Anti-Bullying Policy

(Copy to be kept available in reception)

Committee Responsible: School Life Sub-Committee

Reviewed by: **Deputy Head (Designated Safeguarding Lead)**
&
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Adopted by Committee: **September 2010**

This policy has been approved by the Safeguarding Link Governor on behalf of School Committee and awaits final/formal approval at the Autumn meeting

Date of review: **September 2024**

Date of next review: **September 2025**

Referenced Sources:

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 Keeping children safe in education 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Teaching online safety in schools Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Please read this policy alongside the following policies:

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- E-Safety Policy

General Statement

Sibford has a responsibility to provide a secure and happy environment for everyone so they can flourish personally, socially and academically. Pupils who feel safe are more likely to feel confident, strong and empowered.

Bullying is not acceptable in any form and staff and pupils can invest in this by embracing the following two principles. 'We all have the right to feel safe all the time' and 'we can talk with someone about anything, even if it feels awful or small.'

All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

The core Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship permeate the education and atmosphere of Sibford School. This policy outlines how as a school we aim to achieve these testimonies.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and for reading in the School office during the school day. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Content

- Definition of bullying
- Aims and objectives of the policy
- Types of bullying
- Signs of bullying
- Schools commitment to bullying prevention
- EYFS Children
- Sibford School's response to reports of bullying
- Sibford School's Guide to Cyber bullying
- As a parent/carer, what you should do if you think your child is being bullied
- When bullying is a safeguarding matter
- Support services for victims of bullying
- Restorative Practice

Definition of Bullying (Anti Bullying Alliance)

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship can involve an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming, or humiliating of another person. It may take many forms, including physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual (including the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes), verbal (including cyberbullying via text messages, email, social media, gaming, or other instant messages, and can include the use of images and video), and/or emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) whether that be a physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator(s) having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate the victim(s).

Bullying can sometimes amount to child on child abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. Further information about child on child abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident of child on child abuse is reported can be found in the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.

Aims and objectives of the policy

- To continue to nurture an atmosphere where bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- To ensure all students who are being exposed to bullying behaviour from a fellow pupil inside (or outside of school) feel able to share this with someone, in a way that does not leave them feeling more vulnerable.
- To provide options for how to report this behaviour.
- To provide education, encourage empathy and support those pupils who have demonstrated bullying behaviour.
- To provide restorative meetings in order to repair relationships.
- To work within the guidelines of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024

Types of bullying

Verbal : name calling, abusive language, insults, teasing, making threats, coercive and controlling or ignoring and excluding

Physical: hitting, pushing, kicking, pulling hair, biting, spitting.

Prejudice: negative actions regarding race, religion, disability, gender, colour,

Sexual Prejudice: sexual orientation LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex Questioning + including non-binary and pansexual.

Cyber: Repeated and deliberate online behaviour that causes harm, distress, or fear to the victim, using social media posts, text and sharing private information without consent. Discreet and anonymous.

Sexist: related to devaluation or discrimination based on a person's sex, gender or gender reassignment

Sexual: unwanted physical or verbal comments or sexually abusive, sexual harassment, up -skirting,

SEND: related to a disability, learning difficulty, health or appearance

The School recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to peer on peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The School also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

Bystanders (or bystander apathy)

Witnesses of bullying have a responsibility to report it. If you do not report something you have seen, you are encouraging its continuation and, as such, you are also culpable.

Signs of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with, or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money, and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self-confidence;
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported / recorded, as appropriate, in accordance with this policy.

At Sibford we celebrate difference and individuality.

Sibford School's commitment to bullying prevention

Sibford School is committed to ensuring the safety (physical and emotional) of all their pupils, and therefore the school's response to bullying prevention starts before any bullying arises. The pupils' voices are key in ensuring the success of this plan as it is accomplished by staff proactively adopting a culture of listening, staff getting to know pupils, and so understanding and recognising issues that may arise. Consequently, staff are best placed to provide support and guidance through PSHE, the school curriculum, student forums, clubs, and Meetings for Worship (that occur several times a week).

