

Southfield School

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Policy Name:	ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
Policy Type:	Statutory
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Review Date:	1st February 2027
Approved By:	SF LGB
Policy Owner:	Jyoti Pankhania

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 that a student is being bullied.

This policy applies to all permanent staff, supply staff, volunteers or anyone else working or volunteering in/on behalf of this school. This policy reflects the requirements of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**.

2. Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To consult with staff, students, governors and parents/carers on a regular basis to inform/review practice and policy.
- To ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents/carers and governors are aware of all issues connected with bullying and are fully aware of the procedures for dealing with it.
- To enable staff, students, parents/carers and governors to deal with bullying confidently and effectively.
- To continue to foster an ethos in which students feel confident to raise their concerns about bullying, both in and out of school.
- To promote The Southfield Way values of Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Responsible in preventing and addressing bullying.
- To ensure all students can Be Proud to Be Southfield by creating a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment.

3. Statement of Commitment

Southfield School 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 School is a 'telling' school and anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it. The school will ensure that arrangements are in place to protect students from bullying and promote respect and

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tolerance among students by:

- embedding The Southfield Way - our core values of Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Responsible and our vision, Be Proud to Be Southfield - throughout all aspects of school life;
- having measures which encourage good behaviour (see Behaviour Policy);
- communicating this policy clearly to all staff, students and parents/carers;
- responding effectively to bullying incidents;
- having effective and user-friendly reporting systems for students;
- ensuring that the school offers a safe environment for parents/carers, staff and students to raise concerns about bullying (see Safeguarding Policy);
- having effective and consistent recording protocols 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, PSHEC and assemblies;
- regularly evaluating and updating the school's approach to take into account developments in technology, including generative AI and online safety (see E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy);
- providing effective staff training in line with KCSIE 2025 requirements;
- regularly liaising with and updating governors;
- linking with appropriate outside agencies.

3.1 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 (e.g. 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, July 2017).

In line with KCSIE 2025 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, this policy recognises that bullying is a safeguarding concern and may overlap with other forms of abuse or harm. As defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and includes protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development, ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3.2 Protected Characteristics:

Bullying often targets individuals due to perceived or actual differences, including but not limited to:

- Race, religion, culture, or belief.
- Sexual orientation/gender/gender identity (LGBTQ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning) (see section on Homophobic and Transgender Bullying).

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- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - KCSIE 2025 recognises that children with SEND can be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying and may be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and may have communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Home circumstances or caring responsibilities.
- Ability.
- Appearance or socio-economic background.
- A student stands out in some other way as being different e.g. exhibits particular behaviour patterns, speaks in a particular way, etc.

3.3 Bullying manifests itself in the following ways:

Verbal - name-calling, teasing, spreading rumors, sarcasm, using threatening or offensive language, remarks and taunting.

Physical – unwanted physical contact, pushing, tripping, kicking, hitting, punching or any physical assault.

Intimidation - stealing, extorting money, food or possessions, obviously whispering/talking about someone, passing notes around, laughing inappropriately, tormenting (hiding books, threatening gestures) and preventing access to rooms, resources, corridors etc.

Isolation - excluding from groups, silent treatment and other students encouraged not to be friendly.

Graffiti - writing on books or walls.

Cyberbullying - through all areas of the internet (including through generative AI platforms as outlined in DfE guidance January 2025), social media, mobile phone calls and texts (see section on cyberbullying and E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy). This now includes the spreading of misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories as identified in KCSIE 2025 as safeguarding harms.

3.4 Prevention Strategies

Southfield School's proactive approach includes:

- Incorporating anti-bullying education into PSHE, assemblies, and tutor sessions.
- Promoting The Southfield Way values (Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Responsible) and vision (Be Proud to Be Southfield) through school-wide campaigns.
- Promoting a culture of respect and inclusivity aligned with our school values.
- Training all staff in recognising, responding to, and preventing bullying in accordance with KCSIE 2025.
- Using student voice to shape and refine anti-bullying strategies.
- Collaborating with external organisations to deliver workshops and resources.
- Addressing online safety risks including misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories as outlined in KCSIE 2025.

