

SOUTHFIELD SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING 'SAFE TO LEARN' POLICY

1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide protection for students from bullying and to provide staff, volunteers, students and parents/carers with guidance on what they should do in the event that they know or suspect a student is being bullied.

This policy applies to all permanent staff, in addition to supply staff, volunteers or anyone working or volunteering on behalf of this school.

Southfield is committed to providing a safe environment for students and fully supports the view that every student has a right to be able to learn in a school environment which is free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel secure, safe and supported.

Southfield is a telling school and anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it.

In line with the latest Department of Education advice about preventing and tackling bullying, November 2014, the school will ensure arrangements are in place to protect students from bullying and promote respect and tolerance among students by:

- having measures which encourage good behaviour (reference: Behaviour Policy)
- communicating the bullying policy clearly to all staff, students and parents/carers
- responding effectively to bullying incidents
- having effective and easy reporting systems for students
- ensuring the school offers a safe environment for parents, staff and students to raise concerns about bullying (Reference Safeguarding Policy)
- having effective and consistent recording processes for bullying incidents
- having consistent, fair and robust procedures in place to discipline students involved in bullying
- actively seeking to prevent bullying by maintaining its profile in school through tutor time, PSHE, assemblies, the cross year student working party, the 6th form/ year 11 Anti-Bullying Committee of students and display
- regularly evaluating and updating the school's approach to take account of developments in technology (reference: Acceptable Use Policy)
- providing effective staff training
- regularly liaising with and updating governors
- linking with appropriate outside agencies

2. BULLYING

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2.1 Definition of Bullying

'Bullying is 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, cyber-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.' (Preventing and Tackling Bullying Document, Department of Education November 2014)

2.2 Information about Bullying

The main reasons students are bullied are:

- Race (see policy on Dealing with Racist Incidents)
- Religion/belief/culture
- Sexual orientation/gender/gender identity (LGB and T – lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) (see section on Homophobic Bullying)
- SEND
- Home circumstances
- Ability
- Appearance
- Because a student stands out in some other way as being different e.g. exhibits particular behaviour patterns, speaks in a particular way etc

NOTE: Racist incidents need to be dealt with according the policy and must be reported directly to the Headteacher.

Bullying manifests itself in the following ways

- **Verbal:** name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours, sarcasm, using threatening or offensive language, remarks, taunting
- **Physical:** unwanted physical contact, pushing, tripping, kicking, hitting punching or any physical assault
- **Intimidation:** stealing, extorting money or food or possessions, obviously whispering/talking about someone, passing notes around, laughing inappropriately, tormenting (hiding books, threatening gestures)preventing access to rooms, resources, corridors etc.,
- **Isolation:** excluding from group, silent treatment, other students encouraged not to be friendly
- **Graffiti:** writing on books or walls
- **Cyber:** through all areas of the internet, mobile phone calls and texts (see section on cyber-bullying and E-Safety Policy).

Where bullying occurs

- At break or lunchtime. It might occur in tutor rooms, outside school, in toilets or in other quiet areas of the school

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- In between lessons as students are moving from one room to another. It might occur in the corridor/outside rooms as students are waiting to go in
- In lessons, bullying is often of a more subtle variety and may consist of passing notes, whispering messages, spoiling work, students over re-acting to answers or questions by/from another student
- Outside school bullying can take place on the bus, at the bus stop, when students are walking to or from school
- At home it might take the form of texts, phone calls, via the internet or when the student is out in town

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- 1 To consult with staff, students, governors and parents/carers on a regular basis to inform/review practice and policy.
- 2 To ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents and governors are aware of all issues connected with bullying and are fully aware of the procedures for dealing with it.
- 3 To enable staff, students, parents/carers and governors to deal with bullying confidently and effectively.
- 4 To continue to foster an ethos in which students feel confident to raise their concerns about bullying both in and out of school.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. It is the responsibility of all teaching and non-teaching staff, student bystanders/witnesses and parents to report any incidents which they perceive to be bullying and to take appropriate action to deal with it.
2. It is the responsibility of all members of all staff to familiarise themselves with the appropriate documentation on bullying and ensure that they follow the guidelines when dealing with bullying issues.
3. The assistant Headteacher who is the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator responsible for oversight of anti-bullying policy and procedures will:
 - ensure that all parents/carers, students, governors and teaching and non-teaching staff are fully aware of the policy and its contents
 - ensure staff receive appropriate training
 - ensure that the governors and the leadership team are kept fully up to date with key issues
 - report to and liaise with the governor with responsibility for safeguarding
 - provide the appropriate support for staff
 - oversee the cross year working party and the 6th form/Year 11 Anti-Bullying Committee
 - review the policy and procedures bi-annually

