



# SARUM HALL SCHOOL

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## ANTI BULLYING POLICY

**Date:** September 2024  
**Next Review Due:** September 2025  
**Reviewed by:** Karen Coles

## AIM

The aim of the policy is to prevent bullying and to ensure that all members of the school community: children, staff, teaching, non-teaching and volunteers are able to work and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We have an anti-bullying strategy in order to prevent bullying from happening.

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

A bullying incident is treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

We have used the Department for Education's definition in their guidance; "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017.

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

This means that to be described as bullying, behaviour has to be:

- deliberately hurtful;
- is repeated often over a period of time;
- it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can be:

- direct physical bullying (pushing, hitting, punching, kicking);
- direct verbal bullying (yelling abuse at another, name-calling, insulting someone, using verbal threats, offensive mimicry of accent and/or pretending not to understand what is said, using discriminatory language);
- indirect bullying, also known as social bullying or relational bullying (spreading rumours, social exclusion, disclosing another's secrets to a third party, graffiti);
- online (cyberbullying) – the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages, videos and/or photos of an intimidating, derogatory or threatening nature (threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking', sexting, defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling').

People can be bullied because they are different or are perceived to be different and it is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups or because of characteristics or features about which the person under attack can do nothing.

Bullying can relate to:

- race, religion, culture or belief (or no belief);
- special educational needs and disabilities;

- young carers;
- looked after children;
- background;
- gender;
- appearance and size;
- ability and attainment;
- sexist or sexual bullying (bullying based on a person's sexuality);
- homophobic bullying (a dislike or fear of someone who is or is perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual);
- transphobic bullying (a dislike or fear of someone who is or is perceived to have changed their gender from male to female or female to male or someone who is difficult to categorise as female or male).

## **THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BULLYING AND OTHER HURTFUL BEHAVIOUR**

Our definition of bullying does not include conflict and/or friendship problems between children and young people or one-off incidents. These problems will still be taken seriously and dealt with immediately to prevent them developing into bullying behaviour.

Bullying can also happen between adults and children and between adults.

We believe that all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based behaviour and bullying are unacceptable and should be dealt with seriously.

Bullying can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical intimidation, assault on persons and/or their property. It can happen face-to-face or via the use of technology. We recognise that bullying, both physical and emotional can cause psychological damage and even suicide.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

Bullying, whether verbal, physical, online or indirect, is not tolerated. The School has a zero-tolerance threshold for bullying. It is each person's responsibility to try to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves as child-on-child abuse. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up" This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual violence and sexual harassment.

## **SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can be between two children, or a group of children.

Both sexes may be affected, although girls are more likely to be victims of sexual violence, and boys are more likely to be perpetrators of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment includes such things as sexual comments; sexual jokes; physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, or displaying photos of a sexual nature; and online activity including sharing of images or video (sexting) or making inappropriate sexual comments (Note - this list is not exhaustive).

- Harmful sexual behaviours in children are those which are inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent.
- When considering harmful sexual behaviour, the ages and developmental stages of the children involved should be considered.
- Sexual violence refers to rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault.

Sarum Hall School is aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up” or “just having a laugh. The following document will be used as guidance if there is such an incident.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

- Children with SEND are likely to be more vulnerable.

Staff should be clear as to the school policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and that ‘up-skirting’ is a criminal offence.

The victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people may bring bullying to the attention of any member of staff, Headmistress or Governor.

The school community will be particularly vigilant at times of vulnerability, for example; during times of transition, family or medical changes acknowledging legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with special educational needs (SEND).

## **OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY**

- to provide a safe, caring environment for the whole school community, including the EYFS and pupils with SEND;
- to instil in children and adults that bullying is unacceptable and that reports of bullying will be taken seriously, recorded and acted upon;
- to reassure children and adults that they will be listened to and will know that it is all right to tell;
- a full investigation will follow any report of bullying with detailed records kept of incidents, reports and complaints;
- to take appropriate action, including exclusion in cases of severe bullying;

- to keep parents informed of actions taken in response to a complaint;
- to monitor incidents of bullying.

