Anti-Bullying Policy

Owner: DSL/Pastoral Support Manager
Reviewers: Deputy Head: Pastoral
                    Senior Deputy Head of the Preparatory School
Last Reviewed: September 2023

Version 4

1. **Aims and Objectives**

The School aims to create and maintain an environment which fosters the all-round personal development of pupils. Bullying is morally wrong and undermines the maintaining of this environment.

Bullying is unacceptable at Solihull School. All members of staff have a duty to be vigilant in and around the school site at all times. This policy reflects and supports the aims and ethos of our school. This policy is designed:-

- to prevent incidents of bullying at Solihull School; and

- where bullying occurs, to assist pupils, parents and staff in dealing with it in the most appropriate manner.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) states that child-on-child abuse can take the form of bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying). Therefore, the school considers bullying as a potential Safeguarding and Child Protection concern; this policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.

This policy is informed by:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
Working together to improve school attendance (2022)
Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)
The Education and Inspections Act 2006
Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and school staff (2014)
Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying
DFE Behaviour in Schools (2023)
Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools
Counselling in schools a blueprint for the future: advice for school leaders and counsellors
Independent School Standard Regulations 2014
The Children Act 1989
The Equality Act 2010
Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021)
Stonewall School Report (2020, 2021)
Trans Inclusion School Toolkit (2018)

A key part of The Equality Act 2010 is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. The Duty has 3 aims:

- 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.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2. **Definition of Bullying**

The DfE defines bullying as*:*

'Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance; online-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case."

Many experts say that bullying can involve an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways: it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to a reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

Bullying includes any behaviour that is deliberately intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is usually unprovoked, persistent and can continue for a long period of time. It often reflects an abuse of power. It is often difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Bullying includes any behaviour that intentionally harms, threatens, intimidates or distresses someone else, for example:

- Insults/excessive teasing
- Cruel nicknames
- Making threats
- Isolating/rejecting someone from peer group
- Physical assaults
- Extortion or coercion by means of intimidating behaviour
- Damaging, taking or hiding property
- Writing or telling lies about someone
- Sending cruel text messages, video messages or e-mails
- Spreading rumours
- Being unfriendly and turning others against someone
- Posting inappropriate comments on websites

In some cases, thoughtless behaviour of this sort will also be capable of constituting bullying.

Bullying may occur for a variety of different reasons. The reasons may not be immediately obvious. It may be related to:

- Race, or ethnicity
- Religion culture, or belief
- Disabilities and neural diversity
- Special educational needs
- Appearance or physical health needs
- Sexual orientation
- Sexual harassment
- Sexism
- Transgender status
- Age

Bullying and LGBT Pupils

Children who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transsexual (LGBT) are more prone to bullying in schools than other children and might not tell anyone in school about it. Bullying of LGBT pupils can have an impact on mental health, academic and co-curricular outcomes.

It is vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff (e.g. through the Equity Group, or Counselling Services).

The school's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Bullying and Children with SEND and Physical Health Issues

Children with special education needs and disabilities or physical health issues are more prone to group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. There is a potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions to be disproportionately impacted by bullying, without outwardly showing any signs and communication barriers and may have difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

Bullying can take a number of forms. These include:
- Child-on-child abuse
- Verbal, physical or emotional
- Sexist behaviour, language and or prejudice
- Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying (looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include spreading rumours that someone is gay, biphobic or transphobic or suggesting that someone is inferior).

- Sexual assault and threatening behaviour that may target any pupils or staff regardless of sexual orientation.
- Online bullying – the rapid development of, and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Online bullying is a different form of bullying (e.g. using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. It can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging, email, photographs or abusive phone calls) that can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories for people to forward on content at a 'click' (See ICT: Acceptable Use Policy).
- In the Prep School, staff use the acronym STOP (Several Times On Purpose) to help succinctly explain and educate pupils on recognising bullying and distinguishing it from other forms of unkindness.

N.B. The school uses the terms online bullying and cyberbullying interchangeably.

