



The NEST
alternative
provision
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Anti-bullying Policy

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Policy aims

The NEST is committed to equal opportunities and admits learners across the full spectrum of academic abilities and life experiences. All learners should have equitable access to a safe and supportive learning environment. This means taking a proactive anti-bullying strategy.

The NEST recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals, creating a barrier to learning and having serious mental wellbeing consequences. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying we can create a safer environment, where learners can fulfil their potential.

Victims may be reluctant to attend school and are often absent. They are more likely to be vulnerable (anxious, insecure, fewer friends, unhappy, lonely, low self-esteem, low confidence, negative self-image, feeling stupid, ashamed, like a failure, unattractive). Victims may present a variety of physical health symptoms (fits, faints, vomiting, limb pains, paralysis, hyperventilation, visual symptoms, headaches, stomach aches, bed wetting, sleeping difficulties). Being bullied may lead to lack of trust, depression, anxiety, attempted suicide.

The NEST aims to make every part of the learner journey inclusive, equitable, transparent and accessible. This policy outlines the responsibilities, processes and expectations involved in ensuring that we:

- Demonstrate the NEST's commitment to an anti-bullying culture where bullying is not tolerated in any form
- Outline what the NEST will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying – we do not recognise a hierarchy of bullying
- Provide a range of methods for learners, staff and caregivers to access support and report concerns
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour
- Take appropriate, proportionate, and reasonable action, for any bullying brought to the NEST's attention, which involves or effects learners, even when they are not onsite e.g. on public transport or online,
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.
- Ensure constructive conversations support learners to understand the impact of harmful behaviour and how to hold accountability

Links to legislation and guidance

This policy has been drafted considering the following legislation and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [Malicious Communications Act 1988](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Protection from Harassment Act 1997](#)
- [Communications Act 2003](#)
- [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education \(March 2015\)](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(July 2017\)](#) and supporting documents.
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(December, 2017\)](#)
- [Public Order Act 2023](#)
- [Cyberbullying Guidance for Schools \(Childnet\)](#)

Associated policies and further reading

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following associated policies and documents:

- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- e-safety Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Definitions

Bullying – behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally (DfE: *Preventing & Tackling Bullying*, 2017). See Appendix A for Types and Forms of Bullying.

Prejudicial bullying – bullying related to protected characteristics.

Victim – although not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way, we may use this term in policies to describe a child who may have been harmed.

Perpetrator – this terminology is used because it is widely understood; as above, we understand the need for careful use of language when speaking to parties involved in an allegation or investigation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Directors

The Directors are responsible for creating an environment where the bullying of any member of the Nest community, learners and staff, is prevented where possible and identified and resolved quickly where it does occur. They will:

- Communicate this policy to the NEST community
- Ensure disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably
- Ensure Pastoral Care Lead has been assigned
- Ensure all staff have sufficient training and support to manage incidences of bullying
- Ensure caregivers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns
- Make key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) available to learners and caregivers in a variety of formats, including via the website
- Ensure learners know which sanctions may be applied to those engaging in bullying
- Review procedures regularly and critically
- Include activities and opportunities in the curriculum that embed anti-bullying values and behaviour in the learner community
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of discriminatory bullying
- Ensure caregivers know who to contact if worried about bullying and where to access independent advice

Pastoral Care Lead

The Pastoral Care Lead (PCL) is responsible for the wellbeing of all learners with day-to-day oversight of anti-bullying. They will:

- Review policy regularly (annually) and flexibly (when the need arises between annual reviews), consulting learners, staff and caregivers
- Support staff in fostering positive relationships amongst learners
- Inform learners that bullying concerns are dealt with sensitively and effectively

- Work with caregivers on reported bullying concerns, keeping them informed
- Deal promptly with grievances regarding the NEST's response to bullying in line with our Complaints Policy
- Maintain records, ensuring data is secure and confidential as required
- Learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere
- Support and/or liaise with DSL relating to safeguarding including attending multi-agency meetings as necessary.
- Seek support from Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate
- Publicise details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites
- Offer support to learners who have been bullied and to those who are bullying

See Complaints Policy, Appendix B – Community Contract – Staff.

Staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring the NEST's priorities around anti-bullying are followed and an inclusive environment is cultivated. They will:

- Support, uphold and implement this policy
- Report incidents of bullying or suspected bullying to PCL
- Engage with reviews and feedback from learners, caregivers and other stakeholders
- Recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others particularly those from minoritised groups e.g. Black and Brown learners, LGBTQIA+ learners, learners with special educational needs and disabilities)
- Intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly
- Take all opportunities to embed anti-bullying messages in curriculum and role model anti-bullying values
- In any case where staff are concerned that a pupil is being bullied, a form should be completed

See Appendix A – Types & Forms of Bullying, Appendix B – Community Contract – Staff, Appendix C – Bullying Reporting Form.

