

Seaford Head School

Achieving Excellence Together



Anti-Bullying Policy

FGB Approved: September 2026
Next Review: September 2029

1. Introduction

Seaford Head School is committed to enabling all students to flourish both academically and socially. We expect individuals to take responsibility for their own behaviour and show respect for others. Bullying is regarded as unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Ultimately, everyone at Seaford Head School has the right to learn, to feel respected and to be safe.

1.2 Purpose of the Anti-Bullying policy:

This policy seeks to:

- Ensure the whole school community has a shared understanding of what bullying is and the detrimental impact it can have on wellbeing and achievement
- Ensure staff, parents, carers, and students work together to ensure a safe learning environment for all and to safeguard students who experience bullying
- Raise awareness of bullying and why some children bully
- Take positive action to prevent bullying within Personal, Social and Health Education [PSHE] and exploit opportunities within other curriculum areas and through our extended activities outside of the school day.
- Prevent, de-escalate and / or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- Ensure all bullying behaviours and prejudiced based incidents are taken seriously, recorded and responded to in a proportionate and consistent way
- Encourage shared solutions so that those reporting bullying have an appropriate say in what happens next
- Ensure those using bullying behaviour are supported to change their behaviour
- Outline the consequences, including sanctions, for those who are bullying
- Ensure everyone is mutually valued and respected and that, in line with the Equality Act 2010, we aim to eliminate discrimination based on sex, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and belief
- Encourage students to adopt agreed standards of behaviour and values in order to develop a sense of right and wrong and the ability to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Our school's commitment is that when a student or parent or carer speaks out about bullying:
 - they will be listened to
 - their concerns will be taken seriously
 - the matters will be investigated
 - together we will find a way to tackle it

1.3 Links with other school policies and practices

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

- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum documents including PSHE/RSE and ICT
- ESCC Protocol for managing harmful sexual behaviour
- Online Safety policy
- Equalities Policy
- SEN Policy – Inclusion Framework?

2. The Policy

We define bullying as the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online (Anti-bullying Alliance 2014). Bullying is not one-off acts of aggression or nastiness nor is it bullying when there is no intention to hurt or harm i.e. behaviour is thoughtless or accidental, such behaviours

if repeated, however, may be viewed as bullying.

Bullying is recognised by our school as primarily being a form of peer-on-peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development. The bullying of staff is also unacceptable, whether by students, parents and carers or other staff.

Our school defines cyber bullying as the use of information and communications technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones, the internet, AI and social media to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. We recognise that cyberbullying can have a particularly negative impact because it can invade home and personal space. There are also challenges for example 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.

We remind students, staff and parents/carers that under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication which conveys a message that is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender. 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.

2.1 Friendship issues, relational conflict and bullying behaviour

Our school acknowledges that friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting for both students and parents and carers, but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour. Students will fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and have disagreements. This relational conflict can be a normal part of growing up. During a relational conflict or friendship problem groups of students may disagree, be very upset and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely however, to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental, but students will make an effort to resolve the problem and will want to resolve the problem. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems or relational conflict can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour particularly when there is an imbalance of power when a group acts against an individual as in the examples below.

2.2 Forms of bullying

Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical bullying (hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, breaking, damaging or taking property)
- Verbal bullying (name calling, taunts put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, excessive criticism or sarcasm).
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding belongings, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion
- Racist, sexist, misogynistic, hate based targeting, discriminatory behaviour against others which does not respect an individual's rights
- Sexual Harassment – unwanted conduct of a sexual nature including comments of a sexual nature, jokes or taunting, physical behaviour such as interfering with clothes
- Online sexual harassment such as unwanted sexual comments and messages (including on social media), sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos, or sharing of unwanted explicit content.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, creating AI generated indecent images, AI enabled bullying and harassment, deep fakes and AI assisted grooming, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion

- Indirect (rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass). Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another. This can relate to; the size of the individual, the strength of the individual, the numbers or group size involved, being from a majority rather than a minority group, anonymity – through the use of cyberbullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc. We recognise that students with SEN and particularly ASC and/or speech, language and communication difficulties can be particularly vulnerable to relational conflict and bullying and they may also exhibit bullying behaviours. These students may need reasonable adjustments made and specialised support.

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community.

