

South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust

Saltash Community School

Anti Bullying Policy

Date	Changes
26/11/24	New anti- bullying policy written

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1. Listening to our students

Before finalising this policy, student feedback was taken through student conferencing and student surveying. Therefore, every student in the school was afforded the opportunity to have their voice heard. From this information gathering, the school has been able to draw these key conclusions:

- Bullying has been witnessed or experienced by most students
- Students want to better understand the school's process when dealing with bullying
- Most students want perpetrators of bullying to be sanctioned and educated
- Clear communication and regular check-ins with victims is highly valued
- Trials of the contractual approach have had overwhelmingly positive feedback

We are in total agreement with our students about the seriousness and importance of tackling bullying in our community. Moreover, the school has listened carefully to our students and made good use of the relevant literature when shaping our overall strategy – sanctions are important but must work with an educational approach.

2. Definition of Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance, working from guidance in the Children Act 1989, defines bullying as:

the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.

At Saltash, we identify bullying as happening primarily, but not exclusively, in the following forms:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Verbal
- Online

We know that bullying can target a child's protected characteristics (listed below). The school's response to bullying based on protected characteristics works within government guidelines and includes, therefore, reporting these incidents to the local authority. Moreover, education specific to the nature of the bullying is provided to the perpetrator with a view to changing their outlook and behaviour.

Protected characteristics relevant to children (as laid out in the Equality Act, 2010)

- disability
- gender reassignment
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The school recognises that bullying can take place anywhere at any time (please see '7. Places and Spaces') and will impact a child's experience of school. Therefore, the school will respond to and act on information relating to bullying that has happened in school or out of school. We support targets of bullying which is taking place outside of school by encouraging parents/carers to report incidents to the police via 101 or the website and then working closely with local forces thereafter (please see '10. Responding to Bullying').

3. Link to our Behaviour Policy

As our behaviour policy says, *'sanctions do not in themselves change behaviour. They simply apply the limits to behaviour'*. The approach of this policy, therefore, dovetails closely with the educational approach of the wider school because it seeks to use the dual techniques of education and sanction to achieve its ends. In sum, the principles of restorative justice are central to our approach to bullying behaviour.

The school is clear that it has, *'zero tolerance of prejudice and discrimination between peers or between pupils and adults. All staff and pupils have the right to equal opportunity and to feel safe from harassment or prejudice in any form'*. This policy lays out some of the ways in which the school seeks to 'educate to eliminate' bullying – a clear embodiment of the aims and commitments laid out in our behaviour policy.

The main aim of sanctions for serious misbehaviour, such as bullying, is *'for the child to recognise the mistake and use the opportunity to improve their understanding of behaviour'*. Our contractual and restorative approach, as outlined below, well meets this aim and therefore works hand-in-glove with the behaviour policy.

Repeated bullying by a student could result in a fixed term suspension. As per our behaviour policy, the investigation would be made by a middle leader or senior member of the staff. This decision would not be taken lightly and forms part of an escalation process that would follow a student significantly failing to meet the terms of an anti-bullying contract.

4. Link to Safeguarding

Safeguarding our children is of the utmost importance. The school's approach and responses to bullying form an important part of our safeguarding measures. Safeguarding is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding is therefore primarily proactive and preventative. Reactive safeguarding measures form the school's child protection policy. Bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse and taken extremely seriously at Saltash. There are instances when we would follow our safeguarding policy in response to a bullying incident. For instance, if a child is refusing to attend school, if a child has been physically or sexually assaulted or if there had been significant impacts on a child's mental health. The school works to prevent bullying and respond to it swiftly and effectively – it can therefore be linked with both safeguarding and child protection

As detailed above (4. Link to Behaviour Policy), not all bullying is necessarily an immediate safeguarding concern and can be effectively addressed via mechanisms in our behaviour policy.

Importantly, the school's response to bullying incidents can only take place if the behaviour is reported by the target, upstanders and witnesses or staff. The school communicates clearly with the children about who they can report bullying to (see Appendix A 'Reporting Bullying Poster').

