

# **Saffron Walden County High School**



## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**Date adopted or ratified; July 2017; reviewed July 2019, July 2020, July 2021, July 2022 and November 2023**

**This policy is regularly reviewed following recommended guidelines**

## Linked policies or Guidance

This policy is written in line with guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE) and aligns with other policies in operation at SWCHS namely:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, 2023
- Behaviour Policy, SWCHS, 2023
- Preventing and tackling bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff, and governing bodies, DfE, 2017

## Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We aim to create a culture where the rights of the individual are valued and upheld. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.** If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly, consistently, and effectively. We aim to be a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

## Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching, and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching, and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

## Definition of Bullying

The Department for Education defines bullying as:

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.' (DfE, 2017)

Bullying can be:

- Emotional      being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Physical      pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist      racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual      unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic/ Transphobic/ Biphobic

because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality.

- Verbal      name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- SEND      where a pupil's Special Educational Need or Disability is the target of bullying.
- Cyber      All areas of internet, such as social media, email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology i.e., camera & video facilities Some cyber bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws.

Some bullying may amount to Child-on-Child abuse (see Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023) and should therefore be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) via CPOMS. The DSL at SWCHS is Matt Blayney.

## Prevention

At SWCHS we recognise that our response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. We believe that a culture of mutual respect between students and staff supports an environment where bullying is not able to take root and fester. We also believe that empowering and encouraging children to report any concerns, however small, enables us to respond quickly to any report.

We also undertake the following steps:

- Create an environment of respect and inclusivity for all.
- Deliver annual assemblies to all children emphasising our approach to bullying and reminding children how to report any concerns.
- Deliver a PSHE curriculum to all children that addresses bullying and discrimination. These lessons openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Engage external organisations to provide education through performance to our children that focusses on bullying and discrimination.
- Provide staff with training and reminders on what to do when supporting a child who has been bullied.
- Work alongside the Police to address serious cases.
- Provide all children at SWCHS with a variety of ways to report bullying, including face-to-face or virtual.
- implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Information about the anti-bullying strategies will be included in the Student Planner and Parents' Handbook.

## **Intervention: Why it is Important to Respond to Bullying**

At SWCHS we take our responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. A student who is being bullied often fails to thrive academically.

Students who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. Bullying behaviour is often a sign that a student is unhappy.

## **Monitoring of Incidents**

- All reports of bullying will be recorded on CPOMS and investigated.
- Numbers of bullying incidents will be monitored on a termly basis by the Year Achievement Co-ordinators and reported to Governors biannually.

## **Signs and Symptoms**

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings

- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong or gives improbable excuses
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

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

## Disclosure of an Incident

It is important that reported incidents are treated seriously and acted upon quickly.

Listen very carefully to what the student is reporting. It is very important to a victim that they feel they have been listened to properly and have been supported.

Further investigation is carried out more successfully if a written report of the incident is made. If there is a concern that the child reporting bullying is at risk of immediate harm, they should be brought to the YAC or DSL immediately.

Disclosures may take place via a face-to-face conversation, be reported by concerned friends or witnesses, via Teams, or a Peer Postcard (see Appendix 2).

## Recording an Incident

A written report on CPOMS should include the victim's account along with the names of all those involved. This includes the names of students who were present and witnessed what happened but who were not actively involved.

Those allegedly involved in the bullying may also be asked to make a written report of the incident, but this should be handled carefully, and may be inappropriate in the initial stages of an investigation. Copies of all written information should be passed to the Year Achievement Co-ordinator as this assists in monitoring the frequency of incidents around the school and the behaviour of students.

During the course of gathering information, it is important to try and discover if there was any particular reason why the incident occurred:

- Had there been any build up to the event?  
Had this happened before?
- Was the victim injured?
- Was anything taken from the victim?

Support the victims of bullying incidents by suggesting that they bring a friend with them when giving information.

## Possible Action

It may be appropriate to refer a targeted student or an incident directly to the Year Achievement Co-ordinator. This will usually be in cases where there is a history of bullying, where a student has been injured or where the student is unhappy about any teacher intervention. It is important to discuss this with the student involved. The Bullying Ladder of Consequences (see Appendix 1) should be referred to in order to provide reassurance.

Colleagues who do not feel confident in dealing with an incident at any stage should pass on the written records to the Year Achievement Co-ordinator as soon as possible in order that further action can take place quickly.