Further guidance for schools on preventing and responding to bullying can be accessed at:

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

4. Roles and Responsibilities

In general:

- It is the responsibility of all teaching and non-teaching staff, student bystanders/witnesses and parents/carers to report any incidents, which they perceive to be bullying and take appropriate action to deal with it.
- It is the responsibility of all members of all staff to familiarise themselves with the appropriate documentation and ensure that they follow the guidelines when dealing with bullying issues.
- The Deputy Headteacher, Ms. J. Pankhania, responsible for the anti-bullying policy and procedures will:
 - ensure that all parents/carers, students, governors and teaching and non-teaching staff are fully aware of this policy and its contents.
 - ensure that staff receive appropriate training.
 - ensure that the governors and the Senior 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.
 - review this policy and procedures annually.
- The Deputy Headteacher, Ms. J. Pankhania, responsible for behaviour is responsible for the oversight of all issues relating to bullying.
- The Progress Leaders and Pastoral Team are responsible for the oversight of all issues relating to bullying in his/her year group.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mrs. J. Tailby, ensures safeguarding procedures are followed where bullying overlaps with abuse or neglect.

5. Responding to and Reporting

a. Staff Responsibilities

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 student is able to write down or discuss their concerns fully. Staff should:

- listen carefully to what he/she is being told, making sure that they 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 them to write down what has happened. You must make it clear that you will have to deal with anything they tell you and so cannot keep it in confidence. The friend might need to be reassured that they have done the right thing and

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will 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 they should report any further incidents of bullying or any harassment.
- investigate the incident, see the perpetrator as soon as possible, explain what the victim has told you and record the outcome.
- take any necessary advice from the Student Support Team.
- 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/time.
- refer the matter on to the Headteacher if necessary.
- When necessary, pass all the detail on to the appropriate Form Tutor, Progress Leaders, Pastoral Team, with a copy to the Deputy Headteacher, Ms J. Pankhania in charge of behaviour.

NOTE: In exceptional cases, the police will be consulted.

b. Parent/Carer Reporting

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

- Listen carefully and take notes of dates, times, incidents and people involved;
- With students, it is advisable to stay calm and objective;
- Advise the parent/carers 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/carers who has complained with your findings and any outcomes; if necessary, offer a face-to-face meeting.

c. 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 address 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 School mantra:

'It is up to all of us to take a stand against bullying. Speak out – tell someone, a teacher, a friend, your parents/carers; use the dedicated email address or speak to the behaviour team.'

The Student Support Team are there to talk to you/support you and help reach a resolution.

d. Parent/Carers:

Students who are bullied may show changes in behaviour and there are some tell-tale signs, which might indicate

that your child is a victim as follows:

- 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.

e. What should you do if you 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 child's form tutor, but you could, also, communicate with their Progress Leader or the Pastoral Team;
- It will be helpful to have some notes about your concerns e.g. dates, places and names of other students involved. It is useful to remember that the teacher you contact may have no 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 the web space;
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take;
- Ask if there is anything that you can do to help your child;
- Stay in touch with us and let us know if things have improved as well as if problems continue.

f. Supporting Victims and Addressing Perpetrators

The school will support victims by:

- Offering counselling and mentoring.
- Developing individual action plans for their safety and well-being.

The school will address perpetrators by:

- Delivering appropriate sanctions aligned with the Behaviour Policy.
- Providing restorative justice opportunities.
- Offering support to address underlying causes of their behaviour.

g. 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 of 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 do not 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.

Southfield School is committed to tackling cyber bullying whether it occurs in or out of school. We recognise the impact that 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 PSHEC curriculum.

h. Categories of Cyber Bullying are as follows:

- text messaging;
- sending pictures or video clips;
- telephone calls;
- email messaging;
- defamatory blogs;
- use of social network sites.

Advice to students are as follows:

- 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/carers 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/carers and the school; do not give out personal information on chat rooms or instant messaging; think carefully about what you write.

Advice to parents/carers is as follows:

- make sure that you monitor the use of the internet at home;
- know what the front page of your child's Facebook page is like;
- become a friend on your child's Facebook;
- avoid having a webcam in the bedroom;
- contact the school immediately if you have any concerns and contact CEOP (the police's Internet Child Protection Unit, Tel: 02072 381789) if you are worried about anything out of school hours.

i. Helplines:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk	CEOP: The police's Internet Child Protection Unit, Tel: 02072 381789
www.childline.org.uk	Childline
www.childnet-int.org	Childnet

j. Homophobic Bullying

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Southfield School is committed to dealing with incidents of homophobic bullying and recognizes the impact that 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.

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

- 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/carers;
- talk to someone that you trust.

Advice to parents/carers is as follows:

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

Useful contact: www.stonewall.org.uk - Stonewall.

k. Transgender Bullying (Transphobia)

Southfield School 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 transphobic language in school.

We recognise that dealing with issues related to transgender can be very difficult and that any bullying as a result 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 a zero-tolerance of transphobic bullying.

Advice to students is as follows:

- 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/carers; talk to someone that you trust.

Advice to parents/carers is as follows:

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