

# South Hams Federation

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The procedures in this policy should be considered alongside the Child Protection Policy and the Behaviour

Policy. Reviewed Mar 2024

Next Review Date : Mar 2026

We are an ambitious and inclusive federation of schools that recognise bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can be a barrier to learning, have serious consequences for mental health and damage communities. Bullying which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood (DfE).

Every member of our school community has the right to feel safe and secure during their time at school, on school visits, and when travelling to and from school, free from humiliation, oppression and physical, mental, emotional or cyber abuse. The federation will do all in its power to enable each student to achieve their full academic potential unhindered by the words or actions of bullies following the agreed Anti-Bullying Procedures.

When bullying happens, it can be harmful, both physically and emotionally for the victim. It can also be a sign that the student carrying out the bullying has underlying issues that may require support. The purpose of this policy is to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur. All members of the federation, staff, students and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is and what the procedures are for responding to bullying.

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying behaviour is defined as “behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.” (Taken from the Department for Education advice July 2017, ‘Preventing and Tackling Bullying’)

Whilst one pupil or group starts bullying another pupil or group, there are often other pupils present (bystanders). These may:

- help the bully by joining in
- help the bully by watching, laughing or shouting encouragement
- remain uninvolved
- help the victim by telling the bully to stop or fetching an adult

Bullying is often focused on vulnerable people, but vulnerability is not always visible to adults. Their “difference” may be a notional one used to justify the bullying, to claim that bullying is in some way deserved or self-inflicted. There is no stereotype, but victims may be students who:

- are new to the class or school
- are different in appearance, speech or background from other students
- suffer from low self-esteem (but it’s not clear whether this is a cause or effect of bullying)
- when bullied, demonstrate reactions which the bullies find ‘entertaining’, e.g. tantrums, loss of control
- are more nervous or anxious than others (but witnesses who are not bullied are found to be just as anxious)
- have belonged to former friendship groups who have moved on or “split up”
- have learning difficulties or other kinds of special needs.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not an odd occasional falling out with friends, occasional name calling, arguments, or when the occasional ‘joke’ is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child’s development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships. However, the school takes all incidents which undermine the safety and wellbeing of students seriously

## Types of Bullying

Deliberately unkind behaviour: An incident of any form (physical, verbal, racial etc) which is deliberately (intentionally) unkind and / or causes harm to another person. Bullying - The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. A helpful child friendly definition could be the 'STOP- several times on purpose principle. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online' There are four key elements to this definition: • Hurtful • Repetition • Power imbalance • Intentional

### Sub Categories of Bullying

- Cyber bullying - using the internet, games, mobile telephones, social networking sites etc in a way that causes harm or upsets someone else
- Physical bullying – including: hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions, barging, hurting, stamping
- Verbal bullying - including name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, mockery, mimicking, inappropriate banter, sexist language or lyrics to raps, shaming e.g. fat-shaming • Exclusionary bullying - intimidating, harassing, isolating, or excluding a person from a group;
- Racial bullying – deliberately unkind behaviour regarding someone's culture, heritage, country of birth or nationality
- Disability – any bullying behaviour where someone feels they are targeted for their disability, special educational need or medical needs
- LGBTQ+ - any bullying behaviour where someone feels they are targeted for their sexuality and/or gender (whether actual or perceived)

NB: Sexual – this would feature in the child on child abuse sections and harmful sexual behaviour sections of our recording.

Intention: Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing, banter" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may not be malicious and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. A bully who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions will be fully supported to remedy their behaviour and understand why this is totally unacceptable.

Sexual harassment specifically may present itself in the following ways: •

Unwanted physical contact of any kind;

- Offensive comments of a sexual nature;
- Coercive, controlling behaviour;
- Unwanted pressure e.g., for a date or image/s;
- Cat calling or making inappropriate noises;
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- Unwanted attention, for example staring;
- Spreading rumours of a sexual nature and/or inappropriate facial expressions or gestures. Cyber Bullying is defined as the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or any social media sites as a conduit to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target someone. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that they closely monitor the online activities of their child at home to ensure that they are prevented from engaging in negative online behaviours and also protected from any unpleasantness. Forms of cyber bullying:
  - Trolling: online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged. The aim of trolling is to cause reactions and people often get enjoyment from the victim's distress.
  - Catfishing: creating fake profiles on social network sites, apps and online in order to harass others anonymously.
  - Denigration: putting false, unkind or unpleasant online messages in emails, instant messaging or chat rooms.
  - Outing/exposing: sharing or coaxing someone into revealing secrets online including private information, pictures, and videos. Usually involves screenshotting and forwarding to others.
  - Trickery: tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.
  - Impersonation: pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false

messages online.

