Anti-Bullying (Students) Policy

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Review period	Annual
Next Review date	Autumn 2026
Reviewed by	N Dandy and A Evans
Approving committee	Pastoral Committee
Policy type	Non-legislative
Other related policies	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Online Safety Policy, Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. Our aspiration is to establish and maintain a community of mutual tolerance and understanding within which bullying does not occur. However, we recognise that as with any human society, there is a danger that bullying will take place. Whenever bullying takes place our aim is to correct the offending behaviour in a swift and lasting manner. Bullying is categorised as a form of child on child abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “boys being boys”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”

We recognise there are many forms of bullying which broadly fall under the following headings: verbal (for example, name-calling), physical (for example, one student hitting another), social (for example, being deliberately ignored to isolate an individual) and cyber bullying (for example, using technology, such as AI, as a vehicle for undermining individuals – refer to the e-safety policy). We also recognise that there can sometimes be a complex relationship between the various types of bullying.

Lawrence Sheriff School community recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

We will:

- monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.

- support staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEN, disability, or those that are perceived as LGBTQ+. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required
- intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly
- ensure our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy
- require all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy
- recognise the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so may work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns
- seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilise support from any relevant organisations when appropriate

Please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy for guidance on recognising and dealing with incidents of 'child on child abuse' and 'harmful sexual behaviour'.

2. The Legal Context of Bullying

- **Children Act 2004:** Section 10: the third outcome, 'protection from harm and neglect' specifically mentions bullying. Section 11: 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children'.
- **Common law 'duty of care':** Taking 'reasonable care to avoid causing foreseeable harm'.
- **Equality Act 2010:** Schools and other agencies that receive public funding must promote equality of opportunity for those with a protected characteristic to ensure that pupils are not discriminated against because of these things. Headteachers have a duty to encourage good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.
- **The Education Act 2002 as amended in the Education Act 2011:** Schools must 'safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils'.
- **Education and Inspections Act of 2006 as amended in the Education Act 2011.** Schools have powers under this act: To regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off site or not under the control of teachers 'to such extent as is reasonable'.
- A key provision in The Equality Act 2010 is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into force on 5 April 2011 and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 provide that the proprietor of an Academy ensure that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.
- **Government guidance: Safe to learn: embedding effective anti-bullying work in schools** This includes specific guidance about cyber bullying, homophobic bullying, bullying related to race, religion and culture, bullying related to disability and bullying related to sex/gender.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education- September 2025**: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges.

3. Objectives of this Policy

- All trustees, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.

- All Trustees and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

4. Recognising Bullying

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victims to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent (isolated cyberbullying incidents may be seen as one-off incidents but if sent to a range of pupils may be seen as bullying).
- Friendship fallouts are seen as accidental and occasional, those involved show remorse and want to resolve the situation – this is different from isolating or excluding children from groups.
- Bullying can take place between young people; young people and staff; individuals or groups
- Certain groups of pupils/adults are known to be particularly vulnerable to bullying by others: these may include pupils with special educational needs such as learning or physical disabilities; young carers, Looked After children, those with protected characteristics, including those from ethnic and racial minority groups and those young people who are/perceived as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning their gender role.

5. Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including:

- bullying related to physical appearance
- bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- physical bullying
- emotional bullying
- sexual bullying
- bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
- prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics)

6. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- the Headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility
- the pastoral chair to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy
- all staff, including Trustees, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly
- parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school
- pupils to abide by the policy

7. Strategies for Preventing Bullying

As part of our on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils, we at Lawrence Sheriff School have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour.

- Promoting an ethos of good behaviour, tolerance and respect between pupils and staff, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

- Regularly evaluate and update approaches to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers.
- Implement disciplinary sanctions so the consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness and the impact of the incident.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as protected characteristics, children with different family situations including looked after children or those with caring responsibilities and teach children that using any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.
- Work with the wider community such as the police and children's services to agree a clearly understood approach to cases where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- Maintain an open door policy and make it easy for pupils to report bullying, so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Information on how to report bullying / harassment is regularly shared with pupils via, assemblies, daily notices, digital signage located within key locations around the school, and the 'pastoral site'; the 'pastoral site' also contains a guide on how reports of bullying are dealt with. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying.
- Create an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos.

