

THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

Anti-Bullying Policy

Specialist online education for neurodivergent young people

Document	Anti-Bullying Policy
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Owner	Head / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Approved by	Proprietor + Governing Body

1. Purpose and statement

The Haven is committed to providing a learning environment in which every young person can participate without fear of bullying, harassment or discrimination. Bullying behaviour is not tolerated. This policy sets out what we mean by bullying, how we prevent it, and how we respond when it occurs.

2. Definition

Bullying is repeated, intentional behaviour by an individual or group that hurts another person physically or emotionally and creates an imbalance of power. Bullying can be:

- Verbal: name-calling, insults, threats.
- Indirect or social: exclusion, rumour, manipulation of friendships.
- Online: harassment, exclusion, intimidation, or impersonation through digital means (cyberbullying).
- Identity-based: targeting protected characteristics including disability, race, gender identity, sexuality, religion or faith.
- Coercive: pressuring others into unwanted behaviour. Bullying can occur in chat, in voice, in messages, in shared digital spaces, and at any in-person The Haven event.

3. Our context

The Haven serves learners many of whom have experienced bullying in mainstream education. We take this seriously. Identity-based bullying — particularly targeting neurodivergence, gender identity, sexuality, race and faith — is treated as a serious safeguarding concern.

4. Prevention

Bullying is prevented through:

- A clearly articulated relational culture under the Relational Behaviour and Regulation Policy.
- Explicit teaching about respect, difference and digital citizenship through PSHE, RSHE and Neurodiversity University.
- Modelling by staff.
- Active staff presence and moderation in any shared digital space.
- Regular learner voice mechanisms to capture how learners are experiencing the environment.
- Promotion of British values, including mutual respect and tolerance.

5. Reporting

Learners, families and staff can report bullying through any of the following routes:

- Speaking to a trusted educator or mentor.
- Contacting the Head or DSL.
- Using the family or learner contact channels.
- Anonymously, where the learner prefers. All reports are taken seriously. Anonymity does not prevent action, although it may limit the response possible.

6. Response

Where a report is received, the response includes:

- Listening to and supporting the learner who has experienced the behaviour.
- Recording the concern in line with the Behaviour Incident Reporting Procedure.
- Investigating proportionately, in partnership with families where appropriate.
- Taking action with the learner whose behaviour has caused harm, focused on understanding, repair and change — in line with the Relational Behaviour and Regulation Policy.
- Reviewing the environment for factors that contributed to the behaviour.
- Where the behaviour reaches the threshold of a safeguarding concern (including identity-based abuse, child-on-child abuse, or criminal behaviour), escalating to the DSL and following the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Following up with the learner who experienced the harm to check that the behaviour has stopped and they feel safe.

7. Where the bullying involves staff or volunteers

Allegations that an adult has engaged in bullying behaviour towards a learner are treated under the Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy. Bullying between adults is addressed under the Staff Conduct, Whistleblowing and Grievance policies.

8. Records

All bullying concerns are recorded under the Behaviour Incident Reporting Procedure. Patterns are reviewed termly as part of the Quality Assurance Policy.

9. Roles and responsibilities

- Head / DSL: Oversees response to bullying and safeguarding escalation.
- Educators and mentors: Notice, listen, record and escalate.
- Learners: Empowered to speak up for themselves and for others; trusted to be believed.
- Families: Partners in identifying and responding to concerns.

10. Related documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Relational Behaviour and Regulation Policy
- Behaviour Incident Reporting Procedure
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality and Anti-Racism policies
- SEND Policy
- Quality Assurance Policy

11. Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head / DSL and approved by the Board of Governors.

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