The safeguarding team – there are posters around the school and regular reminders through assemblies and PD lessons of who forms this team – is well advertised to the children and trained in listening to disclosures. All staff are trained in actively listening to our children and reporting incidents accurately and in a timely fashion. A culture of safeguarding is nurtured at Saltash and supports our children in telling the adults looking after them about incidents of unkindness and bullying.

5. Educate to Eliminate

In line with the student feedback discussed above, we are committed to an ultimate ambition – the elimination of bullying at Saltash Community School – and doing so not only by sanctioning bullying behaviour but by a considered and effective educational strategy. (See below (8. Prevention) for details on how various aspects of the school contribute to the creation of an environment in which bullying behaviour is prevented).

The Equality Act 2010 outlines clearly that *discrimination* is treating someone 'less favourably' than someone else because of one or more of their protected characteristics. The school will educate its students about discrimination and its impacts because, as the legislation lays out, in the workplace 'employers can be held responsible for the actions of employees. This is called 'vicarious liability'.¹ The school is, alongside parents and carers, responsible for the behaviour of its students.

When bullying behaviour is identified, investigated and proved (to a satisfactory threshold for the school – namely, more likely than not to have happened), contracts (see 10. Responding) will be issued and a mentoring process begun for both victim and perpetrator. Education for *both* is vital in helping them:

- (a) Identify and understand bullying behaviour
- (b) Understand how and why to report bullying behaviour in a timely fashion
- (c) Develop a school environment in which bullying behaviour is challenged
- (d) Restore relationships and reduce the likelihood of perpetrator recidivism

Once contracts have been issued and mentors ascribed, a bank of resources will be used by staff to educate all involved in the bullying incident. For the victim, this will focus on their rights to enjoy school without being fearful of or affected by bullying and in supporting others who have been victims. For the perpetrator, it will address the type of bullying they have undertaken and may therefore address:

- The potential impacts of bullying on victims
- How to manage peer pressure
- The differences between banter and bullying
- The difference between 'upstanding' and 'bystanding'
- Healthy peer relationships

Some examples of the resources used include (this is neither exhaustive nor complete, and continuously updated):

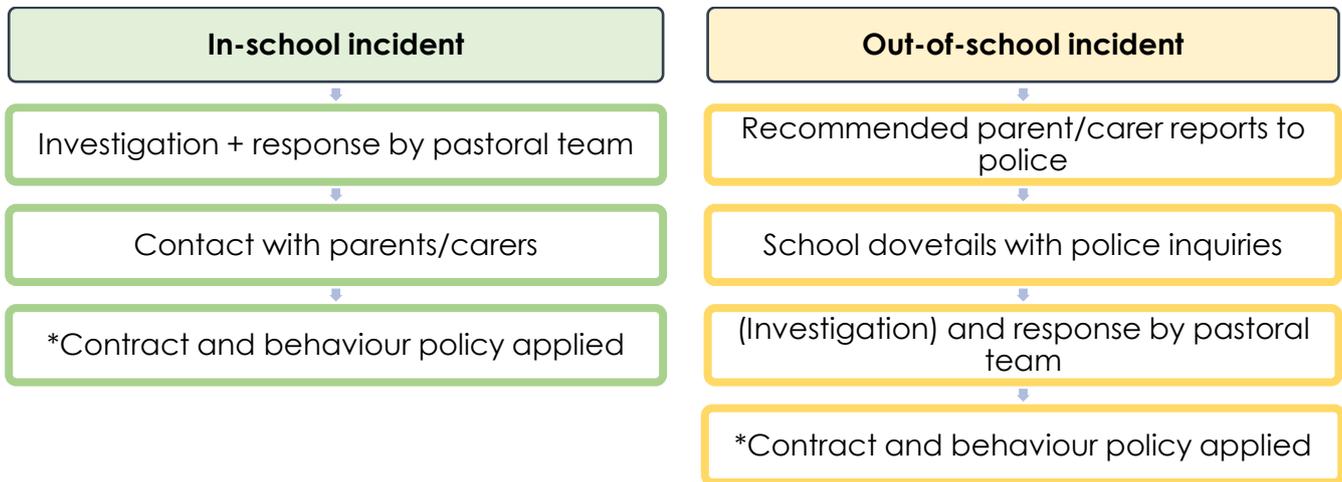
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJN4JE7h4S0> – Choose Respect (Anti-Bullying Alliance)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVvEQjS1K3M> – How to disagree respectfully (Young Anti-Bullying Alliance)
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zdds382> - Jake's Story (Bullying and Mental Health)