Learners

Learners are responsible for their own behaviour related to anti-bullying while at the NEST. They will:

- Abide by the anti-bullying charter
- Report any bullying they witness or are receiving.
- Engage in disciplinary processes outlined in the Behaviour Policy in a meaningful way.

See Behaviour Policy, Appendix D – Anti-bullying Charter.

Caregivers

Caregivers are responsible for supporting learners, including:

- Support their young people in abiding by behaviour expectations.
- Work in partnership with the NEST to resolve and repair instances of bullying involving their young person.
- Escalate any incidences of bullying they feel have not been satisfactorily dealt with.

Community voice

We value lived experience at the NEST, and we believe that centring the voice of lived experience is a route to better care. The insight of learners, caregivers, staff and collaborators are invaluable in shaping an environment of trust, collaboration and co-ownership. Intentionally prioritising the perspective of learners and caregivers supports educator understanding of learner needs and can empower learners to contribute to meaningful decision making and to take an active role in their learning. Valuing staff and collaborator feedback can facilitate closer co-working and productive communication.

Bullying can often be hidden from caregivers or staff or both, the simplest way to remove the barriers to reaching out for help is to consult learners on what would support their being able to come forward. We will use the methods below to ensure learner and caregiver voices are included in our anti-bullying approach. We will seek and include stakeholder voice through

- Involving learners and caregivers in policy writing/reviewing and decision making, to ensure they understand the NEST approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying
- Regularly canvassing learners on the extent and nature of bullying
- Ensuring learners know how to express worries about bullying
- Involving learners in anti-bullying campaigns at the NEST
- Utilising learner voice in providing learner-led education and support
- Work with caregivers and the local community to address issues outside the learning environment that give rise to bullying
- Support caregivers to role model positive behaviour for learners, both on and offline

Processes

Environment – preventing bullying

The most important part of minimising the impact of bullying is creating an environment in which it is difficult to occur and easy to report when it does. We wish to create and support an inclusive, safe environment which promotes mutual respect, consideration and care for others. We recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by all members of the NEST community (staff, caregivers and learners). The NEST will implement the following practices in our daily operations to prevent bullying and promote speaking up early:

- Maintain a high level of staff to learner supervision (at least 1:4)
- Normalising respectful curious conversations around differences. These could include different family makeups, different home circumstances such as looked after children or young carers, religion and faith, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, appearance related difference through staff and visitors, media used, discussion sessions
- Challenge practice and language (including ‘banter’) which does not uphold the NEST values of empathy, non-discrimination and respect towards others
- Actively encourage a culture of speaking up where reporting even a perceived minor concern is praised
- Discuss opportunistically and through schedule discussions (flock huddles) the positive and responsible use of technology and social media
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive inclusive ethos
- Discuss bullying opportunistically and planned in the curriculum (during afternoon “flock huddles” and anti-bullying week)
- Set expectations early in induction, being introduced to the anti-bullying charter and Community Contract.
- Regularly check-in with learners (particularly with minoritised identities) to provide them chances to report bullying
- Create and normalise the use of exit plans when feeling dysregulated to minimise risk of escalation of challenging/antagonistic interactions with peers.
- Practice attentive and compassionate listening to any conversation brought to staff to increase confidence of being listened to and taken seriously
- Provide frequent opportunities to develop learners’ social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem
- Conduct regular staff meetings to discuss potential incidents of bullying

- Consider a range of approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as through displays, peer support, learner council, etc.
- Keep channels open with caregivers and other settings to identify trends early
- All staff are encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance around the likelihood of bullying taking place and to challenge and report all incidents

Particularly at-risk learners

All learners could bully or be bullied however the following factors make bullying more likely to occur:

- Lacking close friends at school
- Being shy
- An overprotective family environment
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- Being different in some obvious respect (e.g. stammering)
- Having Special Educational Needs or a disability.
- Behaving inappropriately, intruding or being an 'nuisance'
- Possessing expensive accessories such as mobile phones or computer games

Cyber bullying

As well as the above, to prevent cyber bullying, the NEST will provide information (e-safety Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy) to staff and learners regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:

- Awareness of information they keep in public domain online
- Advice if targeted:
 - Recording evidence (screenshots)
 - Do not retaliate or reply
 - Block and remove – guidance and assistance

Responding to bullying

Raising a concern

To facilitate easy reporting of concerns or incidents learners, caregivers and staff will be able to report concerns through multiple routes.