3. **Indicators of Bullying**

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness and/or taking unusual absences. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lack of concentration or truanting from school. Staff must always be vigilant for signs of bullying. The seriousness of bullying cannot be overstated. Bullying can cause severe psychological damage and even suicide.

*It is important to be aware that children who are being bullied will potentially exhibit symptoms in **many** different ways. Staff should always be vigilant and look out for the following:*

- *Unwillingness to return to school*
- *Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet*
- *Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others*
- *Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged.*
- *Change to established habits e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary*
- *Diminished levels of self confidence*
- *Frequent visits to matron with symptoms such as stomach pains and headaches*
- *Unexplained cuts and bruises*
- *Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class*
- *Choosing the company of adults*
- *Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact*
- *Difficulty sleeping, experiencing nightmares*
- *Talking of self-harming, running away or suicide*

4. **Statement of Policy**

We will do our best to:

- Make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable
- Encourage pupils to not suffer in silence
- Eliminate bullying
- Enable all pupils to learn in a caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied

5. **Prevention**

All staff should adopt an 'it could happen here' mentality and proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This might involve talking to pupils about issues of difference; in lessons, projects and assemblies. Staff should then be able to determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issue that needs addressing.

The school recognises that where behaviour is poor, pupils can suffer from issues as diverse as lost learning time, child-on-child abuse, anxiety, bullying, violence, and distress Therefore, staff should always promote good behaviour, helping to create an ethos where pupils treat one another and the staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Therefore, it is important that this policy is read alongside the Behaviour and Discipline Policy annually.

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others should permeate the whole school environment and be reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

At the start of a new academic year, the Inclusivity Charter (Appendix 1) is shared with all pupils in the Senior School and discussed within Form Time and referred to during assemblies where appropriate and is visible in all Form Rooms.

The Supervision Policy outlines how staff duties are organised. Duty staff are vigilant to the indicators of bullying and areas of supervision are reviewed in light of incidents of unkindness, bullying and or anti-social behaviour as well as other environmental factors (e.g. lighting). Staff are updated through weekly staff briefings, of any area where there is a need to increase vigilance.

CCTV in the Senior School is strategically located around school in areas where passive supervision might prevent bullying (e.g. corridors) through the school day.

6. **Procedures**

If a pupil is being bullied, they can expect that:

- They will be listened to and taken seriously
- Action will be taken to help stop the bullying
- They will be given an opportunity to talk about how the bully(ies) has(have) made them
- If a pupil is ever in fear of their physical safety, staff will take immediate action to help keep them safe
- They will be signposted to support within school (e.g. RESTORE, Counselling Team) and outside school (e.g. Kooth).

If a pupil is experiencing any of the issues above, they should talk to a member of staff immediately, even if they think they can handle the situation. There are a number of people who would be happy to listen in order to find a solution to the problem; Form Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Section, Nurse, School Counsellors, DSL/Pastoral Support Manager, Chaplain, Deputy Heads, Head of the Prep/Senior School, Executive Headmaster or any other member of staff or senior pupil/Bencher/J4 Mentor/Senior Peer Mentor.

The school will support **pupils who have been bullied** (and those reporting bullying) by:

- Providing an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with Form Tutor, Year Head, a member of management or leadership team or member of staff of their choice
- Offering ongoing support, which may include peer support or an invitation to engage with the RESTORE (Appendix 2) programme.
- Endeavouring to restore self-esteem and confidence
- Offering support with their attendance in school, as required

Support for **pupils who have bullied** may take the form of:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the problems and the need to change
- Informing the family in order to help change the attitude of pupils and gain support for the process
- Counselling will also be offered/encouraged to pupils who have been bullied and the perpetrator(s) where appropriate.
- Support with their attendance in school, as required

The following formal sanctions and interventions may be taken against the bully where appropriate:

- Yellow/Red card (Prep School)

- Reflection Sessions
- RETRACE (Appendix 2) programme
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- Fixed Term Exclusion (suspension)
- Exclusion

The following steps should be taken by staff when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident should be referred to a member of the pupil's Pastoral Team
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and logged by the appropriate member of staff
- Appropriate staff, including Form Tutors, Year Heads and Head of Section/Senior Deputy Head of the Prep will be kept informed of the situation
- Appropriate actions and/or sanctions will be taken in consultation with all parties concerned
- Executive Headmaster and School Leadership Team will be kept informed as appropriate
- Police and Social Care to be informed where necessary

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the DSL or DDSL (see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy) should report their concerns to children's social care.

