

# Anti-Bullying Policy

Southend High School for Girls Academy Trust



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<b>Governor Policy 8SP</b>	<b>Author:</b>	<b>Authorised by:</b> <b>Board of Governors</b>
<b>Anti-Bullying Policy</b>	<b>Date first issued</b> <b>May 2010</b>	<b>Page 2 of 10</b>

**Reviewing authority:**

<b>Date for review</b>	<b>Reviewed Annually by</b>	<b>Reviewed by Board</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Date of new edition</b>
<b>Nov 2018</b>	<b>L Boney</b>	<b>January 2019</b>		<b>*</b>		<b>01/03/2019</b>
<b>Nov 2022</b>	<b>A Leman</b>	<b>29/11/2022</b>	<b>*</b>			<b>29/11/2022</b>

**A = accepted with no amendments**

**B = accepted with amendments**

**C = new edition created**

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### For Pupils: What to do if you are being bullied?

- Remember bullying is never your fault
- Don't suffer in silence; the moment you start to speak out, things will get better
- Tell an adult you trust, to help stop the bullying
- Don't retaliate (fight back – physically or verbally). Stay calm and speak to someone.
- You can report and block people who bully you online [Bullying on social media | Childline](#)
- Report the bullying on SHSG WHISPER [SHSG Safeguarding: Never Acceptable - Southend High School for Girls](#) or by emailing [neveracceptable@shsg.org](mailto:neveracceptable@shsg.org)
- If you don't know who to talk to, you can get support and advice from support services such as Childline or the NSPCC [NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC](#)
- Keep evidence/a diary of what is happening. If you are experiencing cyberbullying behaviours keep screenshots and share these with your trusted adult
- Remember things can change. And there are ways you can build your confidence [Building confidence and self-esteem | Childline](#)

## Policy Aim

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that Southend High School for Girls remains a supportive, caring and safe environment for all, free from bullying. Our aim is for all pupils to be safe, happy and successful.

## Bullying Behaviour

At Southend High School for Girls we believe that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. Bullying behaviour is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated because:

- it is harmful to the person who is bullied, and to those who engage in bullying behaviour
- it interferes with a pupil's right to enjoy their learning and time in school
- it is contrary to all our aims, values and culture

## Definition of Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying. The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as: **“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”**

Bullying may be:

- physical: hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing/shoving people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions
- verbal: name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting or demanding money
- exclusionary behaviour: intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group
- indirect unkindness: Spreading rumours or writing unkind notes, phone texts or e-mails
- cyber bullying: using the internet, mobile telephones, social networking sites or any other form of electronic communication to deliberately upset someone

Bullying may also be:

- sexual - talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way
- sexist - related to a person's gender or gender identity or reassignment
- racist, or regarding someone's religion or culture
- related to a person's sexual orientation (homophobic), or perceived sexual orientation
- related to pregnancy or maternity
- related to a person's home circumstances
- related to a person's disability, special educational needs, learning difficulties, health, appearance
- related to damaging someone else's property or belongings deliberately
- related to coercing someone to do something they do not want to do (including blackmail)

## Prevention, Anti-Bullying Culture and Expectations

A student or a member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying should report it. All complaints of bullying behaviour will always be taken seriously and no one should tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

Southend High School for Girls has a '**Never Acceptable**' campaign which pledges that the school is committed to tackling behaviours such as verbal or physical abuse, discriminatory incidents, harassment or violence. Our aim is for these issues to be reported so that they can be dealt with swiftly and those affected supported. We make it as easy as possible to report bullying. The school has an online reporting system – [neveracceptable@shsg.org](mailto:neveracceptable@shsg.org), and the WHISPER anonymous reporting tool on the website also allows pupils to report bullying. This is widely promoted throughout the school and in assemblies.

