

The Harington Scheme Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out Harington's commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where all students feel secure and valued, free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

It ensures a consistent and effective approach to preventing, identifying and responding to bullying, in line with safeguarding duties and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) principles. This policy applies to all students, trainees, staff, volunteers and users of Harington's provision.

2. Equality & Diversity

Harington is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, challenging discrimination, and fostering positive relationships across its community. This policy recognises that students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may be more vulnerable to bullying and may experience differences in communication, social understanding and emotional regulation. Students may also require reasonable adjustments and personalised support to ensure their safety, wellbeing and full participation. All responses to bullying concerns will be person-centred, trauma-informed, and guided by Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) principles, ensuring that individual needs, strengths and experiences are understood and respected.

3. Definition

Bullying is defined as "behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally." Bullying may take many forms, including physical, verbal, emotional or psychological harm; prejudicial behaviours such as racism, homophobia or disability-related bullying; sexual harassment or harmful sexual behaviour; and cyberbullying. Within a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) framework, Harington recognises that some behaviours may arise from unmet needs, communication differences or anxiety. However, the impact on the person experiencing harm remains the priority, regardless of intent. Understanding the function of behaviour is an important part of preventing recurrence and supporting positive outcomes for all

Policy Title: Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Approved: **XXX**

Review Date: **XXX**

involved. Bullying is recognised as a form of peer-on-peer abuse and may constitute a safeguarding concern requiring appropriate action and intervention.

4.Statement of Policy

Harington has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and is committed to creating a safe, predictable and supportive environment in which all students can learn, develop and thrive. At the same time, we adopt a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach to understanding and addressing behaviour, recognising that behaviour is a form of communication and that effective intervention requires an understanding of the factors that may be influencing an individual's actions.

We promote positive relationships, mutual respect and inclusion throughout the organisation, and actively teach and model appropriate behaviours and social interactions. Through proactive support, personalised strategies and a culture of belonging, we seek to reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring and to create an environment where students feel safe to report concerns. When incidents do occur, we respond in a manner that safeguards all students while supporting learning, reflection and positive change.

Bullying behaviour will always be challenged and addressed. Our responses focus first on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of those affected, while also seeking to understand any underlying needs or factors contributing to the behaviour. Where appropriate, students will be supported to learn alternative behaviours, develop greater self-awareness and empathy, and repair relationships through restorative approaches. This balanced approach promotes accountability while recognising the importance of support and education in achieving lasting behavioural change.

Through this approach, Harington supports the expectations of Ofsted in relation to behaviour and attitudes, personal development, safeguarding, and the welfare of students.

5.Roles and Responsibilities

The prevention and management of bullying is a shared responsibility across Harington. The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding principles and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approaches are embedded throughout organisational practice and the implementation of this policy. Trustees have oversight of the policy's effectiveness and monitor its impact on safeguarding and student welfare. All staff are expected to use PBS-informed approaches to prevent, identify and respond to bullying behaviour, while maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Policy Title: Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Approved: **XXX**

Review Date: **XXX**

is responsible for overseeing responses to bullying incidents, ensuring that concerns are appropriately investigated, recorded and acted upon in line with safeguarding procedures. Students will be supported to understand behavioural expectations, develop positive relationships and report any concerns or incidents of bullying. Parents and carers play an important role in reinforcing positive behaviours and will be encouraged to work in partnership with Harington to support students' wellbeing, safety and development.

6. Recognising Bullying

Bullying may not always be directly reported, and staff should be alert to signs that a student may be experiencing harm. Indicators can include changes in behaviour, mood or engagement, increased distress, withdrawal or anxiety, a rise in dysregulation or behavioural incidents, and noticeable changes in communication or social interaction. These indicators may be particularly significant for students with SEND, who may communicate their experiences in different ways or find it difficult to express concerns directly.

Consistent with a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach, staff will consider behaviour as a form of communication and seek to understand what a student may be expressing through their actions. This includes looking for patterns, triggers and environmental factors that may be contributing to difficulties or increasing vulnerability to bullying. Staff are expected to act promptly on any concerns, using early intervention and proactive support to reduce the risk of escalation and ensure that students receive appropriate help. Maintaining vigilance and responding at the earliest opportunity are essential to safeguarding students' wellbeing and promoting a safe and inclusive environment.

7. Prevention

Harington adopts a proactive, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)-led approach to preventing bullying by creating an environment that promotes positive relationships, emotional wellbeing and respectful behaviour. Prevention is embedded throughout the organisation and focuses on reducing the likelihood of bullying by teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviours rather than simply responding to incidents after they occur.

