# Anti-Bullying Policy

SILVER BRIDGE
SCHOOL

| Policy Ref: | SBS10. | |
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# Contents

## 1. Definitions

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviours, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour has the following four features:

1.  It is repetitive and persistent – though sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time, for it can be experienced as part of a continuous pattern and can be extremely threatening and intimidating. This is particularly the case with racist bullying.

2.  It is intentionally harmful – though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all those who are responsible.

3.  It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.

4.  It causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are at the receiving end.

A very useful definition of bullying for young people is quoted in *Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools*, published by the DfE on 21st September 2007: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally".

## 2. Cyber bullying

This can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else'. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity, and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target. Research indicates that cyber bullying is now a feature of many young people's lives. It can also affect members of school staff and other adults.

Cyber bullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images and manipulation.

## 3.  Homophobic bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual (LGBT) people.

Who experiences homophobic bullying?

- Young people who are LGBT.
- Young people who are thought to be LGBT.
- Young people who are different in some way — they may not act like the other boys or girls.
- Young people who have gay friends or family, or their parents/carers are gay.
- Teachers, who may or may not be LGBT.

## 4.  Sexist or sexual bullying

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name calling, comments and overt "looks" about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.
Students identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies.

## 5.  Racist bullying

The school uses the working definitions of *racism* and *racist incident* that were proposed in the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, 1999. The report defined racism as:

"Conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin".

Historically, the term *racism* has been used principally in situations where colour and physical appearance are considered to be significant markers of difference. There has virtually always, however, been a cultural element as well – 'the other' has been recognised not only by their physical appearance but also in relation to their culture, language and religion. This crucial point was reflected in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition quoted above and is reflected also in race relations legislation, since case law has established that Sikhs, Jews and Travellers of Irish heritage are for legal purposes to be treated as distinct racial groups. Other forms of racism where differences of culture and religion are at least as significant as differences in physical appearance include Islamophobia and hostility to refugees and people seeking asylum.

## 6.  Other types of bullying

- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN/D) and disabilities.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or otherwise linked to home circumstances

**Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

To ensure this policy is effective it is essential that:
- The curriculum promotes tolerance of difference and promotes diversity in society in ways in which students can feel safe.

- Staff are vigilant and trained to spot possible signs of bullying and feel confident in the actions they need to take when it is brought to their attention.
- A culture of openness and zero tolerance is encouraged in the school that enables and assists students to confide in staff if they feel threatened or bullied.
- Safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour management are viewed and worked with as aspects of the same aim i.e. enabling everyone at the school to feel welcome, secure, comfortable and free from threat or harm:

**Standards**

It is important that we tackle bullying in two ways:
1. We need to be proactive in developing anti-bullying aspects of the curriculum and in the information we send out to students, parents/carers and partner organisations.
2. We need to ensure that we react promptly, fairly and effectively so that where bullying exists, those who allege bullying and those who witness bullying will feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems to end it. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying, to increase understanding for both victims and bullies and to help build an anti-bullying ethos within the group.

The following standards set out clearly the responsibilities of managers and staff for creating an anti-bullying culture in the school and for responding promptly and effectively to any concerns about bullying that may arise.

**The Headteacher ensures that the school has a culture that promotes anti-bullying by:**

1. Ensuring that all staff know how to listen to students alleging bullying and know what to look for (including forms of bullying such as cyber bullying, homophobic bullying and racist/sexist bullying as well as 'teasing' and threats etc).
2. Ensuring that all staff know what to do if or when a bullying incident is reported and that agreed procedures are adhered to in all cases.
3. Ensuring that, as part of a wider discussion around 'safeguarding' and behaviour management, bullying forms a standing item on teacher's meetings; where incidents are monitored and actions are minuted.
4. Ensuring that, as part of a wider discussion around safeguarding' and behaviour management, bullying forms a standing item for all staff supervision within the school.
5. Ensuring that training about bullying as an aspect of safeguarding and behaviour management is given to all staff annually and that all new staff receive training as part of their induction and within their first term after taking up their post.
6. Ensuring all incidents of bullying and the actions taken are monitored and reviewed on a termly basis and that the review forms part of the Behaviour Management meetings and Senior Leadership Team Meeting.
7. Ensuring that students are informed through the curriculum about bullying and what can be done to prevent it and what they can do if it happens (ideas and material for this are set out in the 'guidance and information informing this policy and standards').
8. Ensuring that parents are kept informed about the school's anti-bullying policies and practices.
9. Creating a school ethos, reviewed and renewed each year, which encourages students to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying including a formal process for gaining the views of students on a termly basis.
10. Ensure that the 5 key principles set out in 'Bullying around racism, religion and culture' *(i.e. acknowledging that racism exists and can lead to bullying, letting students know where the school stands, ensuring students are listened to, ensuring students are involved in solutions, and ensuring the school has a range of strategies for both prevention and intervention)* are in place.

**Teachers and Inclusion Managers ensure:**
1. They are aware of the school's policy and standards for safeguarding and bullying and what they must do if an incident is reported to them.
2. They are aware of the signs of possible bullying (as set out in training).
3. That, in all their dealings with students, they give a clear message about being available to listen to concerns about bullying and to act appropriately if concerns are voiced.

