identifying, reporting and preventing bullying. The committee is an essential part of the ethos of the school, providing girls with a wonderful opportunity:

- to have a say in the running of the school, by providing feedback directly to the school's leadership
- to take responsibility for the welfare of other girls, encouraging respect for others
- to take part in the traditions of the school, thereby increasing their sense of belonging.

Useful Contacts

Local & School Help Organisations:

- Independent Listener, Sally Godden Ext 171
- Childline 0800 1111
- Office of the Children's Commissioner 0800 528 0731

As a boarding school, our boarding standards are inspected by ISI. The following numbers are for use if you have serious concerns that cannot be met by any of the above or by speaking to someone in school.

- Website <http://www.isi.net/home/>
- Telephone Number: 020 7600 0100

Other useful Help Organisations:

- Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345
- Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk
- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793

- Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
- Kidscape Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204; www.kidscape.org.uk
- Anti-bullying Alliance (www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- ChildNet International (www.childnet.com)

Sources

In preparing this counter bullying policy, we have given regard to the following: DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024; Working together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2023; Preventing and Tackling Bullying Guidance (July 2017); Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff (2014); Kidscape's anti bullying policy documentation.

Complaints

Should you have a complaint about the operation of the school's anti-bullying policy, please contact the Head who will provide you with a copy of the Complaints Policy at your request.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if necessary.

Appendix 1: Summary of Changes in Issue 1.1

- Modified for new Behaviour Policy
- Modified for new Committee structure.

Appendix 2: Bullies and those who are bullied

Roles within bullying

Different roles within bullying have been identified:

- The ring-leader, the person who through their social power can direct bullying activity.
- Assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader).
- Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to the bully, perhaps by smiling or laughing.
- Outsiders/bystanders, who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour.
- Defenders, who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort girls who experience bullying.

It should be noted, however, that the same pupil can adopt different roles at different times, or indeed at the same time (a bullied pupil might be bullying another child at the same time, or a seeming “reinforcer” might become a “defender” when the ring leader is not around).

Pupils should be reminded that if they witness bullying and fail to take appropriate action, they are promoting bullying. They should be encouraged to report even suspected incidents of bullying to a member of staff so that it can be recorded and dealt with as appropriate.

Some bullying behaviour by girls is linked to deeper issues. As should be the case when responding to those who are bullied, understanding the emotional health and wellbeing of these girls is key to selecting the right strategies and to engaging the right external support where this is needed (for example, in relation to issues of domestic violence or other safeguarding issues).

Vulnerability to bullying

Some girls may be more vulnerable than others. Early identification of girls at risk can help the girls, enabling them to develop more effective strategies for responding to, and preventing, incidents.

Appendix 3: Pupil Notice

BULLYING

Bullying is when someone keeps being unkind on purpose, to hurt or upset another person.

Bullying is not OK.
You don't have to face it alone.
There are trusted people who will listen and help.
Here's what to do.

If you are being bullied, tell one of these people:

Your Form Tutor
Your Pastoral Tutor
Matrons
Nurses
Mr Horton
Mrs Phillips
Any other member of school staff

Whoever you tell will give you advice and help you decide what to do next.

If you see someone else being bullied:

Don't join in
Don't be a bystander
Ask the bully to stop
Tell an adult

Even if you have told someone, if the bullying happens again:

Keep telling an adult until it stops

Appendix 4: Staff Notice

BULLYING – INFORMATION FOR STAFF

The School's Policy & Procedures in Response to Bullying and three step action plan are on display permanently in the corridor by the Senior Changing Room for you to look at.

If you need these documents explaining further, or you require any other information, please speak to the headteacher.

When Bullying is Witnessed or Reported

The member of staff will record the following information:

- names of those involved, including witnesses, date and time, venue.
- All factual information regarding the incident (start, incident, how it ended).
- Any immediate action taken.
- Signature of staff recording the information and dated
- This information will be recorded on MyConcern
- In all cases, inform Mrs Phillips or Mr Horton as soon as possible so that suitable action can be taken.

Action – Mrs Phillips or Mr Horton will discuss the incident with the person making the report and will inform the relevant pastoral and form tutors and, if the incident is deemed to be serious, the School Leadership Team. An action plan will be discussed, agreed and documented. More information may be gathered before such a plan can be finalised.

Ongoing monitoring - The Headteacher will identify a member of staff (typically the pastoral tutor) to review the situation on a regular basis and to ensure a successful outcome.