### Education and Prevention

Measures are taken throughout each year to educate students about bullying and school policy. These measures include:

- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)
- Anti-bullying information and advice written by our Anti Bullying Ambassadors
- Anti-bullying posters/messages placed around the school
- Anti-bullying messages are given in assemblies
- Specific, annual Anti-bullying activities led by the Anti-Bullying ambassadors during Anti Bullying week
- Communications with parents/carers
- Safe spaces where pupils can seek out the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- High profile celebration of diversity and difference during anti-bullying week in November. This often involves student led activities
- Anti-bullying notice board with information regarding what to do if you are being bullied and celebrating difference and diversity

Through our pastoral care systems, students are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. They are encouraged:

- to celebrate the effort and achievements of others
- to hold and promote positive attitudes
- to feel able to share problems with staff
- to turn to someone they trust if they have a problem
- not to feel guilty about airing complaints
- not to be a 'Bullying Bystander' and facilitate bullying by inaction

### Safeguarding and Child Protection

When there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, school staff should report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### Hate crimes and Discriminatory incidents

A hate incident is any incident, which may or may not be a crime, which the victim or any other person perceives to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards any aspect of a person's identity. For example, the incident may be perceived by the victim to be one of the following:

- racist
- homophobic
- transphobic (discrimination against transsexual or transgender people)

Or because of a person's:

- religion
- beliefs
- gender identity
- disability
- Perceived socio-economic status

Bullying behaviour may also be regarded as threatening behaviour or harassment which can be either a criminal offence or a civil wrong. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence, for example it is an offence to send an electronic communication (such as a text message or e-mail) to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.

#### Child on Child Abuse and Incidents of Sexual Violence and Harassment between Pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”. We also recognise the gendered nature of child on child abuse. All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Most cases of students hurting other students will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but the child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put students in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including nudes and semi nudes)

If a student makes an allegation of abuse against another student:

- You must record the allegation on CPOMS and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services EWMHS, if appropriate

KCSIE 2021 Part 5 and the separate guidance 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' sets out in greater detail how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment. We will follow the steps in this guidance when responding to incidents. We will minimise the risk of child on child abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female students, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring students know they can talk to staff confidentially
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a student harming another child could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

The school sanctions regarding harmful sexual behaviour are outlined in the consequences ladder under section 5. Section 5 behaviours are classified as ‘Gross Misconduct/Illegal Activity’. Harmful sexual behaviours result in a parent meeting with the Headteacher and Year group SLT Link. The student will receive an external exclusion. Some harmful sexual behaviour offences may lead to permanent exclusion.

### Engaging with Parents and Carers

We believe it is important for our school to work with parents/carers to help them to understand our approach with regards to bullying and to engage promptly with them when an issue of bullying comes to light, whether their child is the student being bullied or the one doing the bullying. The school will:

- make sure that key information (including policies and named points of contact) about bullying is available to parents/carers.
- ensure that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
- ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.

### Procedure for dealing with reports of bullying

The Head of Year or Pastoral Support Officer will usually lead on any report of bullying. The Head of Year of the alleged victim will agree on who will take the lead.

## **PROCEDURES FOR PASTORAL STAFF**

### **Bullying is Reported**

#### **STEP ONE – CHECK PUPIL WELFARE**

Speak to the victim and ascertain how they are feeling. Reassure them that they have done the right thing by reporting the bullying. If any physical contact has been made ensure that the pupil is seen by a First Aider for a medical check-up. Call parents and inform them that the pupil has reported bullying/been involved in a physical incident and that the school is investigating/collecting information as to the circumstances.

#### **STEP TWO – INVESTIGATE AND GATHER INFORMATION**

Speak to the victim and ascertain:

- the nature of the incident(s) - physical? verbal? exclusionary? cyberbullying?
- is it a "one-off" incident involving an individual or a group?
- is it part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?
- has physical injury been caused?
- Is it a discriminatory/racist incident?
- Should this be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead?

Ask the victim to provide a written statement on the SHSG statement form. This must include specifics; dates, times, location, names of all involved, names of all who may have witnessed the incident. Organise for all witnesses to the incident to provide written statements. Ensure these are recorded separately. If appropriate, speak with the member of staff who was on duty/in charge when the incident happened.

