



# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Legal framework

**This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to the following:**

Education and Inspections Act 2006  
Equality Act 2010  
Children Act 1989  
Protection from Harassment Act 1997  
Malicious Communications Act 1988  
Public Order Act 1986  
Communications Act 2003  
Human Rights Act 1998  
Crime and Disorder Act 1998

**This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the schools:**

Behaviour Policy  
Social Media Policy  
Equality Policy  
E-safety Policy  
Safeguarding

## Introduction

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At Sandwell Valley School, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our centre and will not be tolerated. All students should feel able to talk about concerns and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken.

## What Is Bullying?

*"Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of*

*hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008).* Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

1. Indirect being unfriendly, spreading rumors, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding bags or books).
2. Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence.
3. Verbal name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm.
4. Cyber all areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging, mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.

Bullying is generally characterised

Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.

Intent: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.

Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

1. Racial bullying
2. Homophobic bullying
3. Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance

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

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Training and educational institutes have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### **Statutory implications to include the protected characteristics**

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school understands that it has a responsibility to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, the school understands that it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the academy to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or 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.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

### **Upskirting**

Perpetrators will face two years in prison. By criminalising this distressing practice, it is hoped that it deters people from committing the crime.

Upskirting, where committed to obtain sexual gratification, can result in the most serious offenders being placed on the sex offenders register.

The new law will send a clear message that such behaviour is criminal and will not be tolerated.

### **What is Upskirting?**

Upskirting is a term used to describe the act of taking a sexually intrusive photograph up someone's skirt without their permission.

### **Objectives of this Policy**

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the centre's policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- All students and parents should know what the Centre's policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- We take bullying seriously, Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

- Bullying will not be tolerated

### **Implementation**

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents (also refer to Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy):

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Team Leaders/Principal
- The Team Leader/Principal will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Key Tutors will be kept informed and if it persists the form tutor will advise the appropriate subject teachers
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

### **Students**

**Sandwell Valley School recognises the need to support students who are particularly vulnerable to include students with SEND. We educate and respond to students who may be more at risk of being targeted however we understand that this does not necessarily mean that SEND students will be bullied. We have student safeguarding officers and peer mentors who can provide extra support to our more vulnerable students**

#### **Students who have been bullied will be supported by:**

1. Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or a member of staff of their choice
2. Reassuring the Student
3. Offering continuous support
4. Restoring self-esteem and confidence

#### **Students who have bullied will be helped by:**

1. Discussing what happened
2. Discovering why the Student became involved
3. Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change



4. Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the Young Person

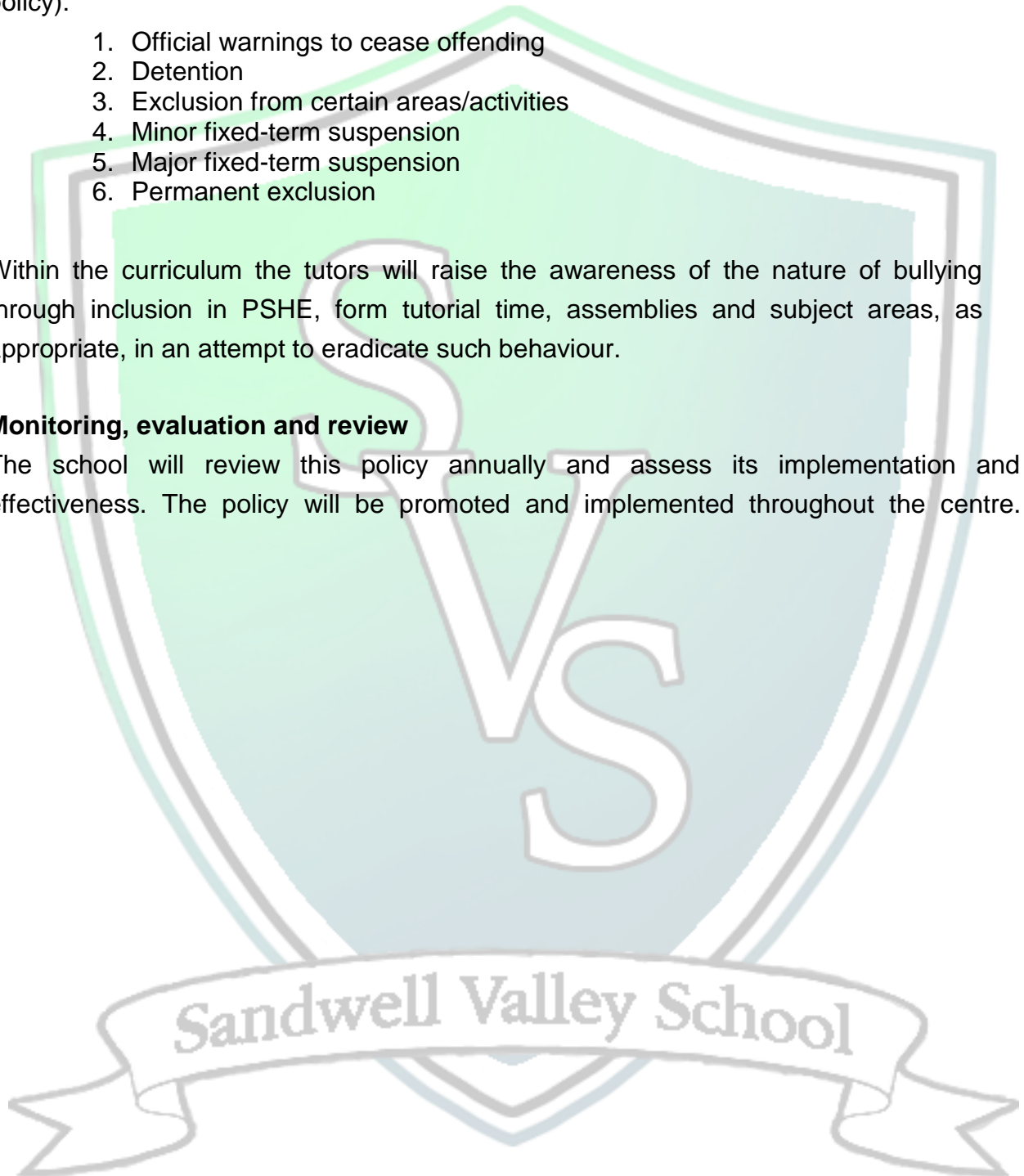
The following disciplinary steps can be taken (refer to behaviour and disciplinary policy):

1. Official warnings to cease offending
2. Detention
3. Exclusion from certain areas/activities
4. Minor fixed-term suspension
5. Major fixed-term suspension
6. Permanent exclusion

Within the curriculum the tutors will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, form tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

#### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the centre.



## Prevention

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

1. Writing and implementing a set of centre rules
2. Signing a behaviour contract
3. Using topics/activities to reinforce awareness
4. Reading case studies and inviting external presenters to talk about bullying
5. Having regular discussions about bullying and why it matters
6. Setting up and sustaining a student forum.

## Signs and Symptoms

Many young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child/young person:

- is frightened of walking to or from the centre
- doesn't want to use public transport
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to attend (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
- uses excuses to miss education (headache, stomach ache etc)
- begins to suffer academically
- 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 or shows signs of being in a fight
- comes home hungry (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other young people or siblings
- changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats)
- goes to bed earlier than usual

- is unable to sleep
- wets the bed
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should always be investigated.

### **The Law**

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
- hate crimes

Call **999** if you or someone else is in immediate danger.

Links to other policies:

Disciplinary Procedure

Safeguarding Statement

SEN policy

Cyber Bullying and Internet Grooming Policy

**Date: September 2020**

**Review Date: September 2021**

**Sandwell Valley School**