Cyberbullying has many forms including but not limited to:

- Threats
- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Stalking
- Manipulation
- Creating AI generated indecent images,
- AI enabled bullying and harassment,
- Deep fakes and AI assisted grooming,
- Sending and requesting nudes and semi nudes images/videos
- Filming
- Publication of private information or images

2.3 Prejudice-based bullying

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion and belief, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. Hate Based Targeting can be classed as homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying. It might be motivated by actual differences, perceived differences or as a result of association with someone else. Our school records these forms of prejudiced based bullying by their type and report on them to the Local Authority. Students may be referred to East Sussex Channel Programme if we deem them to be at risk of radicalization. This is in recognition that these groups are protected by the Equality Act 2010 because of the prejudice experienced by some groups in the wider society. We also recognise that there are other groups of children and young people who may be vulnerable to bullying including children in care, young carers or those with mental health issues.

2.4 Prejudiced based / hate incident

This is a one-off incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility, prejudice or ignorance, based on a person's perceived or actual ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation or gender identity or their association with someone from one of these groups.

These can also include indirect prejudice driven behaviour that is not targeted at one individual. The impact of this expression of prejudice against an equality group whether intentional or not can be damaging and must therefore be responded to as a prejudice based or hate incident. One-off incidents are not bullying. However, we separately record prejudiced based incidents identified using the above definition as we recognise the impact they can have and that they could be an indicator of

bullying behaviour or contribute to an environment where bullying could happen.

2.5 Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Disclosures of harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and harassment are managed in accordance with our child protection and safeguarding policy, East Sussex Protocol for managing harmful sexual behaviour and DfE guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education. In accordance with this guidance, all concerns will be investigated and our approach will be considered, supportive, child centred, educative and any actions including sanctions will be determined on a case by case basis. Actions taken may include referral to Children's services and the Police. The school aims to make reporting of allegations and concerns as accessible as possible to students through their year group pastoral teams, safeguarding team or the safeguarding@seafordhead.org email address. Families/carers with concerns should contact the safeguarding team safeguarding@seafordhead.org or their child's Head of Year/Assistant Head of Year.

2.6 Bullying outside of school

Seaford Head School recognises that bullying does not always occur on school premises and that incidents outside school, including online, can have a significant impact on students' safety, wellbeing and ability to learn. The school will investigate and respond appropriately to reports of bullying that occur outside school where the behaviour affects members of the school community or has an impact on school life.

This includes bullying that takes place:

- on the journey to and from school;
- during educational visits, work experience or other school-related activities
- in the local community between students
- online or through social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms or other digital technologies.

Although we are unable to take responsibility for the actions of students outside of school, where appropriate, the school will work collaboratively with parents and carers, the police, children's social care and other agencies to safeguard students and address concerns. Behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence or presents a significant safeguarding risk will be referred to the appropriate agencies without delay.

3 Prevention of bullying

3.1 We use a range of strategies at our school to prevent bullying behaviour:

- The school values of belonging, diversity and respect are promoted across the school day and the curriculum
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse)
- Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others
- PSHE education and other curriculum subjects are used to promote social and emotional skills including those needed to work together, show empathy, build friendships, get support and help others
- Small group work interventions are used to support those who need extra help to develop their social and emotional aspects of learning

- PSHE education lessons are used to develop understanding of safety and how to stay safe, including Online safety
- PSHE education lessons are used to develop understanding of bullying, its impact and ways to respond to bullying situations. PSHE education is also used to develop understanding of similarity and differences and the unacceptability of all forms of prejudice and bullying
- Regular whole school assemblies are also used to develop understanding of bullying, its impact and encourage reporting
- The whole school participates in annual activities for anti-bullying week and a rolling programme of other events such as Black History Month, LGBT History Month, International Women's Day, Refugee Awareness Week, UK Disability History Month
- Tutor Time provides opportunities for dealing with issues that have arisen in the class and school and a time to reflect. Tutor Time resources are used to challenge prejudices and stereotypes
- Student leadership team provides a forum for discussing bullying and how to address it
- The values of the school are upheld at all times. All staff monitor behaviour and intervene when it becomes necessary to address friendship problems and prevent bullying from developing.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos

4 Strategies for responding to bullying behaviour – a whole school approach

4.1 Reporting bullying

Early identification of bullying is the most effective way of minimising bullying behaviour and the effects on the person being bullied. We also acknowledge that the student doing the bullying needs to understand that their behaviour is unacceptable and will need support to change their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for bullying.

Students are encouraged to report any harmful or hurtful behaviour, even if they are not sure whether it is bullying. They are encouraged to report for themselves or for their friends.

They can do this through:

- Speaking to any member of staff, and particularly their form tutor, subject teachers, Assistant Head of Year or Head of Year.
- Speaking to a parent/other adult who may then contact the school in any of the ways listed
- Parents and carers must inform us if they think or know there is a problem for their own child or for another child. They can do this by contacting their child's form tutor, Assistant Head of Year, or Head of Year.