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4. The student progress co-ordinator is responsible for oversight of all issues relating to Bullying in across his/her year groups.
5. The progress leaders are responsible for oversight of all issues relating to bullying in his/her key stage

5. RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING BULLYING

5.1 Staff

The member of staff to whom an incident of bullying is first reported should deal with the issue initially. The minimum action after the initial report should be that the child is able to write down or discuss his/her concerns fully.

Staff should:

- listen carefully to what he/she is being told making sure that you ask for and record exact details of what was said and done, where and when the bullying occurred and the names of any witnesses using the Record of Bullying Incident form or email the dedicated email address antibullying@southfieldsch.co.uk
- collect any supporting statements from witnesses and record these on the Record of Bullying Incident form
- if the student reporting the bullying is a friend of the victim, go through the same process of asking her to write down what has happened. You must make it clear that you will have to deal with anything he/she tells you so cannot keep it in confidence. The friend might need to be reassured that he/she has done the right thing and be kept informed once you have started to deal with the issue

NOTE: the victim and witnesses can also use the Student Record of Bullying Incident Form to record what happened.

- remain calm and objective
- reassure the victim that the situation will be dealt with and give the student an opportunity to discuss the fear of retaliation
- impress upon the victim that she should report any further incidents of bullying or any harassment
- investigate the incident and see the perpetrator as soon as possible and explain what the victim has told you and record the outcome
- take any necessary advice from the appropriate student progress co-ordinator, progress leader or the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator
- take any necessary disciplinary action (see behaviour policy)
- contact parents/carers when necessary
- ensure that there is a follow-up meeting with everyone involved and make sure that all are aware of the date/day/time
- refer the matter on to the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator or the Head if necessary
- pass all the detail on to the appropriate form tutor, student progress leader and progress leader with a copy to the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator

NOTE: in exceptional cases the police will be consulted

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In the event of a parent/carer reporting an incident of bullying to you the following is advisable:

- listen carefully and take complete notes of dates, times, incidents and people involved. As
- with students, it is advisable to stay calm and objective
- advise the parent of the action you intend to take, the likely outcomes and the timing of feedback
- record the outcome of any investigations you have completed
- feed back to the parent/carer who has complained with your findings and any outcomes
- if necessary offer a face-to-face meeting

Students:

Everyone has a right to come to school and feel safe. No one deserves to be bullied and it is very important that you take steps to sort out any situation where you or someone you know is the victim of bullying. You might feel worried, scared, alone and vulnerable but remember the Southfield motto:

'It is up to all of us to take a stand against bullying. Speak out – tell someone, a teacher, a friend, your parents, someone on ABC, use the dedicated email address or the anti-bullying forms located in the library.'

The Anti-Bullying Committee is here to help. You can go to see any one of them if you want to talk to someone. They can be emailed or you can go to the 6th form study area/year 11 form rooms. A message can also be left at pupil reception that you want to talk to one of them. ABC will check the anti-bullying forms in the library and might be sent to talk to you/support you by a member of staff.

Parent/Carers

Students who are bullied may show changes in behaviour and there are some tell-tale signs which might indicate your child is a victim.

- Continuing absence from school with either real or imagined illness such as sickness, headache, stomach pains or breathlessness. This often shows itself in a child who appears well at other times but develops the symptoms when it is time to go to school.
- A child who becomes withdrawn or anxious or attempts to get in with the individual/crowd who is bullying her, or a child who withdraws entirely and tries to hide/stay in places she thinks will be safe.
- Work and/or concentration might deteriorate and the child might become both hesitant and timid or 'over the top' in her reactions/responses.
- A lack of interest in socialising
- A significant change in the personality of your child

What should you do if I think your child is being bullied?

