



Shrewsbury School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Pupil Behaviour Policy, the Acceptable Use Policy, the Pupil Concerns and Complaints Procedure, the 'Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Sept 2021 and the school's 'Yellow Card' all of which are available to parents upon request. Copies of all of these documents are also located on the school website. The 'Yellow Card' is a pocket-size summary of the school's 'Code of behaviour, expectations, encouragement and sanctions. Each pupil receives their own copy at the beginning of the school year. This policy has been drawn up with assistance from guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), *Preventing and tackling bullying* (July 2017) *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges* (Sept 2021) Relationships and sex education (RSE and health education (Sept 2021) and the latest version of KCSIE September 2021. It will be reviewed against any new government guidance issued. This policy will also apply to bullying behaviour outside of the school of which the school becomes aware.

Here at Shrewsbury we reject all forms of bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) and will act swiftly and decisively if, and when such cases emerge. As indicated in the 'Pupil Behaviour Policy' there are a variety of sanctions available including suspension and expulsion.

Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to create a School in which pupils grow up happily, free to pursue their own interests but with consideration for others, and free from fear. We hope to prevent bullying before it occurs through the continuing vigilance of all pupils and staff, by educating pupils in their responsibility for themselves and each other, and by agreeing a definition of bullying, so that all pupils and staff have a clear understanding of what we, as a School, consider unacceptable behaviour. All staff are mindful of their duty of care and the importance of reducing the risks of bullying at times and places where it is most likely and to adopt a 'it can happen here' philosophy

Definition

Bullying is any action that thoughtlessly or deliberately causes pain, unhappiness, humiliation or suffering to another. Acts may be repeated over time. This may be both inside and/or outside school.

Bullying activities may include isolated or repeated acts of physical violence, and persistent verbal abuse; teasing and name-calling and low level disruptive behaviour such as "banter" and "horseplay" become bullying when they cause another to feel victimised. 'Initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation would also be classed as bullying activities and treated accordingly. Equally, the deliberate exclusion of others from the social groups that form in houses, classes, dining hall and elsewhere, causing distress and isolation, is also an act of bullying. The erosion of self-esteem, and in certain cases the taking or spoiling of possessions may also be classed as bullying. In

addition to these broad guidelines, bullying includes discriminatory activity of any form based on **race, religion, culture, sex, gender reassignment, sexuality, acts of homophobia, special educational needs and disability** or due to a person's **home circumstances, health or appearance or because a child is adopted or is a carer.**

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place using technology. This may include bullying using mobile electronic devices, social media or gaming sites. In an increasingly technological age, the School requires all pupils to adhere to the Pupil Acceptable Usage Policy. This makes clear that '**cyber bullying**' in any form (such as via social media, instant messaging, images or using email) is forbidden and provides guidance for parents and pupils about cyber bullying and online safety. An incident of cyber bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures in this policy. See the Appendix to this policy for guidance for pupils about cyberbullying.

By their very nature all forms of bullying erode self esteem and are damaging to community life. Bullying behaviour will never be dismissed as being normal between young people, as "banter" or simply "part of growing up". If left unchallenged or dismissed, low level disruption can have a wearing and significant impact on targeted individuals exposed to such behaviour. Serious examples of such behaviour can cause lasting psychological damage and in extreme circumstances may even lead some victims to contemplate suicide.

Safeguarding

Bullying behaviour may be of such a nature that safeguarding concerns are raised. See the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for the School's approach to peer on peer abuse. Concerns about a pupil's welfare because they are the perpetrator or victim of bullying behaviour must be reported in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and appropriate action taken and consider the local Safeguarding Partnership thresholds. A bullying incident may be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm, sexual violence or sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals,
- upskirting

Education and Prevention

Education must be at the heart of any effort to eliminate bullying. The risk of bullying is minimised by many aspects of life within the community.

- While all areas of the curriculum provide the opportunity for moral and spiritual development, the role of PSD, Religious Studies, English and Drama are particularly important. Within these subjects especially, we look to embed the core British values of mutual respect and tolerance, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.
- Year group and whole school assemblies, as well as chapel services, will often emphasise the positive values we stand for as a community.
- There is practical training centred on leadership and responsibility for all Praepostors.