Ongoing monitoring and review should include the following:

Time frame	Identified member of staff	Headteacher
Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the victim • Monitor the bully • Provide the opportunity for discussion without mentioning the incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that both victim and bully are closely monitored • Review situation with relevant pastoral and form tutors • Monitor any further observed incidents / issues
Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor the well-being of all parties • Collate and pass on to Headteacher any evidence • Continue to talk to teaching / pastoral staff about pupils' progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If further incidents are observed, discuss them with the victim • Take action as necessary, but ensure that the victim is aware of what is happening
Longer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If resolved, no further action is necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If resolved, no further action is necessary • Ensure records are up to date • Continue to monitor the situation • Revisit with pastoral tutors as necessary • If further action is needed, move on to the Informal Complaint Procedure.

Informal Complaint Procedure

The Headteacher will appoint a member of staff (typically the victim's pastoral tutor) to investigate the allegation of bullying, including speaking to the victim and the other relevant pastoral and form tutors. If, after investigation, the allegation seems to have substance, the relevant member of staff will discuss the available courses of action with the victim.

If the victim decides to make a formal complaint, official procedures now begin.

If **NO ACTION** is requested: the procedure is as for ongoing monitoring and review.

If **INFORMAL ACTION** is requested: all available options are discussed with the victim, including the implications of, and the procedure for, making a formal complaint.

Possible courses of action include:

- ensuring that the victim has personal coping strategies
- informing all staff of problems between individuals to ensure maximum observation of behaviour both in and out of the classroom
- making the alleged bully aware of the concerns - and taking action as appropriate (but being careful to protect the victim from further bullying)

The member of staff will monitor the situation, update the relevant documentation and inform the Headteacher of developments on an ongoing basis.

Formal complaint procedure

A formal complaint is a serious step and it is important that the alleged victim understands that she cannot remain anonymous. A formal complaint can only be made to the Headteacher, in the presence of the girl's pastoral tutor (or other member of staff if appropriate).

A formal interview takes place between the Headteacher and the complainant, who can be accompanied by any person of their choice. The interview data is recorded and signed by all present, and dated.

All the available options are discussed again and a plan of action agreed by those present. The Headteacher will then investigate the allegation of bullying which will include speaking to the alleged bully.

The parents of both parties must be made aware of the situation. They should be involved in the setting of any agreed action from this moment onwards.

After formal investigation, all parties will be notified of the outcome and this will include details of any sanctions, any measures put in place by the school to ensure that the complainant is protected and the situation managed and a timescale for monitoring and review put in place.

If the outcome is not deemed to be satisfactory, the complainant has the right to ask a designated member of the Governing body (typically the Chair of the Governors) to review the case. The Governor's decision shall be final in all cases.

All the documentation for any formal complaint shall be recorded and this shall be held in a file in the Head's office. The file is to be made available during inspections by Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

Appendix 5: Cyber-Bullying

Definition

“Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.”

Bill Belsey, www.cyberbullying.org

Statement of Intent

Hanford is committed to creating an environment which prevents bullying as well as ensuring that bullying is tackled if it occurs. 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. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to share their concerns 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.

Bullying in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Hanford. Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

Hanford will not tolerate cyber-bullying and is committed to protecting boarders from potential harm deriving from their use of the internet, mobile telephones or other electronic and digital technology and systems.

Preventative Measures

Hanford employs a three-pronged approach:

- educating children on the dangers of and risks associated with electronic technologies (and how to deal with them)
- promoting responsible use of the internet and technologies and
- protecting the girls from potentially harmful sites / practices

Educating children on the dangers and risks

- Hanford offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and the dangers of cyber-bullying in ICT lessons and with experts coming in from outside the school.
- The school offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.

Promoting responsible use

- All pupils are expected to adhere to the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Hanford will impose sanctions for the misuse (or attempted) misuse of technology (in accordance with the school's Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy).
- The school prohibits the taking of any images on any device in washing, changing or similar areas.
- Private mobile phones are not permitted. The school has a number of 'locked down' mobile phones which are used under the supervision of matrons.

Protecting the girls from harmful sites / practices

- Access to the internet is severely restricted, with a number of websites blocked, including (but not limited to) Hotmail and social networking sites.
- Children are issued with their own personal school e-mail address.
- Hanford monitors pupils' use of the internet.

Responding to Cyber-Bullying - Advice Given to Girls

- Listen to and act on advice given in school.
- Always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send.
- Seek help if you have any concerns.