



SENDAT

Anti-Bullying, including Cyber Bullying Policy

To be read in conjunction with, but not limited to:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Physical Intervention and Positive Handling Policy
- British Values Statement
- Relationships Policy

History of Document

	SENDAT Anti-Bullying Policy
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Changes	
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SENDAT Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Context

SENDAT is a growing multi-academy trust providing education for students and young people with a range of Special Educational Needs. Our approach to student behaviour and discipline is guided by a shared framework of principles across all the schools, settings and services within the Trust. These are informed by a trust-wide investment in Trauma Informed practice, and the values and ethos of Conscious Discipline.

The Trust encompasses a range of provisions, including special schools meeting a variety of special educational needs, Alternative Provision, and specialist units attached to mainstream schools. For this reason, while our core values remain the same, the detail of how they are implemented is specific to each setting, and is set out in locally agreed procedures.

2. Values

We believe that every member of the SENDAT community has the right:

- To be treated with dignity, respect and empathy
- To be themselves
- To be safe and healthy (physically, emotionally and psychologically)
- To learn without interruption

3. Aims

The overarching aim of this policy is to ensure that all students learn, play and develop in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied; and that all adults and students should recognise that bullying is an antisocial behaviour which affects everyone, and will not be tolerated.

4. Objectives

Our aims will be best achieved in each setting by:

- promoting tolerance and respect for others
- showing respect for the rights and values of others, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, gender orientation, beliefs or abilities
- pro-actively teaching students and offering interventions (including therapeutic interventions) to enable them to recognise their and regulate their own behaviours
- creating an environment in which bullying is considered unacceptable behaviour and where the whole community is willing to take positive action should it occur.

- embedding a trauma informed ethos and a restorative approach to respond effectively to students' needs
- modelling empathetic and respectful relationships.
- ensuring students have access to emotionally available adults.
- encouraging all pupils to seek help and support when needed
- providing clear guidance, training, mentoring and supervision for staff to ensure vigilance and the consistent management of bullying behaviours
- engaging the support of parents/carers, ensuring that they fully understand the expectations in relation to bullying
- preventing, de-escalating and/or stopping any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- Reacting to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way. • Safeguard the student(s) who has experienced bullying
- Seeking sources of support for the student.
- Enabling the perpetrator(s) of bullying to understand the effects of their actions, and to change their patterns of behaviour.
- Working with families to support their child

5. Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined as “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, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences..” (DfE, Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017)

This can be further defined as:

- Physical (eg. hitting, kicking, pushing, theft, intimidating gestures)
- Verbal (eg. threatening, name calling, sarcasm, discriminatory remarks)
- Indirect (eg. spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups) • Online (ie. using technology to intimidate, belittle, abuse, isolate others)

All students in SENDAT schools have additional needs, which involve areas of difficulty or vulnerability. We understand that dealing with bullying in this context can have additional dimensions and complexities and can raise issues that are in themselves complicated to resolve.

Not all students will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it; equally not all students would recognise their own behaviour as bullying towards another individual. As such, the Trust uses the strategies outlined below to support the children/young people to understand what is meant by the definitions above and how to resolve any bullying situation.

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy, nervous, feigning sickness, refusing to come to school/class, clinging to adults, refusing to remain in class, refusing to take part in activities they have liked, an increase in challenging behaviour. It is important that all school staff are vigilant and alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against any form of bullying in line with the roles and responsibilities listed below.

Bullying is usually distinguished from friendly teasing or conflict situations. SENDAT differentiates between these two as follows:

Typical Peer Conflict

- Equal power between students.
- Students involved may be friends.
- Negative actions don't follow a pattern.
- Conflict not premeditated and no real intention to cause harm.
- Followed by sincere remorse.
- Interest in repairing the relationship.
- All students involved play an active role.
- There is an intention to resolve the situation.

Bullying on the other hand involves:

- Imbalance of power between students.
- No real friendship between students.
- Negative actions are repeated.
- Actions are purposeful and possibly premeditated.
- The bully shifts blame and shows no sincere remorse.
- No interest in repairing relationship.
- Incident is one-sided.
- Target is alone without peer support.
- Intent is to gain power, control or possessions

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Governance (Board and LAB)

- Create the right ethos for the school that ensures it is an inclusive environment.
- Ensure regular review of anti-bullying policy and practice including scrutiny of data provided by the Headteacher/Head of School.
- Ensure the school is promoting equality for its whole community.

The CEO, Headteacher/Head of School and Senior Leadership Team

- To determine, publicise and ensure implementation of the school's measures on behaviour support and anti-bullying.
- To consider what adjustments may be needed to policy and practice in this area.
- Ensure the whole school is promoting equality and inclusion.
- To ensure the anti-bullying behaviour policy is kept up to date.
- To deliver and organise any necessary training for staff to ensure they understand and implement the anti-bullying policy and ensure that all new staff receive anti-bullying training as part of their induction
- Keep up to date on bullying related data, analyse the data, and with staff plan appropriate interventions either at an individual or whole school level.
- Ensure key data and information on bullying is shared regularly with the Local Academy Board (LAB).
- Promote anti-bullying week and anti-bullying work in general. Ensure the curriculum covers anti-bullying.
- Work with families so that they are aware of the school's policy/practice and specific circumstances if they arise.
- To act as a port of call to advise staff on any bullying related matter.
- To liaise with external agencies as necessary in partnership to support anti-bullying strategies.
- To ensure bullying is factored into any analysis of student behaviour.
- Ensure that behavioural recording systems record any instances of bullying.