¹ <https://www.acas.org.uk/discrimination-and-the-law>. Accessed 22.11.24

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/z482hbk> - Joe's Story (Bullying re: Protected Characteristics – Sexuality)
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zhpyf4j> - Consequences of Online Bullying
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= B6ro7M4mZg> – Ariana's Story (Understanding why Bullying is Wrong)
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zvndf4j> - Ryan's Story (Bullying re: Protected Characteristics – Race)
- <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/prevalence-and-impact-bullying/impact-bullying> - Academic research links relating to the impacts of bullying (Staff Resource)

6. Places and Spaces

Bullying can take place anywhere. The school's planned response and standard procedures are different depending on where the bullying has occurred. Irrespective of the location in which incidents take place, the school always takes bullying extremely seriously:



*Anti-bullying contracts will be used when investigation of the incident provides evidence of bullying according to the definition in part 3 of this policy

Recommended parent/carer reports to police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal, physical, emotional or online bullying incidents that take place outside of school should be reported to the police or dealt with by parents/carers in the first instance, as they have happened outside the school's jurisdiction • The school is clear that incidents which take place outside of school can have an impact on a child's experience of school
School dovetails with police inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a police investigation has begun, the school cannot conduct its own investigations unless directed to by the police • We work closely with the local policing team and are in regular contact • Police will likely contact the school if a bullying incident is reported to them with regard to a Saltash child
Investigation by pastoral team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations will be conducted by a member of the pastoral team (PSA/HOY/AH for Behaviour/Member of Safeguarding Team) • Investigations are likely to include (but won't necessarily be restricted to) the following: statements being taken from witnesses, CCTV being reviewed, children/staff being interviewed • The findings will be recorded internally, shared with parents and carers, and form the basis of any decisions made regarding sanctions • The school will endeavour to conduct investigations in a prompt and thorough manner with an emphasis placed on gathering student views and perspectives
Response by pastoral team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the report of an incident, the pastoral team's response will be supportive of the target. Safety planning will take place with the target. Parents/carers will be kept informed of the plans made • Witnesses will be supported where needed • Perpetrators are supported through an educational approach (see 6. <i>Educate to Eliminate</i>)
Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-bullying contracts (see 10. Responding) are the key response to bullying • Contracts are issued to both perpetrator and target • The contracts aim to be restorative i.e. to support the perpetrator not to act in that way in future and support the target to fully understand what has happened, how to recognise it and where/how to report bullying behaviour
Behaviour policy applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents will be sanctioned in line with our behaviour policy • Once contracts have been issued, sanctions escalate for repetition of the same behaviour • Contracts are used with the aim to act restoratively rather than punitively with the long-term aim of changing behaviours

7. Prevention

The school works to foster a culture in which students are respectful and kind to one another. Success in doing this would be a great step towards eliminating bullying at Saltash. There are a number of ways in which the school seeks to prevent bullying:

a. Assembly Program

The assembly program is planned at the end of each academic year (in readiness for the next) to address the school's TEAM values of Tenacity, Empathy, Aspiration and Motivation alongside specific sessions designed to promote a culture in which bullying does not happen by addressing, among other things, trends identified in the preceding academic year. Moreover, space is made for 'responsive safeguarding' assemblies which draw their focus from the preceding half term's key trends. Therefore, if bullying is one of them, it will be addressed with all students in good time.

