

Anti-Bullying Policy



Date adopted	September 2014
	January 2025
Next Review	(or as required by regulation)

This policy pays due regard to the equality act 2010 – including aspects of safeguarding and SEND, the DfE guidance 'Behaviour and discipline in schools' February 2014, Section 89 (1) (a to e) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Independent Schools Standards Regulation 2015 and KCSIE 2022. It relates directly to our Safeguarding Policy, E-Safety Policy and our behaviour expectations which applies to all members of our school community. The DfE statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sep 2022) emphasises the importance of tackling bullying (including cyberbullying) and also highlights that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by bullying.

Aims

We expect to work in a safe and secure environment free from bullying – bullying in any form is not acceptable. This includes cyber-bullying, verbal, physical or mental abuse, racism, sexism or homophobia.

The aim of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that students and staff learn and teach in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students and staff be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

At the Southover Partnership, we are committed to ensuring that incidents of bullying are kept to a minimum and dealt with speedily. As part of this philosophy, we work with children through our PSHE curriculum to ensure our students have an understanding of difference in our society and the need to respect others. Our staff all model open mindedness and will discuss and challenge any bullying behaviour they witness. Where appropriate, our students are offered mentoring to help them understand their rights and responsibilities.

Definitions of bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, remarks based on race, disability, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- Cyber-bullying – related to internet and texting (social media)
- Homophobic related to sexual orientation

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Students must be encouraged to report bullying in school.

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School's teaching and ancillary staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Procedures to follow:

If you experience bullying tell an adult, write them a note or get your parent/carer to contact the Head of School. All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated fully.

Investigation Procedure:

The person to whom it is reported will record an incident or series of incidents in a report. The report will be agreed by the victim.

The incident will be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, who will talk to the victim and the alleged perpetrator separately. If a student has carried out the bullying, the parent/carer will be informed and asked to attend a meeting with the Head of School or another senior member of staff.

When bullying occurs, the Head of School or senior member of staff will convene a meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to reiterate that bullying is not acceptable and to negotiate a way for the perpetrator to make reparation to the victim. The victim and the perpetrator will then attend a joint meeting, where possible, at an appropriate time to agree a way forward.

If further incidents of bullying are recorded, they will be thoroughly investigated, parents notified where appropriate and the pupil may be excluded for a fixed period of time in line with the Behaviour Policy. Return to school will be negotiated at a meeting convened especially to clarify expectations for the future.

All staff will be aware of The Southover Partnership's Anti-Bullying Policy and will treat all other adults and students with respect and integrity at all times as covered in the Staff Code of Conduct.

This Policy will be reviewed annually to establish its effectiveness. This will be judged by:

- (i) number of bullying incidents reported and addressed
- (ii) the level of harmony between students and their relationship with adults
- (iii) the level of racist, sexist and homophobic verbal abuse.