Sheldon School
Chippenham

Policy Title: **Anti-Bullying Policy**	Effective Date:	May 2024
LT Member Responsible: John Rumble	Review Date:	May 2026
Governors' Committee Responsible: Community and Culture		

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined by the Department for Education (DfE) as :

Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities:

• You have the right to learn

• You have the right to feel safe

• You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect

• You have the responsibility to protect these rights for yourself and others

1. **What does the law say?**

This policy has been constructed whilst being mindful of the following acts:

• The Education and Inspections Act 2006

• The Equality Act 2010

• The Children Act 1989

• The Education Act 2011

• Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

• Preventing and tackling bullying 2017

• Searching, screening and confiscation advice for schools 2022

2. **Rationale**

We strive to create a culture based on our core expectations for Students to:

• Be Kind, Be Brave, Be the Best You

Students must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are a school that sets high standards for our students, it is important that we create as culture in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no student has to suffer from harassment of any kind. Because bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make our students knowledgeable about bullying and teach them strategies that enable them to stand up for themselves without resorting to retaliation in any form. Bullying can be a cause of anxiety for parents, so good communication around what bullying is and out approach to dealing with it, is really important.

Vision:

Providing a safe and happy learning environment is integral to achieving the wider objectives of school improvement: raising attainment, improving school attendance; promoting equality and diversity and ensuring the well-being of all members of the school community. If a student feels safe at school they are in a much better position to enjoy learning and achieve their full potential.

Tackling and preventing bullying has always been a priority for the school and we are committed to working with parents and students to ensure our school remains a safe place to learn. We expect all staff members to promote anti-bullying messages in our school and to act swiftly to support any student who shares concerns.

We will not tolerate behaviour which is discriminatory in nature and which causes harm to members of our community. All students should expect to attend our school and be treated with equality and respect regardless of their gender, race, religion or any other perceived difference.

This policy sets out a range of proactive strategies, reactive strategies and intervention systems which are in place to:

   a) Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour

   b) React to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way

   c) Safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for them

   d) Apply appropriate consequences to the student(s) causing the bullying and ensure they are given opportunities to learn from the experience, in some cases through multiagency support and using restorative justice techniques where applicable.

3. **Clarification of terms**

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. A one off incident is seldom regarded as bullying except in certain rare circumstances including where prejudice ais present. In some cases such as bullying that targets someone with special needs or disability for example or if there is a significant risk of harm, we would not look for repeated incidents to classify it as bullying if all the other aspects were there. Bullying can be frequent or infrequent, long term, serious or low level and persistent.

Bullying can take many forms including:

• Physical – kicking and shoving, injuring the target or damaging their belongings, intimidation

• Verbal – taunts and name-calling, insults, threats or humiliation, intimidation

• Emotional - behaviour intended to isolate, hurt or humiliate someone

• Indirect – sly and underhand, behind the target's back, rumour spreading

• Cyber – using any form of electronic means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums or apps and sharing images designed to upset and harm

Bullying can be driven by prejudice or fear of difference. It can be linked to

• Race, religion or culture

• Gender

• Sexual orientation

• Disability or special need

• Long term illness

• Appearance

• Family arrangements

• Any protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010

These types of bullying are singling someone out because of their identity. When doing so, a bully may use any of the forms described above but in this list we are looking at intention, prejudice and discrimination.

Actions NOT considered to be bullying:

All students have disagreements: these are not classed as bullying and are dealt with through the Behaviour Policy.

Actions not considered to be bullying are:

• Not liking someone

• Being excluded (unintentionally)

• Accidentally bumping into someone

• A single act of telling a joke about someone

• Arguments

• Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others

• Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation, or meanness.

• Friendship fallouts

Reasons for Bullying

Some reasons why students might bully others include:

• They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular or cool

• They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all of the time

• They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group

• They are fearful of other student's differences

• They are jealous of another student

• They are unhappy

• They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.

The Effects of Bullying

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional and physical stress. Each student's response to being bullied is unique, however some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

• Depression and anxiety

• Higher absence levels

• Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem and loneliness

• Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy

• Unexplainable injuries

• Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery

• Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness

• Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Children may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch

• Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares

• Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school

• Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations

• Self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves or talking about suicide.

Safeguarding children and young people

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'. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is John Rumble and where we consider thresholds for significant harm have been met we will report our concerns to the Integrated Front Door (MASH) at Wiltshire Council.

Link – Safeguarding Policy

4.   Roles and Responsibilities which set the right ethos of being a 'telling' school

 Students: To tackle bullying we need to establish an ethos of being a "telling" school where all of our students 'Speak out. Stay safe'. A 'telling' school is one where students do inform staff when bullying is taking place.

 We want our students to support the school policy by not being bystanders when they see and hear incidents of bullying within the school environment.