7. **Bullying Outside School**

This can relate to any bullying incidents (inc. online bullying) occurring anywhere off the school premises e.g. school or public transport, on a trip/visit, or in the local shopping centre. Where bullying is reported, it will be investigated and acted upon.

8. *The Role of Parents*

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's Form Tutor, Year Head or Head of Section/Senior Deputy Head of the Prep *school immediately. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.*

9. *Recording*

In order to identify possible patterns of bullying, the school keep a child-on-child incident log, which confidentially records incidents of bullying in the school inc. perpetrator(s), targets, type of bullying (e.g. sexist bullying), details of the incident

and intervention. The log is reviewed by pastoral members of the Senior Management, School Leadership and Designated Safeguarding Leads. Endeavoring to fulfil our aim of 'preventing' bullying at Solihull School and put in place early intervention, CPOMS concerns are reviewed daily and weekly by the Pastoral and Safeguarding Team for early indicators of bullying and emerging trends (e.g. change in behaviours, social isolation and concerns about wellbeing).

10. Raising Awareness

Curriculum and Assemblies

Through the curriculum, the school will raise awareness of the nature of bullying (inc. Online bullying) in tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate. This will aid the prevention of bullying. Direct action in assemblies regularly reminds pupils that all forms of bullying are unacceptable.

Each pupil in the Senior school importantly knows how to recognise they are being bullied and what they should do if they are. All classrooms display our anti-bullying statements/Inclusivity Charters.

The school's Wellbeing & Personal Development curriculum (which incorporates the statutory PSHEE requirements) is integral to the promotion of anti-bullying. Related topics for particular year groups are, but not limited to:

Alice House
Keeping Safe, Stranger Danger and Online Safety

J1
Online Safety, managing uncomfortable feelings; developing resilience;

J2
Online Safety; Healthy Relationships; Kindness & developing resilience;

J3
Online Safety and online-bullying; managing uncomfortable feelings;

J4
Online Safety; body image; developing resilience & Mindfulness

Thirds
Human Rights, British Values, The Equality Act 2010, prejudice and discrimination, mental health and wellbeing including resiliency training and mindfulness skills, RSE including consent, digital citizenship and online behaviour, body image and puberty, and contemporary issues including emotional vocabulary and intelligence;

Shells
Human Rights, British Values, The Equality Act 2010, prejudice and discrimination, mental health and wellbeing including understanding identity and

choices, brain health including the science of emotions, RSE including consent, harm, and difficulties, sexism, GSD awareness, personal safety and digital citizenship and online behaviour, body image, and contemporary issues;

4ths
Human Rights, British Values, The Equality Act 2010, prejudice and discrimination, mental health and wellbeing including understanding identity and choices, brain health, RSE including body image, consent, STIs and contraception, pregnancy issues, sexism and other harm, personal safety and digital citizenship and online behaviour including vulnerabilities, the dark web, addictions, and contemporary issues;

LVth
Human Rights, British Values, The Equality Act 2010, prejudice and discrimination, mental health and wellbeing including understanding self-presentation, vulnerabilities and grooming/radicalisation, Justice and the law including gang culture, knife crime, County Lines, civic duties and responsibilities, mental wellbeing including gratitude, optimistic mindsets and personal resilience, RSE including emotional abuse and harm, digital citizenship, contemporary issues, addiction and personal safety