Method of contact	Who can use it	How and when
Speak direct to staff	Learners effected (victim, witness or perpetrator)	Any time they are on-site
	Caregiver	In person, via phone or email
Speak direct to Directors	Staff	In person, via phone or email
If it involves Directors – staff contact the commissioner for a learner or follow Whistleblowing Policy for an adult.		Via learner spreadsheet or Whistleblowing Policy
Include in end-of-day self-report (reviewed daily)	Learner	Via QR code on phone or tablet
Anonymous reporting form	Learner, Caregiver, Staff	QR code on website

Investigation process

All incidents of bullying (from low level persistent put-downs that may feel difficult to pinpoint to unequivocal instances) amongst learners, caregivers or staff will be taken through the following steps as well as RSUCS (see Behaviour Policy). At any point during the process, it can be escalated to a serious behaviour incident if there is a perceived danger to the bullied learner or a safeguarding concern (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

Stage	Record
Report – as soon as reported or identified Staff receiving disclosure must: - Secure time to deal with the report immediately - Facilitate learner in regulating if they want - Allow learner to talk to who they are comfortable with (probably who they disclosed to) - Manage expectations around confidentiality	Date & time Who was involved Type of bullying Location of bullying
Witness discussion (if applicable) Conducted by staff who received disclosure. Witness told reports will not be treated confidentially and asked to record and/or provide evidence (e.g. screenshots).	Details of incident(s) Agreed witness support Safeguarding issues
Review with learner Conducted by DSL or PCL covering: - Reminder of confidentiality not being guaranteed - Learner (perpetrator or victim) feelings about the incident(s)? - What do they need to feel safe? What do they feel safe to do? - How would they rather this issue was resolved (in a flock huddle, without contact or private staff-facilitated reconciliatory conversations)?	Details of incident(s) What is corroborated Learner preferred approach Safety measures Safeguarding issues Agency involvement Report to caregiver sent?

• What support are they accessing? What kind of support do they want? Practical and Pastoral. Immediate and ongoing. Through the NEST or external. • Would they like support talking to their caregivers? • Can they produce/record evidence?	
Discussion with other staff (where appropriate) DSL or PCL investigate if staff have additional information	Any information uncovered
Discussion with all learner(s) involved Through RSUCS process (see Behaviour Policy): • What does everyone think is happening? • Is the perpetrator showing contrition or has their behaviour changed? • Opportunities to apologise • What can be done to support all learners in future? • Productive sanctions – digital for cyberbullying • Acknowledgement of need for change	Identified causes 4Es notes Proposed amends Sanctions – timeframe Safeguarding issues Agency involvement Report to caregiver sent?
Conciliatory work Performed either together or separately: • What attainable behaviour resolutions can be made? • How long do they think it will take to settle?	Resolutions Date of review Report to caregiver sent?
Review With all learners (together or separately) involved: • Do they each feel it has resolved? • Resilience, self-esteem, confidence check-ins	Developments and conclusions Report to caregiver sent?

Where the person being bullied or their associated caregiver (for learners) is not satisfied with how the NEST has conducted the investigation and sanctions then they are invited to register a complaint through the Complaints Policy.

External group involvement

DSL will be informed of all safeguarding concerns that come out of bullying incidents (i.e. when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'). They will report these to the relevant Local Authority according to Safeguarding Policy.

If the bullied individual feels they require further support than can be offered in-NEST, then we will refer them to external organisations or programmes such as CAMHS for learners and counselling services for caregivers and staff (see Appendix E for support services).

While bullying is not in itself a criminal offence in the UK, harassment and threatening behaviour can be considered an offence. If staff think an offence may have been committed, they should seek police involvement.

Where bullying occurs off-site or out of contact hours (including cyber bullying), the NEST will ensure the concern is fully investigated, collaboration with other

groups (school, other AP and placements, Local Authority, police) and equitable and consistent application of sanctions across settings.

Cyberbullying

As well as the above, when responding to cyberbullying concerns, the NEST will:

- Access Childnet's Cyberbullying guidance
- Take all available steps to identify the person responsible, including:
 - Identify and interview possible witnesses
- Work with bullied individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation
- Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content

Supporting adults

As well as the above, there are specific actions that the NEST will take to support adults who are bullied.

- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the NEST complaints procedures.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

Adults who have been bullied or affected or who have perpetrated bullying will be supported by: Aoife Healy (aoife@thenest-ed.uk).

Record keeping and information sharing

Recording an incident

At every stage it is important to record information (or a reason for this stage not being followed) on the Bullying Reporting Form (Appendix C). These forms will then be analysed for emerging trends.

