



Signhills Academy

Anti-bullying Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Body	Date: Autumn 2026
Next review due by:	Autumn 2027	

1. Statutory Framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- DfE 'Behaviour in Schools' (February 2024)
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002, Section 175
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff' (2014)

2. Context

Being bullied can have a devastating effect on pupils, ranging from reluctance to attend school with subsequent under-achievement, to a negative impact on their self-esteem, personal development and mental health. The prevention of bullying and anti-social behaviour is the responsibility of all staff, governors, parents and pupils. A whole school approach, with the emphasis on supporting all pupils to develop socially and emotionally will prevent most cases of bullying. Incidents that do arise will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively.

Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, can be a form of child-on-child abuse. Where bullying reaches a safeguarding threshold, incidents will be managed in accordance with the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** and the procedures set out in KCSIE 2025.

3. Aims / Objectives

Teaching, learning, personal development and well-being should be enhanced through:

- Preventing incidents of bullying from taking place.
- Swiftly identifying and supporting possible victims of bullying.
- Supporting pupils who engage in acts of bullying, providing help to allow them to gain an insight and control over their actions, and any underlying issues.
- Supporting staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensuring that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- Ensuring that pupils are aware of bullying behaviours and the importance of reporting any concerns they have about themselves or others.
- Working effectively with parents/carers regarding any concerns relating to potential bullying.
- Gaining the support of parents/carers in working with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.

4. Definition

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It usually involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the victim, which can manifest itself physically, psychologically, or socially.

It can happen face-to-face or through electronic means, and comes in many different forms:

- **Verbal** – Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.
- **Physical** – Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.
- **Emotional** – Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.
- **Cyberbullying** – The misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation. This may include, but is not limited to: abusive comments or messages; unauthorised sharing of pictures or information; impersonating an individual online; coercion to share inappropriate material; the creation or sharing of AI-generated or manipulated content (such as deepfakes) intended to harm, harass or humiliate; and the use of anonymous messaging tools to target individuals.

Pupils can be targeted for any reason, but those who bully others often target real or perceived differences and bullying can be a form of wider discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Bullying based on any of these characteristics is unacceptable.

For example, bullying behaviour may be:

- **Racist** – Targeted at ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices.
- **Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic** – Targeted at actual or perceived sexuality and/or gender.
- **Sexual and/or sexist** – Behaviour that is intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.
- **Disablist** – Targeted at a real or perceived impairment or special educational need.
- **Based on Appearance** – Targeted at weight, height, colour of hair, wearing glasses or braces, acne, skin conditions, scars, marks or conditions of the face or body, clothing or body odour for example.
- **Based on Situation** – Targeted at poverty, gifts and talents or family situation (e.g. divorce, bereavement, homelessness).

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can, if left unchecked, have a significant impact on pupils. The academy therefore sets clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable either in or out of school and any concerns are acted upon.

Some pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying than others, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), looked-after children, and those with protected characteristics. Staff should be particularly alert to signs of bullying affecting these groups and ensure that additional support is available where needed.

5. Prevention

All members of the academy community are responsible for supporting a culture that promotes and recognises positive behaviour and mutual respect for each other. This is supported by:

- Clear expectations of behaviour in classrooms and around the school,
- Promoting an understanding and tolerance of differences,
- Promoting a school-wide intolerance of bullying behaviours,
- Giving pupils the confidence to speak out for themselves and others,
- Providing opportunities for pupils to raise and discuss any concerns in a safe and sensitive way,
- Encouraging pupils to take pride in themselves and the school, promoting positive behaviours beyond the school day,
- Swift intervention to challenge and correct inappropriate behaviour,
- Staff being alert to signs of potential intolerance,
- Teaching about bullying, online safety, respectful relationships and the protected characteristics through the PSHE/RSE curriculum,
- Raising awareness of cyberbullying, including through age-appropriate teaching about responsible use of technology.

6. Responding to Concerns

All concerns raised regarding potential bullying will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively. This includes incidences of possible bullying outside of school, including online. Where incidents involving possible criminal or anti-social behaviour are reported, the headteacher will ensure that the police and/or other external agencies are notified.

When investigating any incident the victim will be offered an opportunity to talk about the experience with a trusted adult as soon as is possible. The staff involved in investigating the incident will ensure that time is taken to enable all voices to be heard in order to gain as clear an insight as possible into the circumstances of the incident(s).

If any degree of bullying is identified, help and support will be given to both the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s) as appropriate and parents / guardians will be informed.

Where a bullying incident raises a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Steve Carr) must be informed immediately. The concern will then be managed in accordance with the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

Following resolution of the incident, additional support may be required for the victim(s). This may include:

- Regular 'check ins' with classroom staff,
- Creation of a peer support group,
- One-to-one / small group work with the wellbeing team,
- Regular 'check ins' with parents,
- Referral to outside agencies (e.g. FORTIS, Compass Go, Young Minds Matter).

7. Consequences

Any sanctions, in line with the **Behaviour Policy**, will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any additional needs or vulnerabilities. Consideration will be given to the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it raises any concerns. Where bullying is based on a protected characteristic, this will be treated with particular seriousness. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying will likely need support themselves. The Wellbeing team and SLT will lead the design of any required support package, engaging with parents and any relevant outside agencies.

8. Responsibilities

Staff

Staff will:

- Intervene to ensure pupils safety and well-being and ensure that incidents are recorded and investigated
- Record potential incidents of bullying on CPOMs, tagged as 'Bullying'
- Work with the SLT / Wellbeing Team to investigate and respond to potential bullying incidents
- Be vigilant and pro-active in challenging inappropriate behaviour
- Promote a culture of tolerance and mutual respect
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead where bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern

Parents

Parents are strongly encouraged to support their children by:

- Looking for unusual behaviour in their children. For example, they may suddenly decide they do not wish to attend school, they may feel ill regularly or not be doing as well with their work.
- Taking an active role in their education. E.g. ask how their day has gone, whom they played with etc.
- Reporting any concerns to the school
- Making sure that their child can identify a trusted adult in school who they would talk to if they had a worry.
- Being aware of their child's online activity and discussing online safety at home.

Pupils

Pupils are required to:

- Behave in a way that makes Signhills a great place to learn and grow
- Tell adults about any bullying worries they have for themselves and others
- Support each other to be happy and successful
- Be honest with adults when bullying worries are being investigated and supported

9. Recording and Reporting

All incidents of bullying or suspected bullying must be recorded on CPOMs, tagged as 'Bullying'. Records should include the nature of the incident, the type of bullying, the pupils involved, and the action taken.

The Headteacher will ensure that records of bullying incidents are reviewed regularly to identify patterns, trends, and any groups of pupils who may be disproportionately affected. This information will be reported to the governing body as part of the school's safeguarding reporting arrangements.

Where bullying involves, or may involve, criminal behaviour (e.g. assault, threats, harassment, or offences under the Online Safety Act 2023), the headteacher will consider whether a referral to the police is appropriate.

10. Monitoring

Consistency of implementation and impact will be monitored through:

- CPOMs trawls;
- Parent questionnaires;
- Pupil voice;
- Formal and informal observations;
- Analysis of bullying incident records by type, group and frequency.

11. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies:

- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy**
- **Physical Intervention Policy**
- **Suspension and Exclusion Policy**
- **E-Safety Policy**
- Equality Objectives / Equal Opportunities Policy

12. Review

Policy review will be led by:

Staff Team	Senior Leadership Team
Term / Year	Autumn 2027

This policy is intended to enhance teaching, learning, personal development and well-being. All staff and other adults working with pupils in school have a responsibility to implement this policy with regard to the Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Equality Policies.