UVth
Human Rights, British Values, The Equality Act 2010, prejudice and discrimination, mental health and wellbeing for GCSE year, social issues such as grooming, radicalisation, sexism and incel awareness, personal developing through social responsibility, exam skills and resilience (Penn R and/or Harvard Flourishing model) RSE including FGM, CSE, So-called HBA, body image, consent, choices, and safety, digital citizenship and online vulnerabilities and behaviour including the dark web, addictions, and contemporary issues;

LVIth
Human Rights, British Values, The Equality Act 2010, prejudice and discrimination, mental health social and adult responsibility and accountability including external qualifications such as Show Racism the Red Card training, KCSIE, CEOPS, trauma, grief and mental health awareness, RSE including sexual ethics, intimacy, healthy break-ups, body image and eating disorders, digital citizenship and online vulnerabilities and behaviour including the dark web, addictions, and contemporary issues;

UVIth
Human Rights, British Values, The Equality Act 2010, prejudice and discrimination, mental health and My Whole Self Flourishing, adult physical health issues, post-18 life including debt, gambling, poverty, money management, social and adult responsibility and accountability, helping others, passing on wisdom and

contemporary issues, external qualifications such as CEOPS, PREVENT, CSE Awareness, RSE including personal safety, choices, consequences, GSD issues, digital citizenship and online vulnerabilities and behaviour, and managing change, coping with endings and exam resilience

Pupil Voice

Anti-bullying strategies are discussed at School Council meetings. The school takes very seriously the annual anti-bullying week (inc. Kindness Week in the Prep School) and from time to time, the Heads of Section/Senior Deputy Head of the Prep School, Heads of Section in the Senior School and Head of Wellbeing and Personal Development, as well as others, coordinate anti-bullying projects ranging from; promoting Anti-Bullying week themes, writing and drafting the Inclusivity Character and facilitating Tutor Time activities. The issues covered during the week are then used as the basis for assemblies during the year.

Staff Training and Professional Development

It is essential also that the subject of bullying (inc. Online bullying) is regularly discussed at Staff meetings and within Pastoral Bulletins; drawing attention to it, specific incidences, alerting staff to the likelihood of it and providing them with strategies to prevent it and, where it occurs, deal with it appropriately.

The recording strategy allows staff to be informed of particular forms of bullying/particular places around School where bullying has previously taken place in order to reduce the risk of bullying.

The school staff receive specific INSET on wellbeing and safeguarding, which focuses on anti- bullying and child-on-child abuse.

Staff are required to sign for the record that they have read the Anti-Bullying Policy annually.

School Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The schools Safeguarding and Child Protection policy states that the school recognises that bullying might be a child protection matter in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023).

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

The school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy echoes the school's view of bullying stated above;

*'Bullying has never been tolerated at this school and will not be excused on grounds of it being part of a game. Bullying is a serious matter which may lead to **removal or exclusion**. You must not bully others and if others bully you, or you*

see someone else being bullied, you should inform a member of staff immediately or your parents.'

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy

The school's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy states that:

"Solihull School is firmly committed to maintaining a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of school life, nurturing everyone's ability to thrive in an equitable and non-hostile environment, regardless of race, religion, age, sex and gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy and fertility status, disability, and neurodiversity. We celebrate our school's blend of minds, backgrounds, and experiences, and have a strong and all-encompassing stance against any form of discrimination."

Online Safety and Curriculum Policy

The school's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy states that:

Schools have the responsibility for working with pupils, parents and carers to deal with incidents of bullying (including online bullying) using new technologies, that happen outside school, where those incidents involve two or more pupils from the same school.

ICT Acceptable Use Policy

The school's ICT Acceptable Use Policy states that:

The school does not tolerate bullying in any form, whether that be verbal, physical, online or via technology (i.e. cyberbullying / online bullying). Such bullying may include racist, sexist or homophobic language, for example, or sexual harassment. If you are the victim of such behaviours, please report it to a member of staff. Anyone found to be taking part in such behaviour can expect to be managed in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 1 – Inclusivity Charter

<u>Solihull Senior School Inclusivity Charter</u>

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines the forms of 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."