All school staff

- Constantly to monitor the students for bullying-related behaviour and follow the correct procedure where evidence points towards bullying taking place and challenge the behaviours.
- Constantly to model high standards of behaviour and to have high expectations for all the students.

Parents/carers

If a parent/carer is concerned about their child/young person being bullied they should:

- Contact the school immediately and ask to speak to the Class Teacher. If they are unavailable they should ask to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- work with the school to resolve any issues arising from an incident the child/young person is anxious about.
- Contact the school if the bullying is taking place on home to school transport. Parents/carers can also contact Suffolk County Council School Transport if they have concerns that further action should be taken by transport staff such as taxi drivers or Passenger Assistants.

7. Implementation

Prevention

First and foremost, strategies will be put in place for preventing and reducing bullying. These will include:

- Planned transition times between different activities, lessons, etc.
- Specific and clear rules about bullying are very specific so there can be no misconceptions and students are aware of the consequences.
- Students are taught specifically what behaviours and actions constitute being a good friend.
- Identifying risk times and places e.g. break times.
- Choosing groups and team in lessons to prevent students being left out or bullied.
- Examining group dynamics.
- Providing positive role models and celebrating positive behaviour.
- Creating structure at break times, including timetabling student activities where necessary
- Allowing students to use dedicated quiet areas during break time.
- Promoting tolerance, understanding, respecting and accommodating people's differences.
- Tackling issues of bullying through the curriculum
- Employing group strategies such as restorative justice to address peer conflict at an early stage, leading to agreed shared outcomes
- Explicit teaching of acceptable and unacceptable ways of expressing feelings.
- Recognising students' achievements in the area of social interaction and reinforce them through the use of praise and rewards.
- If appropriate signing a behaviour contract.
- Agreements in place for the acceptable use of mobile phones and ICT equipment that are read and accepted when students start school.

Intervention

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is observed, suspected or reported, the incident will be followed up immediately by the member of staff who has been made aware.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded on Arbor and reported to the appropriate member of staff (tutor, Class Lead, Key Stage Lead, SLT etc).
- Where possible, the member of staff dealing with the incident will speak to all parties involved and seek an accurate account of what has happened.
- All relevant staff will be kept informed and if the bullying persists all staff (including transport where relevant) will be advised using appropriate communication channels, such as daily briefing.
- Parents/carers will be kept informed
- Actions and consequences will be put in place as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned

Where the issue is complex or not easily resolved the staff member should seek further advice from the Senior Leadership Team.

Students who have been bullied (victims) will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher and/or emotionally available adult
- Planned ongoing support arising from these conversations
- reassuring the student and their families
- offering continuous support to restore self-esteem and confidence
- Being taught strategies to deal with undesirable behaviours
- restorative justice work with the perpetrator
- updating their Behaviour Support Plan and Risk (Benefit) Assessment to include specific strategies for staff

Students who have bullied (perpetrators and participants) will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- Exploring the feelings that may have led to the bullying behaviour
- Planned ongoing support arising from these conversations
- enabling them to understand and empathise with the feelings of the victim
- restorative justice work, with the victim if possible
- informing parents/carers to help change the attitude of the student
- updating their Behaviour Support Plan and Risk (Benefit) Assessment to include specific strategies for staff

Consequences could be implemented, which might include:

- verbal warnings to cease bullying
- discussion with parents/carers
- a formal letter to parent/carer if their child has been identified as a persistent offender
- Alternative activity at break time to allow the victims social time without fear of reprisals
- Working separately from other students

Student Voice

There are a number of ways that students can communicate to express their feelings and thoughts about bullying. These include the school student council (for general concerns and initiatives, not specific cases), “I would like my teacher to know” boxes, notification button on the school website, PSHE lessons, annual reviews, one-to-one sessions, and everyday communication with school staff.

Claims of bullying made by students will be taken seriously.

Working with Families

Close work with our students’ families is an essential part of our approach at SENDAT schools.

Bullying is one of the most potentially sensitive areas of home/school life, so every effort should be made to conduct conversations sympathetically, calmly and tactfully, bringing family members into school where necessary. The school will work collaboratively with families in order to support a consistent approach between home and school, to address, challenge and change bullying behaviours.

In some instances this may trigger traumatic memories for parents/carers. Staff will endeavour signpost appropriate sources of support for them.

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying is when someone uses technology (such as the internet or a mobile phone) to bully others. Being a victim of cyberbullying can be very distressing for a young person as most of the time they do not know who is bullying them. Cyberbullying includes things such as sending unpleasant messages and pictures; and sending pictures and videos without consent; via text, email, messaging apps or social media; or setting up a hate group on a social networking site.

This form of bullying may 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 cyberbullying very hard to combat.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

SENDAT schools will be proactive in discussing cyber bullying and internet safety with children in class and in residential time (where relevant), including how to conduct themselves online; the importance of not replying to the perpetrator as this encourages them; how to report on different sites and services; the importance of keeping the evidence of cyber bullying so they have something to show others; the importance of telling an adult and asking for help.

Cyber bullying, whether inside or outside school hours will be treated in the same way as bullying. Perpetrators will be subject to the Discipline and Behaviour Policy procedures and may be reported to the Police.

Students are not permitted to have their mobile phones, tablet computers or any other internet-enabled devices in school and they are expected to hand these in for safe keeping until they go home.