- The House system plays a pivotal role in the process with the HSM as crucial figures throughout a pupil's time here. The House system provides both formal and informal opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership, service and responsibilities. In their interaction with parents, HSMs encourage parents to report any awareness of bullying or cyber-bullying to them, so that incidents can be dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
- Pupils should also be made aware of the fact that while bullying itself may not be a criminal offence, there are laws, which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. Misuse of electronic communications could also be a criminal offence. In addition to this, bullying behaviour in the work place may well lead to dismissal.
- Effective tutoring along with the corporate priority given to personal relationships enables pupils to develop social and emotional skills.
- The co-curricular programme enables pupils to value each other through corporate participation and team work.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead speaks to all year groups beginning of every year about our Safeguarding and the Anti-Bullying policy and the pupil complaints procedure and support systems that exist in the school.
- Effective pupil supervision is one of the most efficient preventative strategies. Staff supervision rotas ensure there is always an adult to which a pupil can turn 24/7.
- Weekly House Meetings allow staff to share concerns and updates, although this also occurs daily more informally.
- Online safety is a key aspect of all areas of the curriculum. Parents are informed about online safety issues and the School's strategies to safeguard pupils through correspondence and seminars held by the School to raise awareness.

Training

Ms Anna Peak is the school's appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead. She is assisted by a trained safeguarding team. They all regularly attend training courses run by external agencies and then cascade this material via Housemasters/Housemistresses to members of the Common Room. Issues connected to safeguarding and preventing bullying will be discussed at Housemasters'/Housemistresses' Meetings to raise awareness and reduce the incidence of bullying wherever possible. All staff new to the school are briefed on issues of pupil welfare via the school's induction programme.

Staff are aware of the need for ongoing vigilance paying particular attention to significant gatherings of pupils such as in Kingsland Hall and the movement of large numbers of pupils around the site at break time and in between lessons, as well as quieter moments in the day in Houses. Boarding staff are particularly vigilant. Our intention is to raise staff awareness through training and inset events so staff are alert to children who may be vulnerable and at risk from bullying, including potentially those with protected characteristics which may be in a minority in our community.

All staff are reminded of the possible indicators of bullying behaviour. While this is not an exhaustive list, key signals to look out for might include:

- signs of injury, especially those in unlikely parts of the body, and those which don't have a satisfactory explanation
- otherwise inexplicable, and maybe sudden, changes of behaviour
- unexpected changes of routine: late for lessons, changing late for games, not in the bedroom when expected, etc.
- withdrawal from friends, and social activity
- morose behaviour; loss of confidence or self-esteem
- unaccountable deterioration of work
- Mental health issues

The Bursar is responsible for training where support staff are concerned.

Reporting Procedures, Investigation and Sanctions

If a member of staff is concerned that a pupil at the school is being bullied, then they should report this to the pupil's HSM. Pupils who become aware of bullying issues should also be prepared to act. Pupils are educated through PSD, assemblies and house system that they should not take the role of bystander and that all bullying should be reported to an adult. As indicated in the 'Pupil Concerns and Complaints Procedure', pupils should inform any responsible adult.

In any case of suspected bullying, the HSM will be initially responsible for acting. They will immediately inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral) who will decide the seriousness of the case. If the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the matter should be reported in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures before further investigation is carried out.

The HSM should log the report, investigate with good practice and on the advice of the DHP and ensure that the full details are recorded in writing.

At this stage, the possible outcome might be that there has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully; or (ii) the complaint is justified in whole or in part and further action will be needed (see Range of Action below).

In serious cases, or where pupils from more than one House are involved the DSL will likely ask a member of the safeguarding team to investigate to ensure consistency for the pupils involved. After this initial investigation the DSL will report directly to the Head who, alongside the Senior Deputy will decide on appropriate action, which may include action under the School's Behaviour Policy, including expulsion/withdrawal. The DSL will produce a report of the incident including any witness statements taken. A central record of these incidents is kept at the Head's office. Copies of this report are held by the Head, DSL and the individual Housemasters/ Housemistresses concerned.

If the investigation concludes that the incident involved bullying this will be logged by the DHP in the Schools Bullying log. A Sexual Harassment and Violence Log is kept separately. This log allows patterns of behaviour to be identified and is necessary preventative pastoral or curriculum work to be carried out with year groups/ pupils. It may be appropriate to start a Pastoral Care Plan (PCP) or either the bullied or the bully(s) and if so the pupils HSM is responsible for doing so.

If at any stage the alleged bullying behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, no initial internal investigation will take place. The basic outline of the incident should be established, and the matter will be reported in accordance with the procedures in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Range of action

With any action the safety and happiness of those threatened will be the first consideration. Every attempt will be made to ensure that information about bullying is handled sensitively and that confidentiality is respected wherever possible.

