

# Anti-Bullying Policy

The Sittingbourne School



<b>Approved by:</b>	Lynn Lawrence	<b>Date:</b> Sept 2023
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### 1. Introduction

It is recognised that bullying is a long-standing and persistent problem which occurs in schools and in adult employment. However, bullying will not be tolerated, in any form, at Swale Academies Trust.

Each school within the Trust is committed to the belief that bullying is unacceptable and will take appropriate measures to counteract such anti-social behaviour. Any form of bullying will hinder the process of learning and is against the ethos of the Trust.

#### **At The Sittingbourne School, we :**

- Discuss, monitor and review the anti-bullying policy on a regular basis.
- Ensure that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively, that pupils feel safe to learn, and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy. Bullying incidents at The Sittingbourne School are reported by both staff and students digitally, using the Reporting Unkindness link on the RM Unify Launch Pad.
- Report back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deal promptly with complaints. Parents/ carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy. In collaboration with the school communities, we have a designated anti-discrimination group who deal with incidents of prejudice by holding restorative conversations with offending students. This can also be reported electronically by staff members and students, using the Reporting Discriminatory Language link on the RM Unify Launch Pad.

#### **Definition of Bullying:**

Bullying is "behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally."

Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, inappropriate text messaging and electronic messaging (including through websites, social networking sites and instant messenger), sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.



It is important that bullying must not be confused with the usual childhood/teenage arguments where individuals 'fall out' with one another.

## 2. Forms of Bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to special educational needs.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic)
- Bullying related to gender, including transphobic bullying.
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual bullying.
- Cyberbullying, involving harassment linked to electronic means.

## 3. Preventing, Identifying and Responding to Bullying

We will:

- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
- Consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the Character Education curriculum, through displays, through the anti-discrimination team, assemblies and Personal Development Time.
- Link each year with the Government anti-bullying week devoted to exploring the issues surrounding bullying.
- Ensure that staff on duty during unstructured times (before school, at break and lunch, and after-school) will actively patrol the school, encouraging positive and inclusive behaviour from all pupils.
- Ensure the school's response to bullying is tactful and protective towards the alleged victim. In the initial stage of response the suspected bully will be given the opportunity to adjust his or her behaviour, but subsequent action will not deflect from using the school's system of sanction to punish identified bullies.
- Encourage pupils to confide with a member of staff they trust.
- In conjunction with The Sittingbourne School's Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, pastoral staff can target specific interventions that aim to support the emotional welfare for the victims of bullying. Students who have been identified to be persistent perpetrators of unpleasantness or harassment will have the opportunity to benefit from strategies within the Mental Health Programme in an attempt to reduce the prevalence of further bullying incidents.
- The Sittingbourne School has the jurisdiction to sanction offsite bullying matters when brought to the attention of the pastoral teams. Students involved in cyberbullying can expect for their social media accounts to be screened, mobile phones searched for content and confiscated if found to contain bullying related materials. For ongoing harassment or severe incidents, encouragement/support will be issued to parents/guardians with respect to filing a complaint to the police.

**We believe that the systems at The Sittingbourne School are effective, however they rely on the school being informed of situations and instances of unkindness or bullying. Students**



**are encouraged to report incidents to staff (in person or via the school website) so that immediate action can take place.**

#### **4. Involvement of Students**

We will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying through student surveys and student voice sessions.
- Ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools.
- Offer support to students who have been bullied. This will often be achieved through our peer mentoring initiative.
- Use student leadership strategies to support our work in educating pupils about how to report issues in school.
- Work with students who have been perpetrators of bullying in order to address the problems they have.

#### **5. Liaison with Parents and Carers**

We will:

- Ensure that parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Keep parents/carers informed about the investigation into their concern.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and points of contact) are easily accessible on the school website
- Work with parents / carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for students, both online and in person.

#### **6. Monitoring and Review, Policy into Practice**

We will:

- Monitor, evaluate and review our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis, using feedback from staff, pupils and parents.

#### **7. Responsibilities**

This policy only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.

- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- Governors, the Headteacher, senior managers, teaching and non-teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community.



The named contact for this policy within each school is the designated Headteacher.

## **8. DCSF Guidance**

The school uses the guidance by the DCSF\* to inform its action planning to prevent and tackle bullying.

*DCSF Guidance "Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools"*  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/safetolearn/>

## **9. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.

## **10. Useful link to support**

- Anti-bullying alliance ([www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk))
- Childline ([www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk))
- UK Safer Internet Centre ([www.saferinternet.org.uk/](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/))
- Educate against Hate ([www.educateagainsthate.com/](http://www.educateagainsthate.com/))
- End Violence Against Women ([www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/))
- NSPCC ([www.nspcc.org.uk/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/))