In other cases, it will be appropriate for a member of staff to follow these guidelines as an immediate/initial response to ensure that children are reassured regarding our approach to bullying:

- Issue a VERY STRONG warning in the case of a first incident.
- Make sure that the class/form knows that bystanders who do nothing to help are viewed as culpable.
- Inform the class/form that this sort of behaviour is not acceptable, highly disapproved of and will be treated very seriously at this school.
- Encourage all students to report bullying. Once students see that their reports obtain action, they are more likely to report incidents.
- Ensure that any graffiti is removed which may have formed part of an incident. This could be carried out by those involved in the bullying.
- Attempt to recover any lost items which may have been taken and insist that any damage or loss is repaired or replaced.
- Make sure those that are involved are told exactly who has been informed. Parents of the victim should be informed of the incident and all action being taken explained to them.
- Ensure that a brief report is emailed/ passed to the relevant form tutors and YAC.
- Ensure that the incident is logged on CPOMS.

## Follow Up by Form Tutor or YAC

- Inform staff that teach students involved so that the situation can be monitored carefully in all subject areas.
- Monitor the attendance of the victim.
- Arrange a further meeting with those involved to ensure that there are no further developments.

The Achievement Team also use the '**Peer Support Approach to Bullying**', based on the model developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson, and the '**Support Group Approach**'. This approach aims to build up a supportive network of peers around the victim with a shared responsibility to help the targeted student to feel safe and happy. Other complementary approaches may include 'Circle of Friends' and restorative justice.

## **Possible Outcomes**

- Those involved in bullying may be asked to genuinely apologise.
- If possible, the students will be reconciled.
- Other consequences may follow in line with the SWCHS Behaviour and Exclusions policies. In very serious cases, suspension, or even permanent exclusion will be considered.
- Parents of the victim and those involved in the bullying will be informed and may be invited into school for a meeting.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

## **End of friendship support: 'Fresh Starts'**

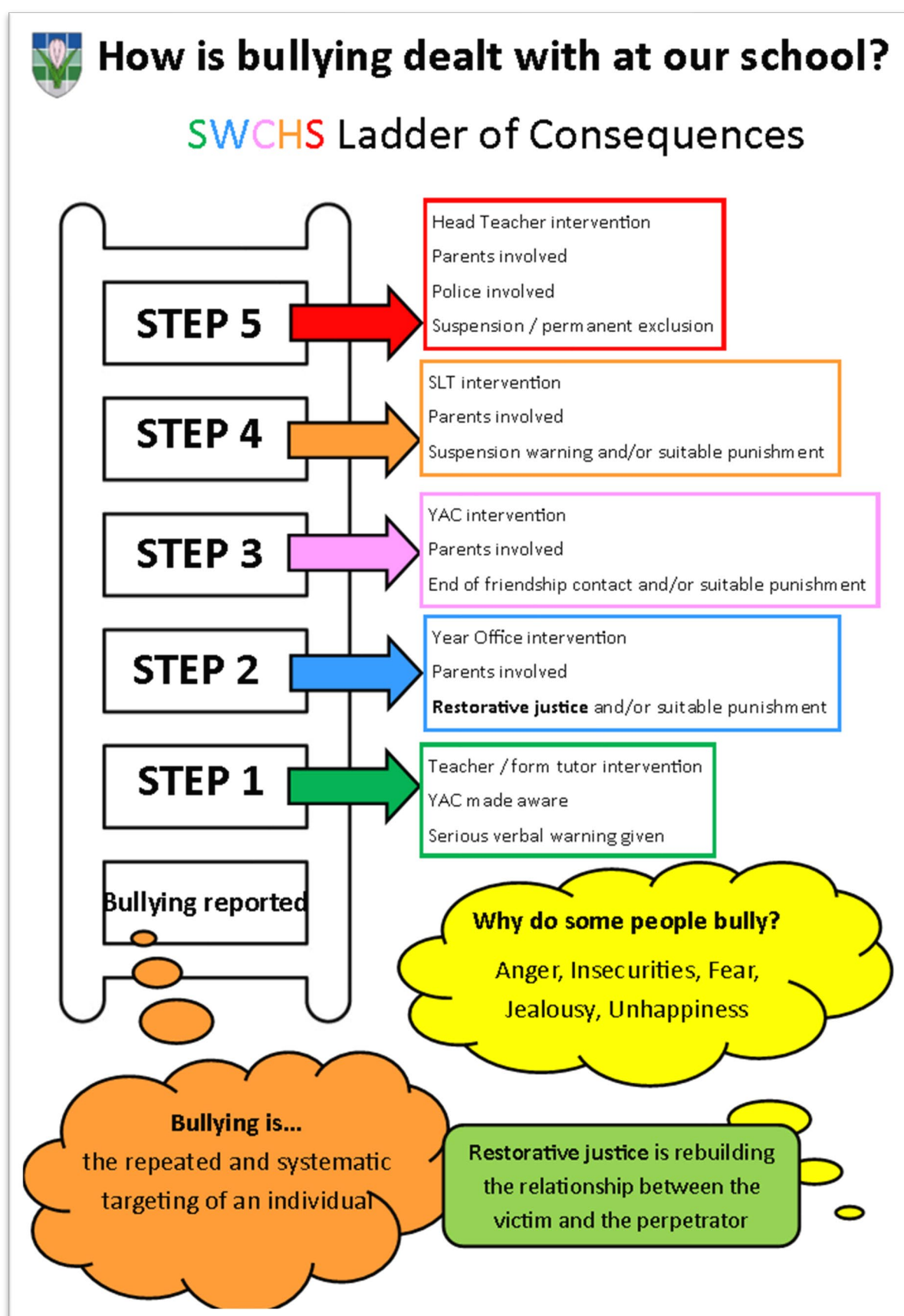
In situations where a friendship has irretrievably broken down, we offer students the chance to join a facilitated session with the school's counsellor or experienced member of staff. This will provide students with an opportunity to successfully move forward beyond the end of the friendship, and to reach a negotiated settlement. By its very nature the content of the session will be largely determined by the needs of the students involved. The hoped-for outcome is to promote fresh starts for all involved. In some cases, this may involve students drawing up an agreement to enable them to move ahead with their fresh start.

