



Severn Valley School

ANTI-BULLYING & HATE CRIME POLICY

Date Approved: January 2022

Date of Review: January 2025

MONITORING, REVIEW & EVALUATION

Headteacher

Hate Crime Definition

Hate in the context of behaviour and attitude has been defined as; “Acts of violence, hostility and intimidation directed towards people because of their identity or perceived difference” (Chakraborti, Garland and Hardy 2014:6)

Hate Incidents

There is a distinction between a hate crime and a hate incident.

A hate incident is any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone’s prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.

However, a hate incident does not necessarily break the law. Where a hate incident amounts to a criminal offence, and is based on one of the five protected characteristics, it is known as a hate crime.

The type of conduct which will be considered as a hate incident is wide ranging and includes the following:

- verbal abuse
- harassment
- bullying or intimidation
- physical attacks
- threats of violence
- hoax calls, abusive phone or text messages, hate mail
- online abuse
- displaying or circulating discriminatory literature or posters
- graffiti
- arson
- throwing rubbish in a garden
- malicious complaints.

Bullying

The Department for Education (DfE) defines bullying as: “Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over a period of time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”.

1. Objectives of the Policy

- As a school we take hate incidents and bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when either are reported.
- Hate incidents and bullying will not be tolerated.
- All MC Members, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what a hate incident or bullying is; should know what the school’s policy is about bullying and follow it.

- Teaching and non-teaching staff have been trained to be able to identify and correctly record incidents of hate or bullying.
- The designated member of staff with overall responsibility for 'Freedom from Bullying' will be the Senior Learning Mentor; however, all staff share the responsibility to ensure our school is safe and free from hate incidents or bullying.

The school community has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy, environment. We recognise that bullying behaviour is harmful to all involved – not just to those who have been bullied but also to those who do the bullying and those who stand by.

2. While recognising that bullying happens in all schools and beyond, it is important that we create an environment that encourages carers and students to report incidents of bullying and be confident that action will be taken following agreed procedures to deal effectively with those involved.
3. Education to prevent bullying will be provided to all students during their time at Severn Valley School (SVS) and appropriate behaviour will be reinforced during lessons and around the school site. Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying through:
 - Subject areas e.g. English; Mindcraft (Personal Social and Health Education).
 - Assemblies e.g. National Anti-Bullying week, National Safer Internet Day
 - Visitors and offsite activities. E.g. Great Expectations
 - Tutor group activities

Students are encouraged to develop and understand:

- Patience
- Empathy
- Co-operation
- Mutual respect
- Democracy
- The rule of the law
- Individual liberty
- Tolerance

4. The School communicates its stance on bullying to all students and parents by publishing this policy on the school website.
5. The School recognises that bullying takes different forms, these may include:

Verbal e.g.

 - Deliberate, unkind and persistent remarks
 - Racist, sexual or homophobic name calling

- Persistent teasing

Emotional e.g.

- Spreading hurtful rumours
- Writing graffiti or spreading images/offensive materials
- Excluding someone and leaving them out on purpose

Physical e.g.

- Pinching, punching, pushing, kicking and hitting
- Theft/damaging personal property

Racist e.g.

- A racial taunt, graffiti, gestures
- Making inappropriate comments regarding faiths and beliefs

Sexual/peer-on-peer abuse e.g.

- Making sexual comments
- Inappropriate and unwanted touching
- Making and sharing of indecent images electronically
- Putting someone under pressure to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Using sexual violence or threats

Sexting

- Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages.
- They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.
- Sexting may also be called:
 - trading nudes
 - dirties
 - pic for pic.

Cyber bullying e.g.

- The use of technology including mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else: sending hurtful, harmful messages.

Homophobic e.g.

- Because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.

Resources for working with pupils from different families can be found at

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/get-involved/education/different-families-same-love>.

Further information can be found at

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse>

Monitoring and Evaluation

6. Safeguarding is on the agenda for the weekly meeting of the Senior Leadership Team. They regularly discuss incidents of bullying to ensure that procedures are adequate, patterns of behaviour are monitored and follow-up action is appropriate.
7. The Management Committee will monitor rates of bullying by reviewing figures presented by the Headteacher as part of the Headteacher's report to MC Members. Subsequent visits to the school may take place should further details be required. This policy should be read in conjunction with SVS policies for: Safeguarding, Behaviour, SEND and the Equality policy.

Appendix 1 - School Procedures

Bullying & Hate Crime/Incidents are never acceptable.

1. Incidents of these should be reported immediately to any staff member who will report the matter to the appropriate senior member of staff. If it is a hate crime then the police will be informed.
2. All students will be listened to and given an opportunity to have their say. Students should be assured that incidents will be followed up.
3. In most cases written accounts of the incident will be taken through discreet interviews where necessary. Following investigation staff decide the appropriate response.
4. Incidents of bullying and hate crime/incidents will be recorded on CPOMS by type and outcome. This data is used for monitoring and evaluation and is shared with the Management Committee.
5. A variety of approaches will be used in response to reported incidents.
 - Restorative justice and mediation to enable those involved in bullying behaviour to understand the impact of their behaviour, to promote empathy and to rebuild/restore good relationships between those concerned, there is a named person at each centre who can deliver this.
 - Investigation of antecedents prior to the incident
 - Positive intervention with those involved in bullying behaviour
 - Monitoring of patterns of bullying behaviours and incidents of bullying
 - Informing parents/carers of all students involved
 - Parents may be involved in resolution
 - Sanctions such as detentions, internal exclusion, isolation and exclusion
 - Record incidents on CPOMS to enable monitoring
 - Mentoring
 - Peer Support
 - Involvement of outside agencies, such as the police, when bullying is particularly serious or persistent.
 - A referral to the Children's Helpdesk will be made when there is a safeguarding issue.
6. Sexual bullying can be a form of sexual abuse. Staff must follow the safeguarding procedure when they have concerns about a child's safety.
7. Staff expertise will be kept up-to-date through training such as CSE training, PREVENT, safeguarding training and updates from GSEP.

Appendix 2 – Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs in behaviour that he or she is being bullied or being subjected to hate incidents. Adults should be aware of those possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money to pay a bully
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received

This is not an exhaustive list

These signs and behaviour could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Appendix 3 – The law and statutory guidance with respect to bullying.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, new duties on schools and public bodies came into force in April 2011. The Act strengthens and simplifies existing equality legislation. The Act brings together existing duties not to discriminate on grounds of race, disability and gender which schools are already bound to comply with, and it extends these to include duties not to discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or gender re-assignment. It places a requirement on governing bodies and proprietors of schools to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION (2018)

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

CRIMINAL LAW

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police or advise the parents/carers of the victim to do the same. Under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for bad behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted upon. The Headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police may be informed.

MONITORING REVIEW & EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the policy review cycle and an assessment made of its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout SVS.