SIMON BALLE ALL-THROUGH SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING - COUNTERING BULLYING POLICY

First Issue: September 2013 (Anti-Bullying Policy renamed Countering Bullying Policy Sept 2021)

Last review: October 2021

Next Governors Review (Annually): October 2022

Committee Responsible: Full Governing Body

Policy Aims:
- To provide a definition of bullying for all stakeholders.

- To increase awareness of the signs and impact of all types of bullying.

- To identify students who may be particularly vulnerable to bullying.

- To ensure all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities for reporting bullying incidents.

- To identify strategies employed by Simon Balle All-through School to prevent bullying.

- To identify the channels which exist for students to report bullying to trusted adults.

- To make clear the response to all forms of bullying, both on and off site.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Legal Framework and Guidance (Appendix 1 and the relevant Simon Balle All-through School policies (Appendix 2)

What is Bullying - definition

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

Different types of bullying behaviour include:
Physical
- e.g. pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and any other forms of violence, and or threats

Verbal
- Hurtful remarks regarding a person's physical appearance
- Hurtful remarks regarding a person's intelligence/interests etc

Social/Emotional
- Emotional – tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups/friendships
- Non-physical - look across a crowded classroom, gestures
- Literature and language – notes, name calling, graffiti, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing

Cyber
- Inappropriate text and electronic messaging (including through websites, social networking sites and email)
- Sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet (cyber bullying)

Sexual
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or abusive comments
- Sexting and or the use of sexual photographs or images

Homophobic

- Homophobic remarks, directed towards a person's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation

Prejudicial bullying (against people/students with protected characteristics):
- Bullying related to race/culture
- Religion
- Faith and belief and or those without faith
- Gender/sexual reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Pregnancy and maternity

Recognising Targets of Bullying
Bullies can pick on vulnerable children. Some children are temporarily vulnerable because of a particular circumstance. Sometimes the target is simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Some children need help to become more assertive and learn strategies to enable them to avoid or deal with difficult situations.

Vulnerability is not always visible to adults. The victim may seem exactly like any other child. He/she/they may also be anxious to cover up the fact that they are being bullied.

Targets may be students who:
- are new to the class or school
- are considered to have SEND (SEND students are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may not be able to report it effectively - staff should be particularly vigilant)
- are 'looked after'
- are 'previously looked after'
- Children for whom English is an additional language (EAL)
- are on the SEND register
- are considered Pupil Premium or Free School Meals
- are different in appearance, speech or background from other students
- suffer from low self-esteem (but this might be a cause or effect of bullying)
- are having difficulties with schoolwork
- have suffered from bereavement
- are suffering emotionally due to difficult family circumstances
- have been bullied before
- are pregnant

See Appendix 3 for typical signs or behavioural patterns which may indicate that a child is being bullied – they may also indicate other kinds of distress, even abuse.

Restrictions to prevent bullying behaviour:
- A link Governor will be assigned to oversee the school's Countering Bullying strategy and provision.

- We will use the curriculum, termly assemblies, Student Voice, and trained ambassadors (for example, the Princess Diana Trust) to educate children and to create a counter ethos within the school.
- We will celebrate Anti-Bullying week annually to promote our ethos of countering bullying.
- Ensure that staff are vigilant and constantly look for signs of bullying.
- Ensure that all staff take reports of bullying seriously by reporting them on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System)
- Use displays effectively to promote this ethos and our values, within school, reminding students of the channels for reporting bullying (including external agencies and helplines) and to celebrate achievements within school.
- Continue to make good use of our student 'Buddies' and Countering Bullying Ambassadors to give students channels to report bullying via peers (Princess Diana Award).
- Use Countering Bullying "Helping Hand" on all devices as an anonymous channel for students to report bullying.
- Use our student mentors to support students who we feel may be at risk of bullying.
- Use 'Restorative Justice' as one of a range of specific strategies designed to combat bullying.
- Involve parents and the school's PCSO/Police Liaison officer as appropriate.
- Run both Year Councils and a School Council to allow nominated students the opportunity to represent the views of others on issues including bullying and general behaviour around school
- Heads of Year/Phase Leaders will carry out student discussions on a half termly basis to gain insights from a number of students across their year groups with regard to behaviour in and around school, and areas where they feel less safe.
- Use the Safeguarding Team newsletter to present information relating to bullying and research to parents and other stakeholders.
- Ensure that all duty staff, including Lunchtime Supervisors have annual reminders and or training on how to report bullying to the appropriate members of the Middle Leadership and Senior Leadership Team and how to ensure that unstructured time is safe for all students
- Run a variety of clubs and activities during unstructured time which offer students an alternative to the playground
- Having effective and organised duty teams to supervise the school during unstructured time such for example, before and after school, during morning break. The Safeguarding Team will review current duty rota and establish protocols for those working at those times.
- Ensure that staff are easily contactable to parents through email addresses available on the school's website. Ensure that parents receive a call back the same day to inform them of reported incidents.
- Train all staff, including, teaching staff, support staff (including administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) to be aware of where children are and what might constitute unsafe behaviours
- Train and induct Year 7 students to self-regulate and show respect and consideration to others in the playgrounds

