



HINDLE'S
SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE LTD

Bullying and Harassment Policy for Students

Hindle's School of Excellence Ltd | Academic Year 2026–27

Policy owner	Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Approved by	Joanne C. Hindle, Director
Approval date	31 August 2026
Effective from	1 September 2026
Next review	1 September 2027, or sooner following significant guidance or an incident
Our commitment Every student has the right to learn in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation and child-on-child abuse are never acceptable, are not “banter” or an inevitable part of growing up, and will be addressed promptly, proportionately and in the best interests of the child.	

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out how Hindle's School of Excellence Ltd (“Hindle's”) prevents, identifies, reports, records and responds to bullying and harassment involving students. It should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Online Safety Policy, Complaints Policy, SEND arrangements and staff code of conduct.

It applies to all students, including children under 18 and learners aged 18 or over; staff, tutors, trainees, volunteers, contractors and visitors; and parents or carers when engaging with the provision.

The policy applies to conduct:

- on Hindle's premises and during lessons, breaks, arrivals and departures;
- during home tuition, online tuition, off-site learning, educational visits, transport or activities arranged by Hindle's;
- between students outside provision, including online, where the behaviour affects a student's safety, welfare, attendance, learning or the orderly operation of the provision;

- through phones, gaming, social media, messaging, email, images, recordings, artificial intelligence or any other digital service;
- directed at a student, a group of students, staff member or another member of the Hindle's community.

2. Legal and guidance framework

This policy has been prepared with regard to the following legislation and guidance, as applicable to Hindle's status and activities:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026);
- Department for Education, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and current guidance on preventing bullying;
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, including the behaviour and anti-bullying duties that apply to maintained schools and are recognised as good practice for alternative provision;
- Equality Act 2010, including protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Malicious Communications Act 1988, Communications Act 2003 and relevant criminal law;
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018;
- local safeguarding partnership procedures and any commissioning-school or local-authority requirements.

Where a commissioning school, college or local authority has additional reporting requirements, Hindle's will work cooperatively with that body without delaying any action needed to safeguard a student.

3. Definitions

3.1 Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another person or group physically or emotionally. It commonly involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power. A single serious incident may still constitute harassment, discrimination, abuse or a safeguarding concern and will be acted upon even if it does not meet the usual definition of bullying.

3.2 Harassment, discrimination and victimisation

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature with that purpose or effect. Discrimination includes less favourable treatment or disadvantage because of a protected characteristic. Victimisation means subjecting someone to a detriment because they raised, supported or were believed likely to raise an equality concern.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age (where applicable), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Hindle's will also challenge prejudice related to socioeconomic background,

care experience, appearance, health, family circumstances, language, nationality, SEND or any perceived characteristic or association.

3.3 Child-on-child abuse

Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse may include physical or sexual violence, sexual harassment, abuse in intimate personal relationships, consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images, upskirting, initiation or hazing, coercive or controlling behaviour and online abuse. It can occur between two children or within groups, inside or outside the provision and online. Hindle's applies a zero-tolerance approach: concerns will never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or boys being boys.

4. Forms and indicators

Form	Examples
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting, restraint, threatening gestures, taking or damaging belongings.
Verbal	Name-calling, insults, threats, humiliating comments, mimicry, repeated teasing or offensive "jokes".
Relational	Exclusion, intimidation, coercion, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships, public humiliation or encouraging others to isolate someone.
Prejudice-related	Behaviour connected to a protected or perceived characteristic, including racist, faith-based, sexist, sexual, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, disablist or SEND-related abuse.
Sexual	Sexual comments, jokes, gestures, unwanted touching, pressure, rumours, image sharing, sexualised bullying or harassment.
Online	Abusive or threatening messages, impersonation, exclusion, doxxing, image manipulation, sharing content without consent, pile-ons, harmful polls, group-chat abuse or misuse of AI.
Economic/property	Theft, demands for money, deliberate damage, hiding property or coercing another person into buying or giving things.

Possible indicators include changes in attendance, engagement, attainment, sleep, eating, mood, behaviour, friendships or online use; unexplained injuries or damaged belongings; anxiety, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, withdrawal, distress before sessions or reluctance to speak. These signs may have other causes but will be listened to and explored sensitively.

5. Principles

- The welfare and best interests of the student are paramount.
- All reports are taken seriously, including anonymous reports and reports from bystanders.
- Students are listened to, kept informed and involved in decisions as far as is safe and appropriate.