## **PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES IN DEALING WITH BULLYING (INCLUDING CYBER BULLYING)**

In dealing with bullying these fundamental guidelines will be followed:

- ensure that pupils know who to tell;
- never ignore suspected bullying;
- listen carefully to all accounts;
- keep detailed centralised records in CPOMS that evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified;
- do not make premature assumptions;
- adopt a problem-solving approach;
- follow up proven cases to check bullying has not returned;
- extra vigilance at times and in places where bullying is likely to occur;
- share relevant information;
- encourage parents to be pro-active, ensuring their children are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

Strategies have been introduced to reduce bullying. These strategies include: raising awareness for the staff through training so that the principles of the school policy are understood; legal responsibilities are known; action is defined to resolve and prevent problem; and sources of support are available; where appropriate, investing in specialised skills to understand the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.

Staff training includes: managing information and communication technologies; use of mobile phones and cameras by staff in the EYFS and the rest of the school; use of mobile phones by pupils in school; guidance about the taking of official and parental photographs of pupils in school; use of computers and other devices in school and as part of any Remote Learning Programme, including filtering and monitoring of internet usage; pupil use of a computer other than in lessons (i.e. in the library); age-appropriate information about grooming, internet sites containing violent or adult content; sharing personal information/photographs; use of technologies to tease, bully or threaten; shared information; discussion and co-operation between teachers and parents.

The curriculum is used to prevent and reduce bullying through: Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), the 'Golden Values' assemblies, workshops, projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events, and current affairs with discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice-based language.

The School recognizes that bullying online, especially on social media, can be as dangerous and damaging for pupils as bullying in person. A range of strategies are adopted to educate pupils about cyberbullying. All children from Reception to Year 6 are taught about the responsible and positive use of technology through their computing lessons, as well as how to stay safe online.

Sarum Hall School keeps detailed records of all instances of bullying and monitors these as part of our commitment to safeguarding, in order to maintain an oversight of trends.

A complaint of bullying towards an adult should be passed to the Headmistress or to a Governor.

## **SCHOOL NETWORKING SAFEGUARDING TOOLS**

- *Smoothwall* Safeguarding Tool is installed on the school computers which alerts the staff if the Responsible Use policy has been breached by any person using the network, or of potential child protection issues. This protects pupils and other users of the network from cyberbullying, online grooming, explicit images and harmful sites such as those promoting suicide, anorexia and radicalisation, among other threats. The software takes a screen capture anytime certain words or phrases appear on the screen.
- Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Support monitors pupils' use of the network. Access to some social networking sites such as Facebook are not allowed on the school's network.
- We issue some pupils with their own personal school email address. Access is via personal LOGIN, which is password protected. We give guidance on the reasons for always logging off and for keeping all passwords securely. These accounts can be accessed by the Deputy Head (Academic and Innovation) and IT Support.
- The IT Support monitors e-mail traffic and blocks SPAM and certain attachments.

## **GUIDANCE FOR PUPILS**

The school will advise the victim of online bullying to do the following things:

- do not answer abusive messages but log and report them
- do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Form Teacher, Head of e-Learning, parents or the Headmistress (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
- do not give out personal details
- never reply to abusive e-mails
- never reply to someone you do not know

In order to reduce incidents of bullying and recognise bullies, all staff will watch for early signs of distress in pupils by listening, believing and acting.

## THE USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom. They have the power to screen and search pupils if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item.

Staff should apply one or more of the strategies below, depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis should always be one of showing a caring and listening approach.

In response to a complaint of bullying towards a pupil, the discipline procedures of the school should be followed, with staff making a full investigation, keeping detailed records on CPOMS and applying sanctions as necessary.