Staff are regularly trained through Pastoral Board, Staff Meetings and Whole School Inset about the importance of the school's value system in relation to bullying prevention.

Staff and students will also be offered the chance to take part in the Anti - Bullying Alliance week November 2024, with the theme Choose Respect.

The School's response to bullying does not start at the point in which a pupil has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the School in the first place:

Pupils

- The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school;
- All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished, will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe;
- We use appropriate Meetings for Worship (assemblies) to explain the School's policy on bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying). Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other. It focuses on the importance of equality and diversity and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language;
- Other lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show all bullying to be unacceptable;

- All of our pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place. They are reassured that they will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe;
- All boarders know how to report anxieties to their House Master/ Mistress or to another member of the pastoral team;
- The School buildings and all of our boarding houses display advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential help lines and websites where they can connect with external specialists
- The School does not tolerate peer-group "initiation ceremonies" or hazing type violence or rituals designed to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation to pupils, and all staff remain alert to such actions.

Staff

- Upon induction, all new members of staff are given training and guidance on the School's anti-bullying policy and on how to react to, and record allegations of bullying at the School, including cyberbullying. The School will ensure that all School staff understand the principles of the School's policy, the School's legal responsibilities, actions to be taken to resolve and prevent incidents of bullying from arising or escalating and also details of sources of further support;
- The School recognises that certain children may be more at risk of bullying than others and may require additional support when dealing with an incident of bullying, for example children with SEND and/or certain health conditions, and LGBTQ+ pupils. The School will ensure that staff receive appropriate training to be able to understand the specific needs of our pupils, and to enable all staff to provide an inclusive environment for all pupils;
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents. Records of any incidents are kept securely in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored;
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team who support the Deputy Head and are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and who are alert to possible signs of bullying and will know when to apply our Safeguarding Policy to bullying incidents;
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies;
- Our trained School Counsellor is an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills of assessment and counselling. The Counsellor is available to give confidential advice and counselling support to pupils who can refer themselves to the Counsellor when they have social, emotional, or behavioural concerns. On occasion, a member of our pastoral team may refer a pupil to the Counsellor as appropriate;
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour at all times.

EYFS Children

Even the School's youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful, and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity.

We explain to our EYFS children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the EYFS setting; but sometimes we may remove a privilege for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Head of the Junior School or the Head of Early Years, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action and introduce a more appropriate action; but such instances are rare. Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed towards their child, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, parents will be invited into the School to discuss the situation with the child's teacher and Head of the Junior School (or Head of Early Years) to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

Sibford School's response to reports of bullying

If bullying does occur, disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, reasonably and in a timely manner so as to ensure that the matter does not persist. All this whilst taking account of the needs of vulnerable students and those with special educational needs or disabilities.

Each incident will be fully investigated by staff who will maintain a unbiased approach. All information gathered will be recorded and added to SIMS and/or CPOMS. The child who reports the bullying will be asked for a written account of the incidents, including being asked to provide online evidence such as messages or social media posts.

The alleged wrongdoer will be also asked for a written statement and any evidence to prove or disprove the claims.

Parents/carers will be informed of the situation and advised of a plan to address it. External services such as police will be involved if necessary.

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly.

Sibford School's Guide to cyber bullying

The way in which pupils relate to one another online can have a significant impact on the culture at school. Negative interactions online can damage the school's culture and can lead to School feeling like an unsafe place. The School makes it clear to pupils that the same standards of behaviour are expected online as apply offline, and that everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity.

Cyberbullying can be defined as "*the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others*" (Belsey, http://www.cyberbullying.org/). It is an aggressive, intentional act often carried out repeatedly over time, and often against a victim who cannot easily defend themself. The School acknowledges that cyberbullying often takes place outside the school day and off the School premises.

At Sibford, pupils are taught about the risks connected to being online and their responsibilities.

Cyberbullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear, or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, sexual, discriminatory, offensive, or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites, social media and social networking sites);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

The School acknowledges that cyberbullying may take many different forms including: cyberstalking, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images, encouraging derogative comments on online platforms, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, upskirting, and sexting.

The School has a role to play in teaching pupils about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform, or app. In taking this forward, the School has regard to the DfE's non-statutory guidance on *Teaching online safety in schools* (January 2023).

Childrens' online presence has increased dramatically since the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to more incidents of cyber bullying. It is a crime to carry out cyber bullying behaviour towards someone in this way.

- Students need to remember that photos and comments posted on social networking sites are public documents. Employers and universities do frequently check these sites. Make sure you use the highest security settings.
- Please remember that when a photo goes online, it stays online forever
- Don't think that because messages get deleted off Snapchat that people can't save your picture and share it
- Save evidence; keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations.
- Always respect others

As a parent/carer, what should you do if you think your child is being bullied

- Listen calmly and reassure your child.
- Ask open questions such as who, what, where, when etc.
- Make a note of what your child says has happened.
- Talk in the first instance to your child's class teacher/tutor or Head of Key Stage as soon as possible.
- Keep a log of all further incidents your child tells you about.
- Be patient and allow the school to investigate and deal with the issue. Bullying can be difficult to detect so staff may not be aware of any incidents.
- Model non-bullying behaviour yourself.
- Parent or carers should not encourage retaliation or confrontation.
- Please do not keep your child away from school as this absence may well be recorded as unauthorised.

If your child feels unable to share with you, encourage them to think about their 'network' and who else they could speak to. This could include other staff at school, school friends, extended family, football coach, Cub Scout Leader etc.

When is bullying a safeguarding matter?

The Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024 recognises bullying as being a form of Child on Child abuse, which includes cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.

In instances of Child on Child abuse, Safeguarding guidelines will be observed.

Support for victims of bullying

Protective behaviours embraces the two principles of 'We all have the right to feel safe all the time' and 'we can talk with someone about anything, even if it feels awful or small.' Protective behaviours is a sure way to prevent bullying as it encourages students to speak out. Bullies like to feel anonymous.

Within school there are plenty of adults that a student can speak to. Firstly, their Tutor who they meet twice daily throughout the week. Secondly is their head of Key Stage, who are teachers but who also provide pastoral support in the form of 1:1 and group support. In the Junior School, the pupil's teacher is the first person to go to, and beyond that the Head of the Junior School.   All staff are trained to deal with these matters and pupils can speak to anyone they feel comfortable to do so.

There is school wellbeing Counsellor, who is available to meet with pupils once a week.

There are online services within school, such as The Box which is there for students who need help in reaching out for support. Students can write down their worries and post them in 'The Box'. These

are available in the Library, by the Wellbeing Room, In the Sixth Form Centre and in the Junior School reception. Alternatively students can email thebox@sibfordschool.co.uk

There is the School's Safeguarding team who can provide information on external services who can provide help outside of school.

- Download the CEOP report button.
- If you feel unable to share, download the Whisper App
- Call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence; check the website to see where to report incidents https://www.childline.org.uk/
- Additional help is available from https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/
- NSPCC 0808 800 5000 https://www.nspcc.org.uk/

BLOCK IT, REPORT IT AND TELL SOMEONE ABOUT IT

Sibford's commitment to Restorative Practice

Sibford is committed to offering students who have been involved in incidents of bullying, the chance to engage in a restorative meeting, which is an approach to working with conflict, that puts the focus on repairing the harm that has been done and offenders taking responsibility for what they have done. Quakers use this approach because it speaks to 'that of God/Good in everyone'; it can be a powerful means of healing for victims, offenders and the community. The concerns of the victim and the community are considered alongside the desire to reintegrate the offender.

Help organisations:

- Child Law Advice - https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/bullying/

- Family Lives - https://www.familylives.org.uk/

- Anti Bullying Alliance - https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

- Samaritans - https://www.samaritans.org/

- Childline   https://childline.org.uk