Community is a core aim of Solihull School. As such, the school, its pupils, teachers and non-teaching staff, governors and parents are committed to respecting one another. The school community therefore commit to this Charter to prevent and respond to bullying as a form of discrimination and promote inclusivity.

The school community shall **STEP: UP, BACK, INSIDE, DOWN, FORWARD:**

1. **STEP UP** – the community shall commit to continued education on understanding what constitutes bullying in its different forms including direct and indirect and non-verbal social exclusion. The community commits to challenging all aspects of bullying, including but not limited to discriminatory language including the expression of extreme and harmful views targeted at protected characteristics such as disability, race, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation and religion.

2. **STEP BACK** – the community understand and accept that we all have an individual and collective responsibility to respect one another and to help stop instances of alleged bullying whether ringleader, target, reinforcer, defender, assistant or outsider (as defined by the Anti-Bullying Alliance). All members of the community commit to reflecting on their actions, omissions and language towards others. This includes how such matters may be perceived by others subjectively and objectively, including impact over intent. This applies both in person and online.

3. **STEP INSIDE** – the community know that all adults in the school community will positively help all parties with any instances of alleged bullying and therefore will report instances of such behaviour for the benefit of all. All members of the community shall be listened to on allegations of bullying and have their voice heard on prevention, reporting and responses to allegations of bullying.

4. **STEP DOWN** - all members of the community are prepared to be humble in recognising errors of judgement as part of their personal development and commit to best efforts in correcting such errors by engaging fully in initiatives to promote equality through equity.

5. **STEP FORWARD** - the community shall respect one another and take allegations of bullying seriously and support all parties as part of their personal development, wellbeing and welfare. The community understand that the school will not tolerate bullying and unkindness and will fully investigate all allegations of bullying and unkindness. The school will take action in accordance with all relevant school policies, including but not limited to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

As a community, we can all work together to help, listen, engage and support on an ongoing basis in the prevention of bullying as a form of discrimination, promoting inclusivity at Solihull.

Appendix 2 – RESTORE and RETRACE

Solihull's RESTORE AND RETRACE Programme

Affected People Support and Behaviour Management Programme is a unique opportunity for pupils who either a) find themselves in a serious disciplinary position to explore what happened and what was going on for them that led to them being in trouble and causing harm (through the RETRACE element) and b) for any 'victims/affected people' to have advocacy support to assist them through their experience (via RESTORE). In general terms, pupils that would benefit from this course of work are those who are showing highly disruptive patterns of behaviour that might risk or are returning from a PTE, those who are facing permanent exclusion and for anyone affected as a result. Relevant issues are more serious situations including anything 'cautionable', sexism, racism, ableism etc., and antisocial/harmful behaviour. Although these systems were created three years ago, considering BLM and Everyone's Invited, they have really come into their own.

RESTORE is 'victim-focused', putting people affected by harmful experiences at the heart of investigations and consequent action. It is delivered in a 1:1 or with a group by RESTORE trained teachers and encompasses **R**eflecting on the **E**motional impact of the situation and assuring **S**afety/Stability, followed by regular emotional and needs **T**emperature checks, and identifying **O**utcomes of feeling more empowered, **R**eassessing any new needs and anything **E**xtra that might help the individual to move through these things. It is important that individuals feel heard, supported and that they can rely on the school to effect whole school corrective and preventative action.

RETRACE is founded on the beliefs that discipline should be proactive, a chance for self-discovery and should not cause further harm, exclusion or shame. It looks to see 'mistakes' as an opportunity to problem solve. Working with a RETRACE trained teacher in a collaborative, coaching style series of 1:1s, the sessions provide guidance, are correction and prevention-focused, enhance communication, help to build empathy and respect, teach equity, responsibility, cause and effect and humility without shame. As a mnemonic, it stands for **R**eflection in their words on what happened, **E**motions at the time, **T**houghts at the time, **R**ecognition of the situation, making **A**mends (putting right that which was wronged), **C**ommitment to change and **E**mbedding back into normal school life. With tools and strategies developed by specialist CBT therapists/teachers in the school, sessions are either 1:1 or in small groups.