Staff:

All staff have a responsibility to be alert for the signs and symptoms that a student may be being bullied; this may be both in their classroom environment, and in the wider school.

• If a student discloses that they are being bullied to any member of staff, they must listen, reassure and explain that they will ensure that support is given. Information should be passed onto the tutor and the Head of Year for further investigation without delay. This should be logged on the Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) system. Parents will be informed of the investigation starting and then updated with the outcome.

• Class teachers must also deal with any "banter" or discriminatory language as it happens and log any issues directly into CPOMS.

All members of staff will routinely attend training that equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Parents/Carers:

Parents/carers have a responsibility to report any incident of bullying behaviour to a member of the school staff and allow the person investigating the incident the time to ensure it is a full and accurate investigation which ensures student safety remains uncompromised. The role of parents/carers in supporting their child to develop a range of social and emotional skills which minimise the chances of their child bullying, cannot be underestimated and will significantly support the school in seeking to reduce or prevent incidents of bullying. Parents/carers should monitor their child's online behaviour and devices and should have access to these to reduce the risk of safeguarding issues and of their child being involved in cyberbullying. Parents should seek to implement a healthy routine of screen free time.

The Role of Governors:

The Full Governing Body (FGB) and the Culture and Commuity Commmittee (C&C) are responsible for the approval of this policy and oversight of it's implementation. They support the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school. The FGB and C&C Commmittee will not condone any form of bullying, and any incidents of bullying will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately. The C&C Committee monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and receives regular updates from the relavant members of the leadership team. The Governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the Governors on request about the effectiveness of the schools anti-bullying strategies.

The Role of the Headteacher:

 It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school's anti-bullying strategies as outlined in Section 2, to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the school policy, and that they know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher will report to the Culture and Community Committee about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher will set the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, therefore making bullying less likely.

5. **Cyber-bullying**

The School has a separate policy related to e-safety addressing the use of mobile technology, social media, appropriate online activity, security, access and monitoring procedures in place – this is the Online Safety Policy which can be found on our website. Students have to agree to the ICT Acceptable Use Policy every time they log on to a school computer. Online Safety is reinforced with students in assemblies, PSRE classes and ICT lessons.

Link – Online Safety Policy

6. **Reporting, Recording, Sanctions and Monitoring**

Confidential reporting systems for students

We are aware that many students worry about telling an adult as they fear that the issue will get worse. They can report bullying to us confidentially, however, if we feel that they are at risk then we cannot keep the information confidential. Our aim is to ensure that they have confidence that their concerns will be treated promptly and seriously, and that action will be taken which will not make their situation worse. Students are able to use the following methods to report bullying to us:

a) Speaking to a member of staff. This is, most commonly, the tutor, Pastoral Support Worker, Head of Year or Deputy Head of Year. There are safeguarding posters displayed in every tutor room and in prominent places around the school. These posters remind the students of who they can talk to in school.
b) Emailing a member of staff.
c) Sixth Form Mentor – many students are mentored by a Sixth Form student. They can report bullying issues to this mentor.
d) Online via E-Praise – Students are able to report issues to a senior member of staff using E-praise.

Recording Bullying

At the point of a disclosure of bullying, it is recorded on our CPOMS system. Following a full investigation, outcomes and sanctions are recorded on E-praise. The CPOMS log will also be updated to show a full chronology of events and outcomes.

Responding to Bullying

We have a responsibility to ensure that sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any SEN or disabilities that students may have, and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable Students. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other students and it should be made clear that their actions are wrong and appropriate sanctions imposed. However, for a sanction to be reasonable and lawful, we must take account of the nature of the student's disability or SEN, and the extent to which the student understands and is in control of what they are doing.

Sanctions have three main purposes:

• To impress on the perpetrator of the bullying that what they have done is unacceptable.

• To deter them from repeating that behaviour.

• To signal to other students that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

The sanctions for bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident. We wish to ensure that our sanctions address bullying behaviours in a way which does not lead to escalation but resolution, and which gives the best chance that bullying behaviour will not be repeated. Therefore we have a range of sanctions and other approaches and strategies that we may apply having investigated an incident.

Where appropriate, we may inform the police.

Such incidents include

• Violence or assault

• Theft

• Repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages

• Hate crimes

Parents of both the victim and the perpretrator will be notified of the outcomes of any investigation involving their child.

Bullying outside of the school premises

We have a statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Where incidents that happen outside school are clearly having a detrimental effect on the life of a student in school, we will investigate these and, in conjunction with the parents and the local police, take appropriate action.