- Use Sixth Form students to help regulate play, be visible in patrolling and offer support to those students who feel more vulnerable in unstructured time.
- Ensure that all staff identify the various forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents
- Parents are welcome to comment on this policy
- Students will be consulted about this policy and practices of the school through the School Council and through regular student discussions

Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:
- 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.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The Head of Year/Phase Leader/Designated Senior Lead (DSL) Deputy DSL or another member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- The DSL/Deputy DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentially policies.
- Outcomes, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned in proportion to the issue
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by students takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is investigated as fully as is possible. If required, the DSL/Deputy DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- Bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:
- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:

- looking at use of the school systems;
- identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- contacting the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  - Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school's Drug Education and Drug Related Incidents Policy (search and confiscation).
- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Provide information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
  - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
  - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain. To identify restorative alternatives that provide a positive learning experience and reduction in further issues or students remaining resentful in regard to outcomes.

Supporting young people and students

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the student and providing continuous pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include- working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through Children and Adolescent Health Services (CAMHS).

Young people and children who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service providers.

Restorative Approach

- Sanctioning, in line with Behaviour for Learning Policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), periods of internal isolation and suspension or permanent exclusions.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or CAMHS.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually and monitored termly by the Safeguarding team and Governing Body. However, should there be the necessity for immediate updates, the policy will be developed to reflect this. The school uses the guidance by the DFE, the updates from HCC, Attendance Strategy and audits to inform its action planning to prevent and tackle bullying.

All teaching and non-teaching staff are responsible for reporting bullying incidents on CPOMS. These are coordinated and analysed by Leon Brown the Designated Safeguarding Lead to identify any patterns of bullying behaviour and address them.

Appendix 1
Legal Frameworks and guidance

- Preventing and tackling bullying DfE July 2017
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children's Act 1989
- The Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988/The Communications Act 2003
- The Public Order Act 1986
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools 2010 DFE RR098
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying in Schools – guidance from the DFE 2017.
- Keeping Children Safe In Education 2020

Appendix 2
This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Hertfordshire Child Protection Policy, with specific information on the "Prevent" strategy and "Keeping Children Safe" statutory guidance

- Prevent Policy
- On-line safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

- PHSCE Policy
- Attendance and Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour for Learning
- PSHE Policy
- Equal opportunity for all Policy
- Safer handling Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Drugs education
- Whistleblowing Policy

Appendix 3
Signs which may indicate a child is being bullied

Children may:
- suffer depression
- have low self esteem
- be frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school and make continual excuses to avoid going
- change their route to school every day
- arrive late to school
- Do poorly or begin to do poorly in their school work
- truant
- regularly have clothes or books or schoolwork torn or destroyed
- come home hungry (avoids lunch queues, gives away or 'loses' dinner money)
- become withdrawn
- start hitting other children (as a reaction to being bullied)
- stop eating or become obsessively clean
- develop stomach aches or headaches due to stress
- cry themselves to sleep
- begin wetting the bed
- have nightmares
- have unexplained bruises, scratches or cuts
- have their possessions 'go missing' repeatedly
- ask for money or begin stealing (to pay the bully)
- continually 'lose' their pocket money
- refuse to say what's wrong
- give improbable excuses to explain any of the above
- threaten or attempt suicide
- be at increased risk of sexual and criminal exploitation
- be at increased risk of radicalisation