Information sharing

Bit about sharing info as required with relevant people like caregivers, schools, children's social care

Training

Staff training, learning and development are highly encouraged and facilitated by the NEST. All staff are expected to complete minimum training requirements as outlined in our Staff Training Plan and additional learning and related continued professional development are strongly supported.

All staff receive induction training delivered both internally and externally. Induction training includes the following anti-bullying elements:

Internally delivered:

- Our anti-bullying policy and processes
- Recognising bullying
- Community Contract in action

The Pastoral Care Lead will also complete additional training pertinent to the role:

- Designated Mental Health Lead training
- Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma-informed Practice
- Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse and Harassment
- Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People

All staff training is logged and stored in our staff records. Refresher courses are facilitated according to best practice.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually at a minimum. Updated policies will be made available locally and on our website (www.thenest-ed.uk). Ad hoc amendments will be made as new information becomes available and to align with any legislative changes as they arise. After every incident, events will be evaluated by the Directors to ensure improvements are made to policy where possible. Stakeholder feedback, particularly that of learners and caregivers, will be invited and incorporated as much as is practicable. Where quantitative data are available these will be analysed and embedded in policies updates.

The NEST will monitor incidences of bullying to identify trends.

Success will be measured as:

- Recorded number of incidents of bullying declines each term
- Instances of bullying are less frequently from those who already have been involved in bullying
- There are no unresolved cases of bullying

Appendices

Appendix A – Forms and Types of Bullying

Bullying can be related to many factors including but not limited to:

- Religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
- Ethnicity (including colourism), nationality or culture
- Gender, gender expression (transphobia), sex (misogyny)
- Sexual orientation (including biphobia, acephobia)
- Physical or mental health conditions, Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) or academic proficiency
- Pregnancy or parenthood
- Physical appearance including size/weight discrimination (fatphobia)
- Home circumstances (e.g. young carers, children in care)
- Socio-economic status (household wealth, education levels, generational legacy)

Bullying can be emotional, physical, verbal, sexual or digital (cyberbullying):

Type	Examples
Emotional	Excluding, tormenting, gaslighting, undermining, gossiping, mocking
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking belongings, any use of violence.
Prejudiced and discriminatory	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality) whether recipient has these traits or not.
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching.
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, taunting, offensive comments
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social media, messaging apps or gaming sites This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Appendix B – Community Contract - Staff

Appendix C – Bullying Reporting Form

Appendix D – Anti-bullying Charter

Appendix E – Key Contacts and Support Resources

Key Contact Personnel

Pastoral Care Lead	Aoife Healy	0118 499 2762	aoife@thenest-ed.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Joy Iliff	0118 499 2763	dsl@thenest-ed.co.uk

Bullying support resources

	www.gov.uk/government/publications/approaches-to-preventing-and-tackling-bullying
Anti-Bullying Alliance	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
The BIG Award	www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
Childline	www.childline.org.uk
The Diana Award	www.diana-award.org.uk
Family Lives	www.familylives.org.uk
Kidscape	www.kidscape.org.uk
MindEd	www.minded.org.uk
NSPCC	www.nspcc.org.uk
PSHE Association	www.pshe-association.org.uk
Restorative Justice Council	www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practiceschools
Victim Support	www.victimsupport.org.uk
Young Minds	www.youngminds.org.uk
Young Carers	www.youngcarers.net
SEND	
Anti-Bullying Alliance: Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities	www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send___module_final.pdf
Changing Faces	www.changingfaces.org.uk
DfE: SEND code of practice	www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-ofpractice-0-to-25
Mencap	www.mencap.org.uk
Cyberbullying	
Childnet	www.childnet.com
DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying' and 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and	www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

school staff'	
Internet Watch Foundation	www.iwf.org.uk
Think U Know	www.thinkuknow.co.uk
UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)	www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
UK Safer Internet Centre	www.saferinternet.org.uk
Ethnicity, religion, nationality	
Anne Frank Trust	www.annefrank.org.uk
Educate against Hate	www.educateagainsthate.com
Kick it Out	www.kickitout.org
Report it	www.report-it.org.uk
Show Racism the Red Card	www.srtrc.org/educational
Stop Hate	www.stophateuk.org
Tell Mama	www.tellmamauk.org
LGBTQIA+	
Barnardo's LGBT Hub	www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
EACH	www.eachaction.org.uk
Metro Charity	www.metrocentreonline.org
Proud Trust	www.theproudtrust.org
Schools Out	www.schools-out.org.uk
Stonewall	www.stonewall.org.uk
Sexual harassment and sexual bullying	
Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying	www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-genderrelated/preventing-and-responding-sexual
Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related
Disrespect No Body	www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobodycampaign-posters
Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW)	www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAWCoalition-Schools-Guide.pdf