b. PSHE Curriculum

Carefully constructed as the basis of our wider Personal Development curriculum, PSHE lessons across years 7 to 13 return to the theme of building healthy and recognising unhealthy relationships and behaviours. The Year 7 program, for instance, begins with lessons on building healthy relationships and ends with a focus on being kind and polite. Year 9s are taught about the Fundamental British Value of respect and tolerance, self-esteem and, later in the year, specifically about bullying. The Sixth Form receive education on consent, how and when to seek support, healthy relationships and how to manage altercations in school, work and beyond. Therefore, our PSHE curriculum works positively and explicitly to combat bullying behaviour through education on a number of tangents.

c. Outside Speakers/Agencies

Outside speakers provide expertise in a multitude of areas. The school often makes use of external agencies to deliver sessions that align with our values and engage the children. Educating the children through a wide range of professionals and organisations is a key tool in the school's arsenal when trying to prevent bullying. We find that over-communicating our message, with the help of adults who are not part of the school, aids with student engagement and impacts behaviour to a greater extent.

d. Character Education

The tutor program also works towards the fostering of a culture that prevents bullying behaviour. Through a weekly session, our children are taught Character Education which addresses the following themes with years 7 to 11:

	Half Term 1	Half Term 2
Autumn Term	Life Beyond School	Celebrating Diversity and Equality
Spring Term	Rights, Responsibilities and Fundamental British Values	Health and Wellbeing
Summer Term	Staying Safe Offline and Online	Relationships and Sex Education

Whilst the entire program works to foster an environment in which safeguarding is a priority and bullying is reduced, there are specific themes such as online safety, health and wellbeing and the celebration of diversity that specifically contribute to educating our students against bullying behaviour.

Tutor time is delivered consistently across KS3 and KS4, ensuring that the same messages, resources and lessons are delivered to every student by staff they trust and have a strong relationship with. As with the assembly program, the sessions delivered can be changed in response to data, events in school or indeed national/international narratives.

e. Student Voice

Student Council

Our student council is a key way in which we listen to our students and receive feedback. 'You said. We did' is the mantra of the school council and shows the school's commitment to documenting the ways in which it has acted as a result of the Council's feedback.

- Each tutor group is represented by two reps
- Reps are elected by voting in each tutor group
- Regular meetings are held with the member of staff leading on student voice
- A suggestion box and 'You said. We did' display will be available and visible from Jan 2025

The school raises bullying with the council regularly and takes feedback on the efficacy of the school's anti-bullying strategy with a view to improving it. Given representatives bring feedback from their tutor groups, the council provides the chance to genuinely understand the views of the whole school.

Peer Mentoring

The school recognises that one of the largest support mechanisms it can mobilise is our own student body. A select group of sixth former students have been trained in Mental health First Aid and are assigned students who need support by the pastoral team. The mentors are trained to share concerns raised with the relevant members of staff, giving the school the opportunity to act early to stop bullying from occurring.

Year 8 students are trained in peer mentoring and are assigned selected Year 7 students in the Autumn Term to ease transition. This not only builds connections between year groups, developing empathy, but also trains a significant number of students in understanding their peers and how students can be vulnerable as well as publicising and praising students who go out of their way to help others.

f. Community Links

The DSL/DDSL attend Safer Saltash meetings at which key members of our community from police and councillors to education, youth work and health professionals discuss current issues, including bullying in and out of school, and build relevant strategies to address them. This maintains and deepens connections between the institutions in the community, helps the school understand our students from a wider perspective and act in an informed manner alongside other professionals. Regular contact occurs between the professionals in this group, which ensures that strategies and approaches can be reviewed with the most up to date information available. Given that bullying can occur anywhere and at any time, this holistic approach is a valuable one in preventing it wherever possible.

g. Culture of Safeguarding

At Saltash, we foster a 'culture of safeguarding' among the staff and students. Staff are kept abreast of the most up to date information and most relevant safeguarding information through a weekly bulletin. Therefore, training in safeguarding is continuous and at the forefront of all staff's minds. Staff are therefore well equipped to identify the key indicators that a victim of bullying would display and understand the importance of timely action.