4.2 Recording bullying

All incidents of bullying must be recorded by the Year Team. All incidents are recorded according to type so that we can monitor the individual incidents, but also monitor incidents across the school to allow us to identify patterns. This monitoring will inform the PSHE education curriculum and assemblies. We also record prejudiced based incidents using the same system but record them differently so that we can report on two separate data sets.

4.3 Responding to bullying

All students have a role to play to intervene to support their peers (if it is safe to do so) and to report bullying:

- Alert an adult in school to any concerns
- Above all always tell someone. Adults will usually need to intervene to stop bullying
- All of us have a responsibility to avoid encouraging or inciting bullying and to not stand by and let someone else be harmed.

Students (if you have been bullied)

- If you feel able to and it is safe to do so, ask the bully to stop, don't react, say no and walk away
- Tell a friend what is happening and ask for their support
- Tell a trusted adult in or out of school (ask a friend to go with you if it helps)
- Do not delete evidence of online bullying as it can be used as evidence
- It is possible the situation will take time to resolve, but unless you tell someone we cannot help you.

Parents and carers

- Listen and talk to your child about the situation and discuss and agree next steps
- Contact a member of staff if you are worried or concerned
- Monitor the use of social networks/computer/mobile devices
- Reinforce the importance of kind behaviour

School Staff

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- Take seriously any report of bullying.
- Make sure you inform the relevant Year Team on the day of the incident so they can investigate.
- Record the incident on CPOMS
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- When we investigate the bullying case, we will follow the guidelines below:
 - Speak with the person targeted for bullying and involving them in what they would like to happen next –
 - Speak to the student(s) carrying out the bullying behaviour and find out their perspectives
 - Find witnesses to explain what they saw – where possible find witnesses who are not friends of either party
 - Contact and involve the parents and carers of those targeted and the parents and carers of those doing the bullying

We will challenge the behaviour and ideas of the person doing the bullying and help them to understand that what they said or did was hurtful and not in line with the school's values, ethos or policies:

- We will consider the intentions of the perpetrator before applying sanctions and consider carefully cases where the perpetrator was retaliating following ongoing bullying
- We will let other students that have witnessed the incident know that the behaviour was unacceptable and that it is being dealt with
- We will keep the target of bullying and their parents and carers informed about progress and any actions taken
- We will identify clear times to 'check in' with those involved (including parents and carers) to ensure issues have been resolved.

Where bullying behaviour is denied and evidence is hard to find those involved will be closely observed and monitored. The student reporting they are being bullied will be asked to record and report any further incidents which cause them concern.

Headteacher and Governors

- Reports of bullying and prejudiced based incidents will be made by the Headteacher / Senior Leader to the governing body
- The Headteacher and the Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy in

discussion with the Student Leadership Team and the staff in school.

4.4 Interventions to support responses to bullying

As a school we are committed to ensuring that those who have used bullying behaviours understand the impact of this and the unacceptability of bullying inside school and more widely. Wherever possible we will seek to employ a holistic approach as we recognise sanctions may modify student behaviour without addressing the root causes. When appropriate and with the agreement of all parties, we also run restorative sessions to encourage those involved to take responsibility for and make amends for their actions. This will often be our first strategy where appropriate, particularly if the bullying behaviour has stemmed from friendship issues.

Support for children involved in bullying will be arranged as appropriate, for instance buddying, friendship groups, reparation meetings, support plans, parental meetings, invitations to lunch clubs, anger management sessions, support with a staff mentor. Students whose bullying is persistent despite intervention may be referred to the Inclusion Partnership depending on their local offer or other alternative provision as appropriate.

4.5 Sanctions

Sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Management Policy will be used where appropriate and to send a clear message about the seriousness of the behaviour

These can include:

- Detentions including Senior Leadership Team detentions
- Behaviour report
- Involvement of the Schools Liaison Officer (the Police)
- Withdrawal of school ICT
- Student's being banned from having their phone in school/handing it in at the start of each day
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises
- Internal exclusions – this may be at unstructured time (break/lunch) and for a set length of time
- Suspension
- Permanent exclusion

Parents and carers of those involved will be informed of any sanctions awarded to their child. We do not explicitly share sanctions given to other children but will make parents/carers aware we have used sanctions in line with the behaviour policy.

Records will be kept on student files.

Complaints

If a parent or carer thinks the school has not resolved a complaint effectively then they should follow the school's Complaints Policy. This can be found on the school website.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This document will be monitored and evaluated regularly and updated to take account of new Government and local guidance, and the views of t