Expected behaviours are explicitly taught and reinforced through the curriculum and daily interactions. Students are supported to develop emotional regulation, communication and social skills through personal development, PSHE and individualised learning opportunities. Predictable routines, structured environments and effective communication systems help students feel safe, understood and able to participate positively.

Policy Title: Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Approved: XXX

Review Date: XXX

Where additional support is required, individual behaviour support plans and functional behaviour assessments are used to identify the underlying causes of behaviour and implement personalised strategies. Harington also promotes inclusion, diversity and mutual respect across the community, encouraging positive peer relationships and fostering a culture where differences are valued.

Staff receive regular training in Positive Behaviour Support and safeguarding to ensure they can recognise, prevent and respond appropriately to bullying. Appropriate supervision, risk assessment and risk management procedures are maintained to reduce opportunities for bullying and to ensure that all students are supported in a safe and inclusive environment. Overall, Harington's approach focuses on reducing triggers, building skills and promoting positive behaviour, rather than relying solely on reactive responses to incidents.

8.Reporting Concerns

Students are encouraged and supported to report any concerns about bullying to a trusted adult. Harington is committed to creating an environment in which students feel safe, listened to and confident that concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

All staff have a responsibility to respond promptly to reports or suspicions of bullying. Concerns must be taken seriously, recorded accurately and without delay on Databridge, and managed in accordance with Harington's safeguarding procedures. Where a bullying incident may constitute a safeguarding concern, staff must ensure that appropriate referrals and actions are taken in line with safeguarding requirements.

Harington recognises that some students may experience difficulties in communicating their experiences or concerns. In these circumstances, staff will use appropriate communication methods and tools, including visual supports, assistive communication systems and other personalised approaches, to enable students to express themselves effectively. Every effort will be made to ensure that the student's voice is heard, understood and taken into account when assessing concerns and determining appropriate support and interventions.

9.Responding to Bullying

All incidents will be addressed promptly, consistently and proportionately, using PBS principles.

Key aims:

- Ensure immediate safety.
- Stop the behaviour.
- Understand why it occurred.
- Support all individuals involved.
- Reduce likelihood of recurrence.

Actions may include:

- Immediate intervention to ensure safety.
- Gathering information from all parties
- Recording incidents on Databridge
- Reviewing support plans
- Involving parents/carers
- Safeguarding referral if required.
- Involving external agencies where necessary

Where a crime is suspected or risk is significant, appropriate authorities will be contacted.

10.Support for Students

Students who experience bullying will receive:

- Immediate protection and reassurance
- Emotional and pastoral support
- Adapted communication support.
- Strategies to rebuild confidence and safety.
- Ongoing monitoring

Students displaying bullying behaviour will receive:

- Clear, consistent boundaries
- Support to understand impact of behaviour.
- PBS-informed interventions
- Teaching of alternative, appropriate behaviours
- Opportunities for restorative approaches (where appropriate)
- Multi-agency support if needed.

The focus is on learning, development and long-term behaviour change.

Policy Title: Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Approved: XXX

Review Date: XXX

11.Support Strategies

Responses will follow a graduated, PBS-informed approach:

- Increased support and supervision
- Adjustments to environment or timetable
- Behaviour support strategies
- Restorative approaches
- Time-out or removal from situations (as a supportive measure)
- Fixed-term suspension or permanent exclusion (last resort, where risk remains high)

Sanctions will never be used in isolation and will always be combined with support and intervention.

12.Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Harington is committed to continuously monitoring and improving its approach to preventing and responding to bullying. Incident data will be analysed regularly to identify patterns, trends and potential triggers, enabling the organisation to take proactive steps to reduce future incidents.

The effectiveness of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) strategies will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they continue to meet the needs of students and promote positive outcomes. Feedback from students and staff will be actively sought and used to inform practice and identify opportunities for improvement.

Safeguarding outcomes will be monitored to ensure that bullying concerns are managed effectively and that appropriate support is provided to those involved. Information relating to bullying incidents, trends and the effectiveness of preventative measures will also be reported to the Board of Trustees as part of Harington's governance and safeguarding oversight arrangements.

13.Associated Documents

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Online Safety / E-Safety Policy
- Suspension & Exclusions Policy

Policy Title: Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Approved: **XXX**

Review Date: **XXX**

14.Reference Documents

- Department for Education (2024) *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- Department for Education (2017) *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)