4. That their teaching includes clear messages about the unacceptable nature of bullying.
5. The Inclusion Manager has a particular responsibility to ensure that Looked After Children are kept safe from bullying.

**All staff ensure:**
1. They are aware of the signs of possible bullying (as set out in training).
2. They know what to do if a student alleges bullying.
3. That, in all their dealings with students, they give a clear message about being available to listen to concerns about bullying and to act appropriately if concerns are voiced.
4. They create through curriculum planning and delivery, safe and caring environments that promote the British Values and SMSC inclusion and thereby enable all students to grow in self-awareness, in managing their feelings, motivation, empathy and social skills.

# 7. Anti-bullying strategies

The aims of Silver Bridge School's anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the student.
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the student causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi- agency support.

# 8. Strategic Preventative Procedures

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.
- Use of curriculum opportunities (in particular, PSHE and Citizenship classes can be used to discuss issues around diversity and draw out anti-bullying messages).
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year; and whole-school assemblies).
- Engaging students in the process of developing the school anti-bullying policy and promoting open and honest reporting.
- Improving the school environment, looking in particular at staff supervision patterns; the physical design of the building(s); and joint work with partners such as transport service providers. The DfE recommends that schools target their attention on key times and locations where bullying is more prevalent; and that they work with students to establish when and where those times and locations are.

Disciplinary penalties have three main purposes, namely to
- impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable;
- deter him/her from repeating that behaviour; and
- signal to other students that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

# 9. 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 frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school/public bus/taxi
- begs to be driven to 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 dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/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
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

## 10. Prevention Practices

At Silver Bridge School we use a variety of methods for helping students to prevent bullying through class discussions, key working, or during PSHE and Citizenship lessons. Students are also consulted through in-school student questionnaires and are fully aware of the complaints procedure.

The ethos and working philosophy of our schools means that all staff actively encourage students to have respect for each other and for other people's property.   Good, kind and polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.  Students are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate which may include:

- writing a set of school or class rules
- writing essays, poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that bullies are dealt with
- quickly

## 11. Parental involvement

Silver Bridge School is firmly committed to working in partnership with /carers and believe that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator.

Parents/carers who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Where parents have concerns about with regard to bullying they should contact the Head teacher.

## 12. Incident management

Silver Bridge School will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff.  When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a student may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.  The School will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual

needs and may include:

- immediate action to stop the incident and secure the student's safety
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents
- sympathy and empathy
- counselling
- assertiveness training
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents/cares
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim
- arrangements to review progress

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Silver Bridge School ensures all reported incidents are responded to promptly and effectively by the following procedures:

1. The Headteacher must be informed of all reported incidents of bullying within one working day.
2. The Headteacher must ensure that the student who has reported the bullying is safe.
3. An action plan for responding to the allegation of bullying must be agreed within two working days. Issues to consider include:
    - Is the allegation a matter for the police
    - Need to inform parents/carers
    - Need to inform the County Council
    - Clarifying whether the alleged incident is racist, sexist homophobic or involves a disabled student or use of ICT.
    - The plan needs to be in writing and agreed with the student who has been bullied, and parents/carers.
4. Once agreed, the action plan must be monitored and actions taken to ensure that the likelihood of repetition is minimised.
5. Where incidents have occurred 'off-site' (e.g. in the taxi bring students to school) the above procedure must be followed.
6. Regular follow up to ensure that bullying has not resumed.

# 13. Promoting anti-bullying messages through the curriculum

Silver Bridge School aims to create effective learning environments in which:

- the contribution of all students is valued;
- all students can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately;
- stereotypical views are challenged and students learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability or disability;
- students learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community;
- all forms of bullying and harassment are challenged;
- students are supported to develop their social and emotional skills.

The curriculum includes all the planned learning activities, explicit and implicit, which a school promotes. So, when reviewing the curriculum for anti-bullying work, we will aim to review:

- the school curriculum policy and the responsibilities of all curriculum team leaders in taking account of anti-bullying work and tackling prejudice that may give rise to bullying in their curriculum area;
- the contribution to anti-bullying work in specific curriculum areas such as PSHE, Citizenship and in the British values and SMSC
- how class discussions, class time, and tutorial time are, and can be, used as teaching opportunities for anti-bullying principles and practice;
- how transition is planned and delivered:

- at planned times
- for individuals arriving at other times in the school year
- for individuals needing specific support

Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education (PSCHE)

PSHE provides school staff with a clear opportunity to work on bullying. Within the Curriculum for PSHE students should be taught:

- Key Stage 2: the consequences of anti-social and aggressive behaviours, such as bullying and racism, on individuals and communities; the nature and consequences of racism, teasing and bullying and aggressive behaviours; how to respond to bullying and ask for help.
- Key Stage 3: the effects of all types of stereotyping, prejudice, bullying, racism and discrimination and how to challenge them assertively.
- Key Stage 4 & 5: to challenge offending behaviour, bullying, racism and discrimination assertively;  to take the initiative in giving and receiving support.

## 14. For the bully

Silver Bridge School takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way.  Steps will be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any help that they may need.  We will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response.  When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly.  These sanctions may include: a period of time away from the group, reflection session or fixed-term exclusion.

The school will always seek resolution for the victim and this may involve the bully undertaking restorative work.

Resources and Useful Websites that staff can access for further information are: www.bullying.com / www.childline.co.uk / www.antibullying.net