As regards our students, the school commits to Anti-Bullying Week each year and strongly supports initiatives such as the 'odd socks' campaign. Moreover, students are made aware of the members of the safeguarding team, encouraged to speak with staff if they are struggling and well-supported by the wider pastoral team. Trusted adults are available and student wellbeing is taken seriously.

h. Community Routines

Managing behaviour at before school, during social times, at lessons changeovers and after school is a challenge which we tackle partly through our Community Routines. These were initially

communicated to our students through tutor time and assemblies and are reiterated through daily interactions with the staff. In order that our students not only understand what is expected of them at, for instance, line-up, break time and when journeying home after school, the 'why' is clearly displayed and explained. Elements of this exposition focus on safety for oneself and others as well as understanding how to behave as part of a larger, respectful community.

i. Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

Specifically selected students in Key Stage 3 and 4 are given the opportunity to engage in anti-bullying ambassador training through the Diana Award. This program follows The Diana Award's well-known peer-led approach, which promotes leadership and teamwork, empowering participants to make lasting changes in their communities. These leaders of our community are a powerful tool in highlighting the school's commitment to creating an environment in which bullying does not happen and in highlighting the role that our students can and should play therein.

8. Reporting and Tracking

An anonymous bullying reporting tool is now available on the school website for students. Reports are recorded and the relevant pastoral staff are alerted. Following that, action is taken in line with the approaches above. Anonymous reporting is vital because it eliminates the fear of repercussions that some students cite as a reason why they do not report bullying behaviour.



<https://www.smart-trust.net/anonymousreporting>

<https://forms.office.com/e/GinjFfknZ8>

Every half term, the safeguarding and behaviour leads review the incidents raised through the anonymous reporting tool, and through conventional means in school, and ensure that the school's policy has been applied in a timely fashion. Training needs among staff are identified through this process as well.

The school also reviews the incidence rates of bullying in each year group in order to target its efforts in prevention, education to eliminate and provision such as outside speakers, drop-down / off-timetable opportunities, the assembly program and PSHE lessons.

9. Responding

The school's key tool in addressing bullying is the Peer Bullying Contract. There is a strong research base that supports a 'restorative' approach using 'conferences' – the schools in which this has been trialled have significantly reduced their bullying incidence rates.

A 'restorative' approach is one in which:

- a) The school listens to the students involved (victim and perpetrator)
- b) The behaviour is analysed and discussed with a view to all parties having a strong understanding

- c) Education of the perpetrator is paramount
- d) Sanctions work alongside the education provided
- e) Victim and perpetrator are supported by individual mentors

The 'conferences' used in the research are, realistically, a combination of meetings and contracts/agreements. In combination, these will:

- a) involve parents and students
- b) explore the behaviour's causes and consequences
- c) engage all involved in an agreement (contract)
- d) check in regularly with those involved in order to support them until the issue(s) is resolved

The contracts will be assented to by students and parents and monitored by the ascribed staff mentor, who will be chosen with the specific needs of the student involved. Check ins are scheduled regularly for the 6 weeks following the implementation of the contract in order to carefully monitor the situation and prevent recurrence of the bullying behaviour. Moreover, the scheduled check ins are also the times in which some of the educational work is done with the students.

Failure to meet the agreed terms of the contract leads to a sanction and triggers a meeting with senior staff. Contracts can be issued more than once and sanctions will escalate accordingly i.e. should the terms of a contract terms be broken more than once, the sanction would be more significant, following the escalation ladder in the Behaviour Policy.

*please find here a link to the contract: [Anti-Bullying Peer Contract.pdf](#)

10. Measuring Impact

At regular intervals throughout the school year, we are committed to gathering data with the aim of understanding incidence rates, the efficacy and impacts of the strategies outlines above and will present our findings and consequent next steps to the governing body, staff and parents at the appropriate times. The school welcomes parental input and will build it into our future decision-making process as regards the anti-bullying policy.