Link – School Behaviour Policy

Parents/Carers wishing to report bullying

Parent/Carers are encouraged to talk to any member of staff if they have concerns regarding their child. All reported incidents will be fully investigated within a reasonable period of time. It is important to understand that good practice in investigating incidents recognises that time needs to be set aside to ensure that children and young people involved do not have time to collaborate their stories. Any investigation needs to be done in a manner which ensures the target of the bullying feels safe about the process and the outcomes which may result from it. We realise that parents and carers want action but they must also allow staff the time to fully investigate the report. Ultimately we wish to ensure that parents/carers have confidence that staff will act promptly, take the concern seriously and not take action which makes the situation worse. A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can make a complaint in line with the school Complaints Policy.

Restorative Approaches

At Sheldon, we will use restorative practices to resolve friendship issues. We may use it to resolve bullying issues, but only when appropriate and agreed with the victim of the bullying. Support for those involved can be ongoing and may involve :

- Work with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead.
- Referral for mental health support (could include mindfulness, ELSA or Thrive)
- Ongoing work with the tutor
- Regular support through the Pastoral Support Worker.
- Possible SEN referral (where appropriate)

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

• The C&C Committee, the Headteacher and relevant staff will review this policy regulalrly and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

• The school council and student leadership teams will review the effectiveness of the policy biannually and their views given to the Headteacher.

• Records of all incidents will be kept in CPOMS.

• Incidents of reported and confirmed bullying will be reported to the Culture and Community Committee as part of the termly leadership report.

• Bullying data will be analysed to reflect and re-design further strategies to improve procedure.

• There will be regular analysis of incident logs and interventions to continually improve practice.

8. Links to other policies

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans that can be found on the school website, including:

• Behaviour Policy

• Complaints Procedure

• Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

• Curriculum plans and practices, such as: PSHE, Character Development etc.

• Online Safety Policy

• Mobile Phone Use Policy

9. Useful websites

Supporting Organisations and Guidance

• Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

• Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org

• Childline: www.childline.org.uk

• DfE: "Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies", and "Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools" March 2014: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

• DfE: "No health without mental health": https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-healthwithout-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy

• Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk

• Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

• MindEd: www.minded.org.uk

• NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

• PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk

• Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk

• The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk

• Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk

• Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

• Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

• Childnet International: www.childnet.com

• Digizen: www.digizen.org

• Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk

• Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

• UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

LGBTQIA+

• EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk

• Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk

• Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk

- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk

- DfE: SEND code of practice: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice0- to-25

- National Autism Society – Dealing with bullying Dealing with bullying (autism.org.uk)

Racism and Hate

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk

- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org

- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk

- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org

- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/education

PODCASTS for parents

https://www.goodinside.com/podcast/2360/what-to-do-when-your-kid-is-bullied/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gqsm7AyJI2U

The emotional lives of teenagers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecaB5oqDC8M

Appendix A

Definition of Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or social media to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target a child. Unlike physical bullying, cyber-bullying can often be difficult to track as the cyber-bully (the person responsible for the acts of cyber-bullying) can remain anonymous when threatening others online, encouraging them to behave more aggressively than they might face-to-face.

Types of Cyber-bullying

• Flaming: Online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.

• Denigration: Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.

• Exclusion: Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites or other online group activities.

• Outing: Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos

• Trickery: Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.

• Impersonation: Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.

• Harassment: Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.

• Cyber-stalking: Continuous harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.

Appendix B

Strategies to Reduce Bullying

How to deal with bullying and who to tell

Each year in the autumn term we will remind all our students to take the following action if they feel they are being bullied. These messages will also be reinforced throughout the year;

• if you feel able to, then let the perpetrator know that you do not like what is happening and ask them to stop;
• if the bullying doesn't stop, tell someone in school who will take action to sort out the problem. This will often be your tutor, your head of year, Pastoral Support Worker, any teacher, or any other member of staff. Sheldon School has adopted a range of other strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour, including:

• The consistent promotion of the school's behaviour policy, which requires all students to respect the rights of others

• The reinforcement of the clear message that violence has no place at Sheldon School

• Taking part in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week

• Training all members of staff on the anti-bullying policy and strategy

• The supervision by school staff at break and lunch times

• Providing information to parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if they suspect their child is being bullied

• A clear policy of mobile phones not permitted to be used in school hours

• The celebration of all student's backgrounds and cultures through assemblies and in lessons.

• During assemblies, tutor sessions and PSRE lessons, discuss and explore bullying issues with the children

• Raising awareness of cyber-bullying and teaching children to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, internet) – following DfE current guidance on gender questioning children (December 2023)

• All websites accessed in school are filtered and monitored. Software screens the language used in all documents, emails and websites. Any incidents of offensive emails, websites or documents are sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Action will be taken and recorded.

• Effective recording systems are in place (CPOMS)

• Working with multi-agency teams including police and children's services as appropriate

• Contacting the parents of both the child being bullied and the bully

• Challenging sexual content within verbal abuse, especially challenging the word 'gay' and other homophobic or transphobic language