- Harassment: repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.
- Cyber-stalking: repeated messages that include threats of harm, harassment, intimidation or engaging in other online activities that make a person afraid for their safety.
- Online sexual harassment: sending unwanted images or messages of a sexual content. This could include trying to persuade someone into returning images of themselves and/or doing something they are not comfortable with

It is vital that the whole school community understands the meaning of bullying. We accept that children 'fall out' with each other but if the term is used too loosely serious issues might not be uncovered. Therefore, we will:

- Define bullying and explain some of the steps we take to ensure that bullying does not become a problem in school.
- Ask one Governor to take responsibility for understanding and communicating the school's Anti Bullying procedures. If any other Governor is contacted about bullying s/he must direct the parent to the appropriate Governor.
- Ensure Anti-Bullying procedures are on the Agenda of an MTA and TA meeting every year. ▪ Review this policy every year.
- Each class will clarify bullying and remind children what should be done.

### **Objectives of this policy**

- To reduce the frequency of bullying incidents
- To increase the likelihood that incidents are disclosed to a responsible adult ▪ To intervene effectively when bullying happens.

### **Bullying outside the School Premises**

We are not directly responsible for bullying that takes place during journeys to and from school. However, if we are aware of harmful behaviour outside school and fail to take steps to combat it, we may be in breach of the school's common law duty of care. One or more of the following steps should be taken:

- Contact the local police;
- Contact the transport company if there are reports of bullying on the bus;
  - If the bullies are from another school, talk to their Headteacher;
  - Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying.
  - Decide with the pupil who will inform his/her parents.

### **How incidents of bullying might come to light**

Research suggests that a child is more likely to tell a member of their family about bullying than his/her teacher and that the older the child the less likely s/he is to tell anyone. Therefore, we need to take steps to uncover bullying.

A child might indicate that s/he is being bullied by displaying certain behaviour. Staff should be aware of possible signs of bullying and use their knowledge of pupils to identify changes in behaviour that might indicate bullying. Any suspicions must be investigated.

Signs of bullying might include:

- Being emotionally volatile;
- Low self-esteem;
- Unwillingness to come to school;
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour;
- Complaining about missing possessions;
- Refusal to talk about the problem;
- Being easily distracted;
- Damaged or incomplete work.
- Feeling ill in the mornings
- Coming home with clothes torn or damaged

- Asking for money or stealing
- Damaged or missing possessions
- Stopping eating
- Afraid to use internet or phone
- Nervous or jumpy

Within school, bullying most typically takes place where adult surveillance is intermittent; research suggests that in primary schools approximately three-quarters of bullying takes place during playtimes. All members of staff have a duty to be particularly vigilant during these times.

### **Further strategies to prevent or reduce bullying**

Through co-operative group work children learn to:

- listen to different points of view
- learn tolerance of others
- become better integrated into the peer group
- share responsibility to complete a task.

In PSHE lessons children will:

- be in a safe space to explore issues of concern
- explore relationships with adults and peers
- affirm the strengths and enhance the self esteem of each person
- make eye contact
- take turns to speak and listen
- discuss difficult issues.

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

### **Preventative Measures**

We aim to help Students to prevent bullying, by reinforcing our policy through: • Ethos of good behaviour within school.

- Encouraging to “Start Telling Other People”.
- Students are encouraged not to be bystanders.
- All duty staff support students at unstructured times.
- Assemblies and events to support appropriate behaviours.
- Individual events/activities related to Anti-Bullying.
- PSHE lessons (or relevant equivalent).
- Individual or group interventions.
- Restorative justice.
- Individual mentoring or support from in school teams.
- Liaison with SENDCO where necessary.
- Referral to School Nurse and/or wellbeing support.
- Referrals to other agencies to support.
- Mentoring and attendance support
- Regular student support meetings where relevant.
- Reports and behaviour contracts.
- Engagement in Anti-Bullying Week, a National annual event.
- Information shared with parents through parents’ evenings and events, newsletters and messages home.

Individual schools have a range of strategies in place to help students work and behave co-operatively in order to minimise the possibility of bullying taking place. Some of these include:

- PSHE lessons that educate students around a wide range of inclusion and diversity issues including lessons, assemblies, workshops, guest speakers and focus days.
- National Anti-bullying week in November each year, involving all students in discussions about acceptable behaviours and ensuring all students know what procedures should be followed.