The Headmistress, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or form teacher should follow these procedures:

1. Discuss the nature of the bullying with the 'victim' at length, recording all the facts. (An incident form will be written and copies put into the files held by the Deputy, of anyone concerned. A record is put into CPOMS)
2. If it is online bullying involving children, the designated Deputy Head (Academic and Innovation) must be informed. If it involves staff members, the Headmistress must be informed.
3. If online bullying has occurred, advise 'victim' to save any offending messages/image or take a screenshot/print off the offending material.
4. Identify the bully/bullies and any witnesses.
5. Discuss the incident(s) with the alleged bully/ies. Confront them with the allegations and ask them to tell the truth about the incident. Make it clear that this is only an investigation at this stage.
6. If the bully owns up, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable at Sarum Hall School and what affect it has on the education of the victim and the rest of the children in both the class and the school. Apply sanctions proportionate to the type of bullying.
7. If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, apply proportionate sanctions.
8. Hold separate discussions with parents of the bully and victim.
9. All staff will be informed and asked to monitor and observe the victim monitoring during break times and lunchtimes and through discussion to make sure there is no repetition.
10. All staff will be asked to monitor and observe the bully/ied during break times and lunchtime and inform the Headmistress of any further incident. Outcomes will be minuted at staff meetings.
11. All pupils will have the opportunity, in the curriculum to discuss relationships, feelings and the effect bullying can have, in particular in PSHE, drama, history, computing and in Anti-Bullying and Internet Safety days/weeks. These issues will also be used as themes during assembly.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING**

Bullying behaviour is often very subtle, so staff need to be vigilant for signs or behaviour that suggest that bullying is taking place. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has charity money or other monies continually “lost”
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- goes home starving (lunch has been stolen)
- 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

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. Disciplinary action will be taken against pupils who have found to have made malicious accusations against staff. Pastoral care will be provided for staff accused of misconduct.

Disciplinary sanctions reflect the seriousness of bullying; this policy is closely linked to the school’s Policy to promote good behaviour and set out sanctions and the PSHEE policy, (with support for the victim and the bully). It is clear what the sanctions are for bullying (strong sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying as the School has a zero tolerance towards bullying).

## **BULLYING OFF THE SCHOOL PREMISES**

Sarum Hall School is not directly responsible for bullying off the school premises.

Where possible we will support anyone who has been bullied, especially on their way to or from school, by pupils from another school or by other persons. We also would become involved, as

necessary, with any Sarum Hall School pupil suffering online bullying, whether this be with other pupils from the School or external parties.

The following steps should be taken:

- talk to the pupil(s) and parents involved;
- talk to the Headmistress if another school is involved;
- talk to the Community Police;
- talk to the local transport company, if bullying is occurring on school coaches;
- talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying situations.

## **VULNERABLE PUPILS AND THOSE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR DISABILITIES**

Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities might not be able to articulate experiences as fluently as other children. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly, and usually about their specific disability.

Staff should ensure that their behaviour does not unintentionally trigger bullying. They must avoid undue attention towards any individual child compared with others, and do not make comments based on pupils' appearance, perceived character or academic ability.

We endeavour to make classroom activities and lessons sensitive to all children's needs. We teach assertiveness and other social skills and teach victims to say 'No' or to get help.

Able and exceptional able pupils can also be affected by bullying. Teachers should treat this as seriously as any other type of bullying.

## **SANCTIONS**

A punishment must be proportionate. In determining whether a punishment is reasonable, section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 says the penalty must be reasonable in all the circumstances and that account must be taken of the pupil's age, any special educational needs or disability they may have, and any religious requirements affecting them.

Sanctions for the bully include:

- a verbal reprimand;
- the setting of written tasks such as an apology;
- loss of privileges;
- missing break time;
- detention including during lunch-time, after school;
- school based community service or imposition of a task to the benefit of others;
- regular reporting including early morning reporting; scheduled behaviour checks; or being placed "on report" for behaviour monitoring;

- in more extreme cases schools may use temporary or permanent exclusion.

## **REPORTING BULLYING, INCLUDING CYBER-BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL**

The threshold for reporting a bullying issue to external agencies (such as police/children's social care) will be decided by the Headmistress or in their absence the Deputy. Records are kept to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted to enable patterns to be identified.

## **USEFUL DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES**

### **What does the law say and what do I have to do?**

Every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying.

### **The Education and Inspections Act 2006**

Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides that maintained schools must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

### **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 provide that the proprietor of an Academy or other independent school is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

### **Safeguarding Children and Young People**

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue schools may need to

draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying. Where necessary records of behaviour are transferred to another school.

### **Criminal Law**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example 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. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

### **Cyber-bullying**

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available – see below for a link to this document.