In all cases, once the nature of the incident has been evaluated, parents of pupils involved will be informed, normally by the HSM's. It is important that the issues of sanctions and, where appropriate, counselling are addressed. All the internal sanctions listed in the 'Behaviour Policy' are available to the Head, including possible suspension or expulsion. The Chaplain, HSM's, Tutor and any other respected adult will be available to continue the process of pastoral support. This should have regard not only for the individual's welfare but also for their relationship within the community.

Mobile devices may be confiscated, monitoring procedures increased and / or access to the School's internet and email facilities limited if the incident involves cyberbullying (see also the school's Acceptable Use Policy).

The offender will be left in no doubt that we will not tolerate bullying behaviour in the school community. Bystanders will be educated as to how they can help to prevent further bullying instances and any correction of actions that could have prevented the instance from escalating will be explained to them.

The motivation behind the bullying behaviour and any underlying issues will be considered. If these considerations give rise to safeguarding concerns relating to the bullying, the School's child protection procedures will be followed.

Guidelines include those mentioned above for the offender. However, priority must be given to the well-being and the continued security of the pupil who has been bullied. Once back in the House community, the HSM will monitor the situation closely and provide reports for the Head where necessary.

Sanctions

All pupils are made aware of the fact that if they exhibit bullying behaviour formal sanctions will follow. All the internal sanctions listed in the 'Pupil Behaviour Policy' are available to the Head's office, including possible suspension or expulsion.

Supporting those severely impacted by bullying

The school acknowledges that the consequences of being bullied may have a severe impact on a pupil's social, emotional or mental health and the pupil's ability to learn. The well-being and continued security of the pupil is the School's priority and steps will be taken to support him / her.

The School recognises that removing bullied pupils from school is disruptive and can make it difficult to reintegrate. The School will do all that is reasonably possible to ensure pupils who are bullied continue to attend school and maintain their educational progression by putting in place proportionate short term alternative on-site provision plans where necessary.

If a pupil is considered to have significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of pupils of the same age because of the impact of the bullying, the School will consider whether he / she will benefit from being assessed for special educational needs.

In the rare situation where reintegration is not possible, the School will consider alternative arrangements for the pupil to continue their education which may include assisting the parents in finding another school.

Pupil Concerns and Complaints Procedure

In order to safeguard the interests of children living away from home, the School has a procedure by which a pupil has a right to be heard if he/she is concerned about any matter that affects his/her welfare.

It is likely that such matters already surface in conversations with friends and adults whom the pupil already trusts. However, if he/she feels the need to express these concerns more fully, or if he/she is concerned, worried, or upset about any matter affecting their welfare, then there are procedures in place for pupils to voice their concerns. Pupils should refer to the separate Pupil Concerns and Complaints Procedure which is available.

The School has appointed the following Independent Adults, who are "appropriately distanced from The School," and who pupils may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at school:

Mrs. Mary Clapworthy Tel. 01743 343852

The 'Children's Commissioner' can also be contacted on the Freephone number 020 7783 8330 or by email on info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk (see www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk).

The number for Child Line is 0800 1111.

Review

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will review this policy on an annual basis, or more regularly as required, taking into account any guidance published by the DfE together with the records of bullying incidents.

The Board of Governors will consider the revisions made as part of its collective responsibility to carry out an annual review of safeguarding.

September 2021 (Deputy Head Pastoral) to be revised September 2022

Appendix I Cyberbullying - guidance for pupils

- 1 Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology.
- 2 Pupils should remember the following:
 - 2.1 Always respect others - be careful what you say online and what images you send.
 - 2.2 Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
 - 2.3 If you or someone you know are being cyberbullied, **TELL SOMEONE**. You have the right not to be harassed or bullied online. Tell an adult you trust - your parents, any member of staff or volunteer, the School's Independent Adults or a helpline such as ChildLine on 0800 1111.
 - 2.4 Don't retaliate or reply online.
 - 2.5 Save the evidence - learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. Ask someone if you are unsure how to do this. This will help to show what is happening and can be used by the School to investigate the matter.
 - 2.6 Block the bully. Most social media websites and online or mobile services allow you block someone who is behaving badly.
 - 2.7 Don't do nothing - if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying.
- 3 You may find the following websites helpful:

<http://www.childnet.com/young-people>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/online-bullying.aspx>
- 4 Please see the School's Pupil Acceptable Usage Policy which sets out the School rules about the use of ICT including mobile electronic devices.