- Clear behaviour policy that rewards positive behaviour. Expectations are clear and straightforward and focus on positive attitudes.
- Kindness and compassion are recognised and rewarded.
- Data is analysed and used to reveal patterns of behaviour, which may be indicative of bullying.
- Staff have regular training to support their understanding of bullying, advice and guidance is shared with them.
- Vulnerable students may be flagged with staff to support vigilance.
- Schools take a pro-active stance towards challenging behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- Both students and parents are made aware of how to use the internet safely and of the possibilities of cyber bullying and to report such incidents to school and the police when appropriate.
- Above all students are encouraged to speak out if they feel they are being bullied or if someone they know is being bullied.

Stereotypical views and prejudiced language are challenged, and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability, disability, or different family situations (e.g. pupils who are looked after or those with caring responsibilities); Pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community and understand how their actions affect others. Schools are also encouraged to be proactive in dealing with political tensions and local, national or international situations which can lead to bullying of minority groups.

### **Onlookers and Bystanders**

Through the strategies outlined above, all children will be aware of what bullying is and their responsibility for caring for their peers. From Year 1 children are taught to begin to understand their responsibilities if they know that other children are being bullied. From Year 3 children are taught about the role of witnesses. From Year 5 children are taught about the different roles in bullying and what to do if they spot them. Children who 'egg-on' other bullies will be treated as a bully. 'Tellers' will be rewarded, but not named.

Our School Aims focus on caring for others; therefore, if children stand by knowing that bullying is taking place and they do not tell, then we are failing to achieve our school aims.

### **Collective Bullying**

Bullies will often have significant power within their peer group and may use this power to encourage others to bully. There is security in numbers; collective bullying will make it less likely that the bullying will be reported and that the initiator will take responsibility. Although it is time consuming, it must be remembered that a group of bullies is a collection of individuals and each individual role within the bullying should be dealt with separately. Several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean that they are telling the truth. Group punishment can be ineffective as it could nurture group solidarity and isolate the victim further.

### **When an incident of bullying is reported**

If a parent contacts the school s/he should firstly be directed to the class teacher to discuss the incident of bullying. If appropriate the difference between bullying and behaviour incidents should be made clear to the parent.

If another member of staff notices an incident of bullying, s/he should also refer to the child's class teacher. The class teacher is most likely to know the child, friendship patterns, other incidents or behaviours that might shed light on the bullying incident.

#### The class teacher will

- make a note of the parent's concern, including dates and names (Use Report Form Appendix B)
- reassure the parent that the issue will be followed up
- tell the parent what will happen next
- make a further appointment to explain what has been done and find out if it has

- stopped.
- Record detail on CPOMS

If a child discloses that s/he is being bullied, see procedure for meeting with the victim (below).

The class teacher must refer the incident to the Head of School or Deputy. The class teacher must also refer to the behaviour policy.

Whenever a disclosure about bullying is made, it must always be treated seriously. While others might not feel that certain actions or words are of a bullying nature, if the recipient feels that they are being bullied that is sufficient evidence to treat the case as bullying.

Any incident of confirmed bullying must be reported to Devon County Council.

## **DEALING WITH A BULLYING INCIDENT**

### **Meeting with the Victim**

The experience of being bullied can have a significant impact on the rest of a child's life; it could cause low self-esteem, anxiety and depression. A child with low self-esteem will find it hard to disclose incidents of bullying. If the child who has been bullied exhibits 'victim behaviours' the Head or one of the Deputies must be informed. The child will need help to identify how difficulties could be avoided or resolved in the future.

- Ask the victim if s/he would like a friend.
- Make a note of what the child says, including dates and names (Use Report Form Appendix B)
- Remain calm and non-judgemental to reassure the child that s/he is being listened to
- Agree with the child what should happen next, including
  - establishing if parents know or how the parents will be informed
  - how the difficulties should be resolved. (The preference should be to see both children together after speaking to both sides individually. 'Rescuing' the victim will not help the child to deal with or avoid incidents in the future.)
- Establish how the child can be and feel safe whilst you complete enquiries
- Praise the child for having the confidence to speak out
- Arrange to see the child again the next day.

### **Interviewing the suspected bully/bullies**

Any consequences will be applied in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and will always aim to take account of the severity of the incident, any aggravating or mitigating factors and the need to ensure the safety of students at all times. We also recognise some students will need additional support to help them recognise and change their behaviour.

We will aim to do this in the following ways:

- Consider the safety of the victim. It might be more appropriate to describe the behaviour that has been heard and/or seen, suggesting that it has been witnessed by a third party. The bully should be led to considering the consequences of his/her actions.
- Note what is said.
- Talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- informing the bully's parents/carers.
- Continuing to work with the bully in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- Taking disciplinary steps in line with our behaviour policy to prevent more bullying.
- Working towards a "fresh start/clean slate" position as soon as possible.
- Ask the bully how s/he will put the matter right. If a one-to-one meeting between the bully

and the victim is required, get the agreement of the victim first and ensure that the victim feels safe and supported at the meeting.