- Talk to the school. At Southfield School your first point of contact to report concerns about bullying is your daughter's/son's form tutor, but you could also communicate with her/his Progress Leader or the Student Services Team.
- It will be helpful to have some notes about your concerns e.g. dates, places and names of other pupils involved. It is useful to remember that the teacher you contact may have no

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idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident, so the clearer you can be about what has happened the better.

- save any written notes, text messages, emails or anything posted on web space.
- make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- ask if there is anything you can do to help your child.
- stay in touch with us and let us know if things improved as well as if problems continue

CYBER AND HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

CYBER 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. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

Being a victim of cyber bullying can be very distressing for a young person as most of the time they don't know who is bullying them. Cyber bullying includes things such as sending nasty text messages or emails, or setting up a hate group on a social networking site. The bullying may also happen 24/7 and the victim is often targeted even when they are in the comfort of their own home. Images and text messages can be circulated very quickly and widely on the internet which makes it very hard to combat cyber bullying.

Southfield is committed to tackling cyber bullying whether it occurs in or out of school. We recognise the impact this sort of bullying has on the intended victim and we will take the necessary disciplinary steps to deal with anyone who is involved in it. Internet safety is also part of the PSHE curriculum.

Helplines:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk – CEOP the police's Internet Child Protection Unit 02072381789
www.kidscape.org.uk
www.childline.org.uk
www.childnet-int.org

Categories of Cyber Bullying:

- text messaging
- sending pictures or video clips

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- phone calling
- email messaging
- defamatory blogs
- social network sites

Advice to students:

- do not reply to nasty emails or texts. If the content is abusive or obscene don't give the perpetrator the satisfaction of reacting to them.
- tell your parents immediately and then tell the school.
- keep copies of any texts and/or emails as they may be used for evidence.
- tell the service provider. Providers should have a number you can ring to report abusive messages.
- on social networks do not respond to an abusive or obscene posting. Log off and do not answer. Again keep the evidence and tell your parents and the school.
- do not give out personal information on chat rooms or instant messaging.
- think carefully about what you write.

Advice to parents:

- make sure you monitor the use of the internet at home
- know what the front page of your daughter/son's Facebook page is like
- become a friend on your daughter's/son's facebook
- avoid having a webcam in the bedroom
- contact the school immediately if you have any concerns
- contact CEOP if you are worried about anything out of school hours

HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

The government is very concerned about homophobic bullying and a recent report concluded that it continues to be widespread in Britain's schools. 'More than half (55%) of lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils have experienced direct bullying.' In addition: 'Gay people who are bullied are at a higher risk of suicide, self-harm and depression. **Two in five** (41 per cent) have attempted or thought about taking their own life directly because of bullying and the same number say that they deliberately self-harm directly because of bullying'

Southfield is committed to dealing with incidents of homophobic bullying and recognises the impact this can have on a young person's wellbeing. We are also committed to challenging the use of negative homophobic language and to raising awareness of the impact of this type of language.

Useful contact:

www.stonewall.org.uk

Advice to students:

We recognise that dealing with issues related to sexuality can be difficult and that any bullying as a result of that can seriously damage your self-esteem:

- do not be afraid to talk to someone you trust about how you feel
- always report any incidents to the school

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- talk to your parents
- talk to someone you trust

Advice to parents

- contact the school immediately if you have any concerns
- contact Stonewall who are an organisation set up to support students, parents and professionals

TRANSGENDER BULLYING (transphobia)

Southfield is committed to providing a safe environment for transgender students. As with homophobic bullying, we recognise that transgender bullying can have significant harmful effects on transgender students and we are committed to challenging the use of negative transphobia language in school.

Advice to students:

We recognise that dealing with issues related to transgender can be very difficult and that any bullying as a result of this can seriously damage your self-esteem and ability to make your transition a positive experience. We are committed to supporting you totally and to adopting an zero-tolerance of transphobia bullying.

- do not be afraid to talk to someone you trust about how you feel
- always report any incidents to the school
- talk to your parents
- talk to someone you trust

Advice to parents

- contact the school immediately if you have any concerns
- contact one of the organisations committed to helping and supporting parents of transgender children

Useful contacts

[Mermaids](#)

[Get Connected | Transgender or Cross-dressing - Get Connected](#)

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