- Responses are child-centred, trauma-informed, proportionate and sensitive to age, development, communication needs, SEND, disability and vulnerability.
- The wishes of the student are considered, but confidentiality cannot be promised where someone may be at risk.
- Hindle's will avoid creating barriers to reporting and will not penalise a student for making a good-faith report that is not substantiated.
- Being unable to prove an allegation does not mean it was deliberately false.
- Safeguarding action and support do not depend on the outcome of any disciplinary or criminal process.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Maintain oversight of prevention, reports, safeguarding decisions, records, risk assessments and follow-up.
- Ensure staff know how to recognise and report bullying, harassment and child-on-child abuse.
- Coordinate with parents or carers, commissioning settings, local authorities, children's social care, health services and police as required.
- Ensure support and safety planning for the student who has experienced harm and the student alleged to have caused harm.
- Review patterns, locations, protected-characteristic incidents and the effectiveness of action.
- Report allegations about adults under the safeguarding and allegations procedures, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where required.

6.2 All staff, tutors, trainees and volunteers

- Model respectful, inclusive conduct and challenge harmful language and behaviour safely.
- Remain professionally curious and recognise that students may not disclose directly.
- Act immediately to secure safety, listen without judgement, preserve evidence and report to the DSL on the same day.
- Make a clear, factual and timely record using the safeguarding or incident system.
- Never investigate beyond the initial facts, promise secrecy, mediate a safeguarding disclosure, or require a student to confront another student.
- Make a direct referral to children's social care, emergency services or police if necessary; safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and action must not be delayed because the DSL is unavailable.

6.3 Students

- Treat others with respect and follow the behaviour expectations.
- Tell a trusted adult about bullying, harassment, discrimination, abuse or online harm affecting themselves or someone else.
- Do not join in, share, like, forward, film or encourage harmful behaviour.
- Preserve relevant online evidence where safe, but do not download, copy or forward nude or sexual images of a child.

6.4 Parents and carers

- Report concerns promptly and provide relevant information or evidence without confronting another student or family.
- Support safety plans and respectful behaviour, including online and outside provision.

- Avoid posting identifying information about incidents or children on social media.
- Work constructively with Hindle's and use the complaints procedure if concerns remain unresolved.

7. Reporting concerns

Immediate danger

Call 999 where there is an immediate risk of serious harm or a crime is in progress. Staff must then notify the DSL as soon as possible. A student can report to any trusted adult and does not have to use a special form.

A concern may be reported verbally, in writing, through a parent or carer, by a witness, or through any available safeguarding route. The person receiving the report will:

1. listen calmly, take the student seriously and use their preferred language for those involved;
2. check immediate safety and whether urgent medical or police assistance is needed;
3. avoid leading questions, blame, promises of confidentiality or asking the student to repeat the account unnecessarily;
4. record the student's words as accurately as possible, the date, time, location, people involved, witnesses, actions taken and any evidence;
5. report to the DSL immediately, and always on the same working day;
6. preserve digital evidence without viewing or forwarding illegal images;
7. explain what is likely to happen next and identify a safe adult for support.

If the concern involves the DSL, it must be reported to the Director or the appropriate alternative safeguarding lead. If it concerns the Director, staff must follow the allegations policy and contact the relevant local authority safeguarding/LADO route or commissioning body as appropriate. No person will investigate an allegation about themselves.

8. Assessment, investigation and decision-making

The DSL will complete an initial safeguarding and risk assessment without delay. This will consider the nature, frequency and context of the behaviour; power imbalance; age and development; SEND or communication needs; protected characteristics; risk of retaliation; online reach; impact on attendance and wellbeing; possible criminal conduct; and risks to other students.

Where it is safe and appropriate, the DSL will:

- speak separately with those involved and relevant witnesses;
- review records and available evidence;
- inform parents or carers unless doing so may place a child at greater risk, prejudice an investigation or conflict with professional advice;
- liaise with the commissioning school, college or local authority;
- seek safeguarding advice and make referrals where thresholds are met;
- document the rationale, actions, outcome, support and review date.

The balance of probabilities may be used for internal behaviour decisions. A criminal standard of proof is not required to put protective measures or support in place. Relevant information will be shared on a need-to-know basis; privacy law does not prevent proportionate information sharing to safeguard a child.

9. Safeguarding and external escalation

The DSL will follow Hindle's safeguarding procedures and local multi-agency arrangements where the behaviour may indicate significant harm, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, self-harm or suicide risk, serious violence, hate crime, stalking, extortion, theft, assault or another offence. Actions may include referral or consultation with:

- children's social care or the relevant multi-agency safeguarding hub;
- the police (101 for non-emergencies, 999 for emergencies);
- the commissioning school or college and local authority;
- health, mental-health or specialist services;
- the LADO where an allegation concerns an adult working with children.

Potential criminal conduct will not be handled solely through restorative practice. Staff will not search for, copy or forward nude or semi-nude images; these concerns will be managed under safeguarding guidance.