Repeat statement gathering step two with the alleged bully/bullies/pupils identified within the incident.

#### **STEP THREE – ANALYSE INFORMATION AND AGREE NEXT STEPS**

Group the collected information into:

- Corroborated facts about the incident(s) taken from student and staff statements
- Other facts relevant to the incident (including online evidence eg screenshots)
- Information not known at this point but that would be useful to fully understand the incident(s) (if you feel that it is necessary then repeat the information gathering stage again in order to gather this information)
- If necessary, meet with the SLT link for the victim's year group and discuss the facts of the incident(s). Agree the appropriate next steps.

#### **STEP FOUR – SCHOOL ACTIONS**

The school will decide whether bullying has taken place. When a bullying report is upheld the range of responses by the school will include one or more of the following:

- advice and support for the victim
- advice and support to the bully in trying to change their behaviour.
- consideration of the motivation behind the bullying behaviour and whether external services should be used to tackle any underlying issues of the bully
- a supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict
- a disciplinary sanction against the bully, in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- In a serious case or a case of persistent bullying, a student may be excluded
- notifying the parents of one or both students about the case and the action which has been taken (without discussing/giving details of sanctions to the other parent)
- support from external services where appropriate
- such other action as may appear to the Headteacher to be appropriate
- noting the outcome in the Bullying Incident Log
- Logging any sanctions on SIMS and isolation log where appropriate

## **LOG ALL ACTIONS AND UPLOAD STATEMENTS ON CPOMS**

### **THE PASTORAL SUPPORT OFFICER LOGS THE INCIDENT IN THE BULLYING LOG**

#### **Sanctions for Bullying**

All sanctions for bullying will be in line with the School's Behaviour and Rewards Policy (see Behaviour Ladder)

#### **Record Keeping and Monitoring**

The pastoral team maintains records of the welfare and development of individual students via CPOMS. Every report of bullying must be investigated and entered in the Bullying Log held by the designated member of the Senior Leadership Team. The designated member of the Senior Leadership Team monitors all incidents logged to enable patterns to be identified, both in relation to individual students and across the school as a whole and to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's approach.

#### **Staff training**

Three members of the Pastoral Team are trained Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (the Diana Award Programme). Appropriate training is arranged to ensure that Pastoral Leaders, Pastoral Support Officers and other staff have the necessary professional skills, especially awareness of the risk and indications of child abuse and bullying, and how to deal with cases including basic counselling skills.

#### **Support**

Victims of bullying will be monitored closely by the HOY after an incident has been dealt with and offered support or counselling if required. The student's form tutor will monitor matters and teachers will be alerted so they can be vigilant. It is vital that the student tells someone if the bullying continues. The bully/bullies will also be monitored closely by the HOY and PSO to ensure that repeated incidents do not occur. Training and support for school staff in dealing with bullying will be offered as necessary to ensure that all staff feel confident in challenging and addressing bullying in school.

## References and Further information

- Equality Act
- [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010)
- Children's Act 1989
- [Children Act 1989 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41)
- DfE Guidance Preventing and Tackling Bullying updated July 2017
- [Preventing bullying - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/preventing-bullying)
- Article 12 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child -1989
- [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNICEF UK](https://www.unicef.org/uk/childrens-rights-convention)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022
- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/keeping-children-safe-in-education)
- Education Act 2011
- [Education Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/28)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- [Protection from Harassment Act 1997 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/42)
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- [Malicious Communications Act 1988 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/41)
- Childline
- [Childline | Childline](https://www.childline.gov.uk)
- [Bullying and cyberbullying | Childline](https://www.childline.gov.uk/parents/childline)
- Diana Award
- [Anti-Bullying - From The Diana Award - The Diana Award \(diana-award.org.uk\)](https://www.diana-award.org.uk)
- Anti Bullying Alliance
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](https://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk)
- NSPCC
- [NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## Links to other Policies

- Behaviour and Rewards Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy