



Anti-Bullying Policy

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Statement of Intent

Shenstone Lodge School believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behavioural Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

Signed by:

Executive Headteacher

Date: _____

Chair of Governors

Date: _____

Supporting Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

Education and Inspections Act 2006
Equality Act 2010
Children Act 1989
Protection from Harassment Act 1997
Malicious Communications Act 1988
Public Order Act 1986
Communications Act 2003
Human Rights Act 1998
Crime and Disorder Act 1998
Education Act 2011
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including, but not limited to:

DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)
DfE 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' (2018)
DfE 'Mental Health and wellbeing in schools' (2018)

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:

Child Protection Policy
Behavioural Policy
Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy
E-Safety Policy

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is **not** when two people have a disagreement or fall out over something. Anyone has the potential to be a target or perpetrator of bullying.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.

Types of bullying

Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

Verbally
Physically
Emotionally
Online (Cyber)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Cyber bullying: Includes the sending or posting of harmful or upsetting text, images or other messages, using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology for the purpose of bullying.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, eg SEND or Mental Health

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying

Statutory implications

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The Executive Head teacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the Executive Head teacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

Prevention

The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole school.

All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.

Staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum.

Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.

Potential victims of bullying are placed in working groups with other pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.

All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

A safe place, supervised by a teacher, is available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone.

The teacher supervising the area will speak to pupils to find out the cause of any problems and, ultimately, stop any form of bullying taking place.

Teachers will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

Signs of bullying

Some of the signs that a pupil may be a victim of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Being frightened to travel to or from school
2. Asking to be driven to school
3. Unwillingness to attend school
4. Truancy
5. Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
6. Saying that they feel ill in the morning
7. Decreased involvement in school work
8. Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
9. Missing possessions
10. Missing dinner money
11. Asking for extra money or stealing
12. Cuts or bruises
13. Lack of appetite

14. Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
15. Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
16. Lack of eye contact
17. Becoming short tempered
18. Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs are identified, their needs addressed, and appropriate action taken.

In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the pupil becoming aggravated

They have been the victim of domestic abuse

Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the Well-being Team who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

Our Aims

Aims
To ensure that young people feel safe secure and happy in a caring environment
To encourage the school community to challenge bullying behaviour and to advocate openness.

Staff Principles:

- Foster in our pupil's self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- Demonstrate by example, the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher or other staff member about bullying when it happens.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying, such as pupil absence.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Head of School, Head of Care or DSL.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

- Staff always respect pupils' privacy and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to or there is a safeguarding concern.
- Follow up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

Preventing peer-on-peer sexual abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline.

Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence.

The school's outlines our stance on addressing peer-on-peer sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.

The school's **Child Protection Policy** outlines our stance on addressing peer-on-peer sexual abuse and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.

Cyber bullying

The school has an **Online Safety Policy** in place, which outlines the school's zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying.

The school views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the Head teacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to their class teacher, classroom assistant or Head of School and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken.
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved.
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth. And point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- Annual parental questionnaires to ascertain how safe their children feel in school.

Everyone should:

- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying.

Preventing Bullying

The school makes strenuous efforts to prevent bullying behaviour.

High levels of staff support and almost constant supervision of pupils is a key prevention strategy.

In addition, we address issues of bullying in the academic and pastoral curriculum by raising pupil awareness of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, knowing who and how to tell and developing pupil confidence and social skills. These messages are delivered through specific lessons, assemblies and keyworker sessions for residents. Pupils are given opportunities to openly discuss differences between individuals that could motivate bullying, such as religion, gender, sexuality and disability.

The school also uses internal and external providers to deliver awareness raising programmes.

Survey/questionnaires distributed to pupils, parents and whole school staff help the school to monitor the general feelings of student and whether or not they feel safe. Feeling safe is on the school council agenda.

Pupils have access to staff and to external agencies such as child line, and for residents the independent visitor if they wish to discuss bullying incidents or concerns.

Sanctions

If the Head of School is satisfied that bullying did take place, the pupil will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.

The Head of School and Well being team informs the pupil of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (detentions, service-based activities, etc.) and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

If possible, the Head of School and Wellbeing Team will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.

Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

Procedures

Staff are aware of anti-bullying policy and act accordingly.

Staff are aware of bullying behaviours and should respond to pupils engaged in such.

Bullying incidents will be recorded on a central log (behaviour watch), monitored by the senior leadership team and reported to governors.

Dependent upon the precise nature of the bullying incident, a range of actions may be taken which could include loss of free time, detention or internal separation from group, parents informed, parent meeting requested and for persistent bullying fixed term exclusion may be appropriate. Where bullying is particularly serious, persistent or that gives rise to a criminal offence, this is reported to the police and children's services.

School aims to support both the victim and perpetrator by offering opportunities for discussion, reflection and modelling. Consideration will be given to how we address specific issues with those pupils who may have neurodevelopmental or diagnosed conditions (such as autism).

If a parent/carer feels as though an incident of bullying has been dealt with unsatisfactorily they can take the issue to a member of the school Senior Management Team and/or the Head of School. If concern remains then a letter outlining the issues can be sent to the Executive Head Teacher and then the Governing Body (via the school), for appropriate attention.

Follow Up support

Pupils who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to
- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with staff
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

Pupils who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand and change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents

Bullying Outside of School

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff.

The Head of School has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Head of School the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

The Head of School is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police or the anti-social behaviour co-ordinator of the action taken against a pupil.

If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.