10. Support, protective measures and consequences

10.1 Support for a student who has experienced harm

- a named trusted adult and regular check-ins;
- a personalised safety plan, safe space, adjusted arrival/departure, seating, groupings or supervision;
- reasonable adjustments and communication support;
- support to preserve or report online evidence and block harmful contact;
- academic, attendance, counselling, health or specialist support where available;
- updates and review dates agreed with the student and parent or carer where appropriate.

10.2 Support and response for a student alleged to have caused harm

The student will be treated fairly and safely while concerns are assessed. Support may include increased supervision, separation, mentoring, SEND review, teaching about consent and impact, behaviour planning, family work and specialist referral. Support does not remove accountability.

10.3 Consequences

Consequences will follow the Behaviour Policy and be proportionate to the seriousness, impact, persistence, intent, context, previous incidents and the student's needs. They may include:

- restorative work only where voluntary, safe and appropriate;
- education, reflection, apology or repair of harm;
- warning, behaviour agreement or loss of privileges;
- changes to group, timetable, online access or supervision;
- temporary removal or suspension from sessions;
- termination of placement or permanent exclusion in serious or persistent cases, with the commissioner involved where relevant;
- referral to external agencies or police.

No-contact or separation arrangements will be designed so that the student who experienced harm is not unfairly burdened or excluded from education. Restorative approaches will not be used as a substitute for safeguarding action or imposed in cases involving coercion, sexual harm or an unsafe power imbalance.

11. Online and off-site incidents

Hindle's may respond to online or off-site behaviour where there is a safeguarding concern, a connection to the provision, an impact on a student's welfare or education, or a threat to the safety and orderly running of the setting. Staff will work with parents, commissioners, platforms and police as appropriate.

Students and families should avoid retaliating or deleting evidence. Screenshots, URLs, usernames, dates and times may be retained where lawful and safe. Harmful content can be reported to the platform and, where appropriate, the UK Safer Internet Centre Report Harmful Content service or CEOP. Illegal sexual images of children must not be copied or forwarded.

12. Prevention

- clear behaviour expectations, respectful relationships and adult modelling;
- age-appropriate teaching about equality, consent, healthy relationships, online safety, reporting and bystander responsibility;
- staff safeguarding and anti-bullying training, including child-on-child abuse and prejudice-related incidents;
- effective supervision and environmental risk assessment;
- reasonable adjustments and targeted support for students with SEND or communication needs;
- safe reporting routes and visible information about trusted adults;
- partnership with parents, commissioners and local services;
- regular analysis of incidents and student feedback to improve practice.

13. Recording, confidentiality and information sharing

All concerns, decisions, actions and follow-up will be recorded promptly, factually and securely. Safeguarding records will be kept separately from general educational records, with access restricted to those who need the information. Records will distinguish fact, observation, allegation and professional opinion and will include the rationale for decisions.

Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately to safeguard students, support action and meet legal or commissioning duties. Students and families will be treated sensitively, but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Records will be retained and transferred in line with Hindle's retention arrangements, safeguarding guidance and data-protection law.

14. False, mistaken or malicious reports

Most reports are made in good faith. A concern that is unsubstantiated, unfounded or mistaken is not automatically malicious. No sanction will be imposed merely because evidence is insufficient. Where there is clear evidence that a report was deliberately fabricated to cause harm, the Behaviour Policy may be applied, while considering the student's needs and whether the report itself indicates a safeguarding concern.

15. Complaints and review of decisions

A parent, carer or student who is dissatisfied with how a concern was handled may use Hindle's Complaints Policy. A complaint will not delay urgent safeguarding action. Information about another student's personal circumstances or sanctions may be restricted, but Hindle's will explain the process followed and the steps taken to protect the reporting student as far as it lawfully can.

16. Monitoring and policy review

The DSL will monitor the number, type, location, protected-characteristic dimension, recurrence and outcomes of incidents; the effectiveness of support; and any patterns involving individuals, groups, staff practice, online spaces or provision arrangements. The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a serious incident, learning review, legislative change, updated guidance or identified trend.

17. Key contacts and emergency routes

Contact	Details
Hindle's School of Excellence Ltd	115 Rochdale Road, Bury BL9 7BA 0161 764 2415
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Contact through Hindle's using the details above.
Emergency services	999 - immediate danger or a crime in progress
Police non-emergency	101
Childline	0800 1111 childline.org.uk
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk
CEOP Safety Centre	ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre - report online sexual abuse or grooming
Report Harmful Content	reportharmfulcontent.com - advice about reporting harmful online content

18. Approval

Signed: Joanne C. Hindle MA PGDE BA (Hons)

Role: Director of Hindle's School of Excellence Ltd

Address: 115 Rochdale Road, Bury BL9 7BA

Date approved: 31 August 2026

Date effective: 1 September 2026

Next review: 1 September 2027

Reference documents

- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- Department for Education, Preventing and Tackling Bullying.
- GOV.UK, Bullying at school: the law.
- Equality Act 2010, including section 85 and the education provisions.