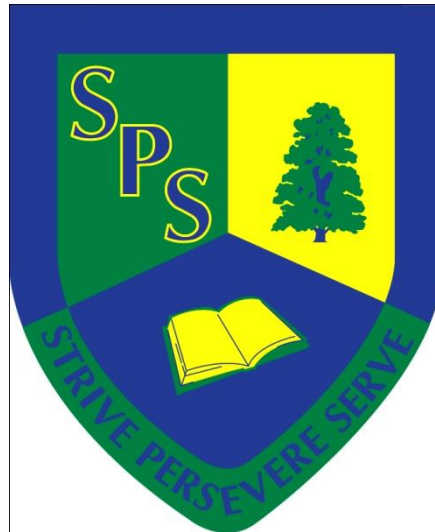


Sandfield Park School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed Sept 2021

This policy is to be applied across all the school sites and is to be openly shared with pupils where appropriate. A pupil friendly version will be available.

This policy has been written following consultation with pupils and staff.

The incredible diverse needs of all pupils at Sandfield Park School, including Sandfield Special School, The Alder Centre for Education and The Hospital School means that the implementation of this policy must take account of the individual needs of all pupils. Many of our pupils have special educational needs and may present additional disabilities, e.g. Profound and multiple learning difficulties, sensory, physical, medical and communication needs, A.S.D, challenging behaviour, or any combination of these. Many of our pupils may also have severe anxiety and mental health issues.

Our approach to anti-bullying therefore needs to take into consideration on the one hand, the impact of inappropriate behaviours on our physically and emotionally vulnerable pupils, while on the other, the influence of specific types of special needs on the behaviour of some children. While the school recognises this dilemma it is also dedicated to supporting youngsters who unintentionally may make pupils feel threatened, unsafe or afraid. The school will act promptly and firmly to combat bullying and aspects of behaviours that may impact upon the emotional and wellbeing of all, whenever and wherever it occurs.

1. Definition

Bullying is anything that makes people feel uneasy, scared, left out or forced to do something they don't want to do. Bullying is done on purpose and usually continues for some time on a regular basis. People who use their position of power unfairly are considered to be bullies. There may be some incidents that do not come under the definition of bullying because they may not continue over a regular period of time but these still need to be reported and dealt with, and so some procedures from this policy would still apply.

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. 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.

What is bullying?

Bullying is hurtful and harmful behaviour that is usually repeated regularly over a period of time. It is done on purpose and can cause serious harm and stress. Bullying can happen to children and adults.

2. Objectives of this Policy (why we have this policy, who is it for)

Everyone in school has equal rights **not** to be bullied. Everyone has the right to feel safe all the time and not to be bullied.

Pupils and adults have the right to:

- Be respected
- Feel safe
- Speak out and ask for help
- Be listened to and taken seriously

- Keep personal information private (unless it is a safeguarding issue – see later in this policy)
- Tell someone about something they have witnessed
- Ask for help if they have been bullying someone else
- Complain to the school

Signs and Symptoms

A child 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 child is reporting:

Physical Bullying

Physical bullying is hurting someone, for example, hitting, punching, kicking, tripping someone up, spitting or pulling hair. Anything that hurts you by touching you is physical bullying.

Verbal Bullying

Verbal bullying is calling someone nasty names or name calling and could be threatening you after school. This may be during bus travel to and from school. If we think this is happening we must liaise with bus drivers and escorts. This could also include silent or abusive phone calls and spreading rumours or lies about someone else, or trying to convince others not to be friends with somebody.

Indirect bullying

Indirect bullying is using technology to upset someone using the internet or mobile phones.

This includes:

- Internet abuse - Using social networking sites to show pictures, embarrass others, set up groups and encourage others to take part in the bullying online. This is **VERY DANGEROUS** as personal information could get into the wrong hands.
- Social Media - Bullies can come into homes and abuse people on social media. Please be aware of the types of apps young people use at the moment where bullying could occur for example, house party, zoom, whats app, tik tok.
- Setting up fake profiles and using those to falsely represent somebody.
- Chat rooms, using chat rooms to spread gossip and hurt feelings.
- Abusive text messages, sending nasty text messages and the person receiving them not knowing who they are from.
- Using a phone or a video camera and film someone being attacked unknowingly. This is assault and any such incident should be reported to the police.
- Intentionally leaving someone out and grouping with others to make someone feel isolated.

Signs of Bullying – The person:

- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Doesn't want to be near a certain person/people

- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phones
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received such as a text, email or on social media.
- Self-harms
- Shows lack of self-esteem e.g. talking negatively about themselves

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. It could be that a person is vulnerable and is prone to manipulation. There could be other associated issues including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Criminal Exploitation (CE) / County Lines. In these instances we need to be vigilant in the same way we detect any bullying. Some signs of young people being exploited are them suddenly having expensive items/money.

Bullying can happen to young people and to an employee in a workplace. Therefore this list applies to everybody. There is also a Whistle Blowing Policy in school for staff.

How does bullying make you feel?

Bullying can hurt us in different ways. If someone does something that makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or unhappy you should **tell an adult** in school.

Outcomes (what happens next)?

You will be listened to. What you say will be kept private (Between you and relevant staff/adults that need to know in this situation) however as in line with the School's safeguarding procedures we can't promise that we won't tell anyone else if the pupil is in danger of harm.

What you say will be taken seriously. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will deal with the problem and other staff members will be there to support you.

You will be given support to help you feel happy, safe and comfortable in school.

What will happen to the bully?

The bully may be offered help with specialist support from outside agencies, including the police.

1) The bully/bullies may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place such as:

- Headteacher or Governors informed
- Parents informed
- Being kept in at break
- Serious incidents recorded in CPOMS

- Put on report
- Exclusion

2) After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use different methods as part of the curriculum and all through the school for helping to change attitudes and prevent bullying. School staff must be proactive in gathering information about issues between pupils which could help develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. The School will have anti-bullying days and internet safety days as well as these being instilled in the curriculum through PSHE and Computing.

This may involve talking to pupils about issues of difference through dedicated events or projects or through assemblies. Staff themselves determine the best way to work pupils through particular issues that need to be addressed.

These include:

- Learning about bullying, having discussions about bullying and why it matters in PSHE lessons in all classes.
- Discussing bullying in lessons such as Citizenship, ASDAN and Independence.
- Individual work on social stories and behaviour strategies.
- Using AAC communication techniques to support complex emotional situations and language work.
- Learning about rights and responsibilities and friendship groups and how to develop and maintain appropriate relationships.

In all work with children and young people, staff are to emphasise the importance of developing social skills, including respect for the feelings of others. Where children have difficulties interacting appropriately with their peers or with adults, then staff aim to help them develop an awareness of why particular behaviours are valued socially and what is appropriate.

Sandfield Park School Curriculum builds on this through activities, which include PSHE, R.E, Circle Time, PE, Snack Time, Language and Communication sessions, and group work to develop an ethos of co-operation and respect for everyone.

The behaviour of adults towards each other and towards the children is a highly effective tool for preventing and decreasing bullying behaviours in children, (this includes children with autistic spectrum disorders).

The strategies being employed to overcome a child's potential or actual bullying behaviour must be recorded. Information will be shared with the child's parents or carers.

Strategies need to be carried out over a specific time span and their effectiveness reviewed. It is important that strategies are shared with parents and carers of the children involved so that there is a consistency of approach at school and at home.

To make our school a happy place for everyone:

- We treat each other with respect.
- We tell an adult if we see or hear bullying.
- Not to say words that might hurt others, or call anyone names.

- We do not say hurtful words, gossip or send nasty pictures when using mobile phones or the internet.
- We do not hurt anyone.
- We tell the truth at all times.
- We accept each other's differences.

This policy must be read in conjunction with: Behaviour Policy / Physical Intervention Policy / Whistleblowing Policy / Allegations of Abuse by Staff.

Legal Requirement

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 89) outlines the statutory obligations on schools with regard to clear responsibilities to respond to bullying. It provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying.

Equality Act 2010

Schools are required to comply with the new Equality Duty. The duty is aimed at eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to foster good relationships between different people and advance equality of opportunity for those of different age, disability, gender, pregnancy, maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Criminal Law

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communication could be a criminal offence under the protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the Police.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff it should be investigated and acted on. This includes social media / online bullying. The Headteacher should consider whether it is appropriate to contact parents, notify police or the Local Authority.

Bullying in School

This will result in disciplinary measures appropriate to the special educational needs or disability of the pupil and will take into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Involvement of Others

Parents need to know that bullying will not be tolerated at the school. Parents' complaints about incidents will be dealt with by the Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher. Where appropriate, pupils will be made aware of how they can draw their concerns about bullying to the attention of staff in the confidence that these will be carefully investigated and, if substantiated, taken seriously and acted upon. This could be done with the use of the school's concern / worry boxes or other ways of collecting information from pupils, depending on their needs.

All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities for ensuring the safety of more vulnerable pupils who, because of the impact of their special needs are unable to communicate any issues

that arise. We work closely with the School Council to hear their views and opinions. (see Article 12, United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child). Communication between staff is crucial so that issues are known and can be dealt with. In the Hospital School, this will include information being shared by hospital staff / unit teams.