## **Review of policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher: Student Achievement.



**Appendix 1: The Bullying Ladder of Consequences** (included in all planners and publicised around the school)



Appendix 2: The Peer Postcard to support anonymous reporting.

Feeling worried about someone?

**Family**

*Complete a Peer Postcard*

**Peer Postcard**

THINKPINK

Exam Stress

Friends

**Social Media**

Pick-up a pink postcard from the Learning Centre

Complete it (sensibly)

**THINK PINK**

**DON'T BE A BYSTANDER!**

Post in the wooden box outside the Year 8 Office

Boxes will be emptied at the end of each day

## HELP ORGANISATIONS:

The Year Achievement Team at SWCHS

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900
Bullying Online	<a href="http://www.bullying.co.uk">www.bullying.co.uk</a>

## Helpful documents and resources:

Essex and Southend Healthy Schools Partnership  
<http://www.essexandsouthendhealthyschools.com/>

*Don't Stick it Stop It! Bullying wrecks lives: the experiences of children with a learning disability*  
MENCAP

*The School Report, The experiences of young gay people in Britain's schools*, Stonewall

Homophobic bullying

*Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools* DCSF 2007

This is best used directly from [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)

The downloads are particularly useful and provide scripts to support staff and young people

*Cyberbullying Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools* DCSF 2007  
[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)

*Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools* DCSF 2007  
[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)

*Anti-bullying Alliance (ABA)* [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org/](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org/)

Anti-bullying Audit tool kit

Audit tool for children and young people

Audit tool kit user's guidance

Audit tool kit for staff

Audit tool kit for parents and carers

E-engage

On-line bullying and safety. This offers support on-line opportunities for young people to learn while working live with experts. [www.e-engage.net/video](http://www.e-engage.net/video)

Stop Text Bully

[www.stoptextbully.com](http://www.stoptextbully.com) This website offers guidance to children and young people if they are being bullied by texts, calls, photos and emails. There is good advice on how to stay safe whilst using mobile phones and IT.

Cyberbullying:

Guidance – [www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk)

News articles on cyberbullying compiled by the National Children's Bureau

Email-library@ncb.org.uk [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)

Child Exploitation and On Line Protection Centre (CEOP):  
CEOP Education runs training on cyberbullying and participants can then access their materials and DVD for use in schools.  
To view their DVDs go to [www.youtube.com/ceop](http://www.youtube.com/ceop)  
CEOP Education ([Education@ceop.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Education@ceop.gsi.gov.uk))

Childnet International  
[www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)

This website has a DVD about cyberbullying. This could be used in school assemblies. You will also find updates and links to different articles and information.

[www.dontstickit.org.uk](http://www.dontstickit.org.uk) This MENCAP website provides cartoon scenarios for children and young people as well as information

Kidz Aware  
Disability and equality awareness activities manual  
[info@kidzaware.co.uk](mailto:info@kidzaware.co.uk)

Know IT All  
Is an interactive CD rom commissioned by the DCSF from Childnet International.  
The key aim is to encourage parents to have a dialogue with their children about the internet.  
<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk>

The Children's Legal Centre  
Is an independent charity which provides legal advice, information, assistance and representation to children, parents/carers and professionals working with children.

[www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

Girl bullying  
'*Understanding Girls' Friendships, Fights and Feuds.*' A practical approach to Girls' bullying, Valerie E Besag Open University Press 2006