Anti-Bullying Policy

Last Ratified by Governors: 24 April 2023
Review Cycle: Two Years

This Review Date: March 2024
Reviewer: Mrs L Humphries
Approved by Governors: 18 March 2024

Signed:..

Next Review Date: March 2026

Bullying can be defined as *"behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally"*. (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

This policy is based on the DfE guidance, 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017). It also considers the recommendations in the OFSTED Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (June 2021) and DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023'. This policy also considers the way in which the school can ensure that the aims of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are fulfilled in ensuring the rights of those protected characteristics are upheld.

In relation to cyberbullying, the policy takes note of the DfE guidance: 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff (2014)' and 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying (2014)'

Our policy is underpinned by The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992).

School ethos

SPGS recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing in the long term.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying SPGS can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to develop, learn and fulfil their potential.

1) Policy objectives:

- SPGS does not tolerate any form of bullying. This policy outlines what SPGS will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- The policy will be developed with the involvement of the whole school community.
- SPGS is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.
- Parents should be entitled to feel confident that when they send their children to school, they are protected from bullying.

2) Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Behaviour policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- IT, Digital Devices and Acceptable use policy

3) Links to legislation

There are several pieces of legislation that set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

Statutory Duty of Schools

Headteachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils. Under the Education Inspections Bill 2006 the duties are extended to include preventing/responding to bullying that happens outside the school, where it is reasonable to do so. Schools have a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils' (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004). Government guidance advises that the policy should also address the bullying of staff by pupils ('Safe to learn' DCSF 2007).

4) Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to be vigilant in observing the social relationships of pupils, and to investigate changes in the behaviour patterns of individuals, which give cause for concern, victim or bully.

It is the responsibility of all staff to report all incidents of bullying or changes in behaviour of individuals or groups of pupils, which give cause for concern. This is especially important at break and lunchtimes.

Heavily populated areas of the school have been identified, carefully monitored and appropriately supervised.

5) Definition of bullying and types of bullying

- Bullying can be defined as "*behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally*".
  (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)
- Bullying can include name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; intimidating behaviour; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours online or offline.

- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyber bullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of **child-on-child abuse**. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse long-term effects on children's and adults emotional development.

6) Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including repeated instances of:

- Physical - pushing, kicking, tripping up, spitting, punching or any use of violence
- Emotional - humiliating someone, being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing comments about appearance/physique
- Online or cyberbullying – all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Misuse of associated technology such as camera and video facilities. Threats by text messages and calls.
- Related to sexual orientation – because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality (this is discrimination of a protected characteristic).
- Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) - because of or focusing on a disability or special educational need (this is discrimination of a protected characteristic).
- Home circumstance – targeting individuals who are looked after children or because of a particular home circumstance.
- Race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures (this is discrimination of a protected characteristic).
- Gender based - including transphobic bullying/gender reassignment (this is discrimination of a protected characteristic).
- Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act).

Although all of the actions above are serious and adults should always intervene, they may not always be regarded as bullying unless they are part of an on-going pattern of behaviour against the victim. Pupils may have disagreements with other pupils, there may be u kindness in some form, friendship groups might breakdown and pupils will feel upset and hurt. However, we would not consider this to be bullying. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must include:

An imbalance of power: Pupils who bully use their power for example; physical strength; access to personal information; or popularity – to control or harm others; its is one sided as opposed to repeated unkindness by both parties.
Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

Repetition: Bullying behaviours that happen more than once or have the potential
to happen more than once.

7) Education and Training

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.

- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, etc.

- Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.

- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.

- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

8) Involvement of pupils

We will:

- Involve pupils in decision making via pupil voice, student council and student leadership groups, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.

- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.

- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.

- Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil led education and support

- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.

- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

9) Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.

- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website.

- Ensure all parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying.

- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

10) Implementation

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or by the member of SLT on duty that day.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the appropriate HoY, Assistant Head and/or Deputy Headteacher.
- A member of the Pastoral Manager team will interview all concerned and will record the incident.
- Form tutors will be kept informed and if it persists the Pastoral Managers will advise the appropriate subject teachers.
- Parents will be kept informed.
- Consequences in line with the school's behaviour policy will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.
- Support will be provided to both victim and perpetrator.

11) Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- SLT will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The lead for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.