- Tell the bully that the notes made will be kept and that you will be regularly checking up on him/her

### **The mediation meeting with both children**

- Paraphrase your understanding of the antecedents and the actions. It is how the children perceive the situation which is important, not how others perceive it.
- Ensure that the children identify how they can resolve the incident/difficulties and prevent anything from recurring. ie What will both parties agree to do?
- Explain what each child should do if there is further bullying or provocation.
- Explain what action the school will take if the problem happens again.
- Decide on an appropriate punishment for the bully.

### **After the meeting**

- Note how the bullying came to light, what steps were taken, the solution, and what will happen if the incident recurs. A report form is included as Appendix B. These must be added to CPOMS
- Make a note of when you will speak to both parties individually to review the agreements.
- Parents of both parties should be informed. Description of the incident, action and solution will be used, not names of the other party involved.

### **On-line Bullying**

Children will be taught about the potential of online bullying through our PSHE and Computing curriculum, actions to protect themselves and reporting procedures as part of our Online Safety Curriculum.

### **Evaluation of the success of this policy**

- The success of this policy will be judged against the objectives on page one of the policy.
- Once a year the children on the school council will be asked what bullying is and what should be done if they know someone is being bullied.
- If there are appropriate answers these questions, without prompting, it would suggest that our message about bullying is clear and constant.
- The Head of School will keep notes about bullying incidents to identify patterns or repetitions. There will be intermittent checks on victims of bullying. If our policy is successful we would not expect repeated incidents.
- CPOMS will be used to track incidents of bullying to identify trends

Ensure that all relevant staff are kept fully informed of incidents involving their pupils

**Anti-Bullying Expectations**

SUMMARY OF INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR EACH YEAR GROUP

YR GP	INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES
Rec	<p>I know I belong in my classroom.</p> <p>I like the ways we are all different and can tell you something special about me. I can tell you some ways in which children can be unkind and bully others. I can tell you how it feels when someone bullies you.</p> <p>I can be kind to children who have been bullied.</p> <p>I know who I could talk to in school if I was feeling unhappy or being bullied. I know what to do if I am bullied.</p>
Yr 1 & Yr 2	<p>I can tell you what bullying is.</p> <p>I can tell you some ways in which I am the same as and different from my friends. I am proud of the ways in which I am different.</p> <p>I can tell you how someone who is bullied feels.</p> <p>I can be kind to children who are bullied.</p> <p>I know that when you feel sad, it affects the way you behave and how you think. I know some people in and out of school who I could talk to if I was feeling unhappy or being bullied.</p> <p>I know what to do if I am bullied.</p>
Yr 3 & Yr 4	<p>I can tell you what bullying is.</p> <p>I know what it means to be a witness to bullying.</p> <p>I know that witnesses can make the situation better or worse by what they do. I know how it might feel to be a witness to and a target of bullying.</p> <p>I can tell you why witnesses sometimes join in with bullying or don't tell. I can tell you some ways of helping to make someone who is bullied feel better. I know that sometimes bullying is hard to spot and I know what to do if I think it is going on but I am not sure.</p> <p>I can problem-solve a bullying situation with others.</p> <p>I have thought about whether my behaviour could be perceived as bullying.</p>

Yr 5 & Yr 6	<p>I understand how rumour-spreading and name-calling can be bullying behaviours. I can explain the difference between direct and indirect types of bullying. I can explain some of the ways in which one person (or group of people) can have power over another.</p> <p>I know some of the reasons why people use bullying behaviours.</p> <p>I know some ways to encourage children who use bullying behaviours to make other choices.</p> <p>I can tell you a range of strategies which I have for managing my feelings in bullying situations and for problem solving when I am part of one.</p> <p>I have thought about whether my behaviour could be perceived as bullying. I have thought about how I behave in a group.</p>
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**Anti-Bullying Policy Appendix B**

**South Hams Federation - Anti-Bullying Report Form**

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Person who reported incident \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged bully \_\_\_\_\_

Adult dealing with the issue \_\_\_\_\_

Brief outline of reported incidents

Do you (the adult) consider it a case of bullying?

\_\_\_\_\_ Brief outline of discussion with child

Actions agreed with child	Date actions taken

Solution

\_\_\_\_\_ parents informed YES/NO If no, state reason

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ parents informed YES/NO If no, state reason

\_\_\_\_\_