Specific strategies may include:

- Employing restorative approaches.
- Activities to promote National Anti-Bullying week annually (usually held at LSS in February).
- Studying PSHE/Citizenship topics based around bullying.
- Delivering tutor time activities that focus on themes of bullying.
- Delivering assemblies regarding British Values such as mutual respect and tolerance.
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and internet safety.
- Evaluate student views on bullying via the school council.
- Installing values of tolerance and respect during break and lunchtimes via staff and Prefects.
- Regular Staff training and development.

8. Responding to complaints about bullying

Incidents will normally be investigated in the first instance by a member of the school pastoral team (i.e. Form Tutor, Head of House, Head of Year or Pastoral Assistant) under the instruction of a Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher. If for any reason a parent / carer or student is unhappy about the way in which a bullying complaint has been responded to, they should contact

one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads – Nicola Dandy, Rachel Fox, Amelia Merrigan or Alastair Evans who will investigate and respond as appropriate.

a. All key persons involved will be asked to provide an account stating their view on what has happened.
b. All parties will be listened to and supported. Hasty judgements not based on clear evidence will be avoided. We will seek to consider both the actual incident and the context in which it has occurred.
c. We will seek to identify whether bullying has taken place, using the legislation in section two and the professional judgement and common sense of all involved.
d. All relevant parents / carers may be informed about the incident and at a later stage about the way in which the school has dealt with the incident. DFES guidance recommends that complaints of bullying should be responded to within two weeks. Where possible we will seek to respond more quickly, but speed of response must not be allowed to compromise the integrity of the investigation.
e. Sanctions will be imposed as appropriate. These may include community service, detentions, internal suspensions or external suspensions, or exclusion from school. Disciplinary sanctions may be discussed with the parent / carer of the student concerned; however, the school will not break the rules of confidentiality by discussing the case of other students.
f. If appropriate, external agencies may be involved to support the person being bullied or to offer corrective counselling to the person who is carrying out the bullying.
g. Form tutors and the assigned member of the pastoral team should review student behaviour following the incident.
h. It may be appropriate for the Head of Year or Head of House to speak to the entire year group about a particular incident.
i. Any member of staff who deals with an incident of bullying will record the incident via CPOMS
j. Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying / harassment through inclusion in PSHE, Citizenship, form tutorial time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.
k. The school pastoral manager speaks to all students and parents about the subject when they join Lawrence Sheriff. If appropriate, they provide a point of contact for students who wish to report an incident of bullying to someone who is not a teacher.

9. Supporting pupils involved in bullying

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- the adult reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support
- offering the pupil an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice
- passing on the key information to the pupil's teachers, thus helping to monitor and prevent any future incidents of bullying
- being advised to keep a record of the bullying on Cpoms, as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate
- working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence
- providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers
- ensuring the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide

- where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through the Children and Adolescence Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or the Mental Health Schools Team.

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change
- when appropriate informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
- providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions
- if online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider
- where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through the Children and Adolescence Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and MHST
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and internal, fixed-term or permanent exclusions

10. Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

Bullying is reviewed on an ongoing basis by the student council. The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Appendix 1 – Organisations providing support for bullying

Anti-bullying organisations

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Childline: www.childline.org.uk
Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
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
The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

SEND

Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

Childnet: www.childnet.com
Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis
Thee ducationpeople.org

DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff':

www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Race, religion and nationality

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
Tell Mama:www.tellmamauk.org
Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBTQ+

Barnardo's LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related/preventing-and-responding-sexual
Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related
Lucy Faithfull Foundation The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is the only UK-wide child protection charity dedicated solely to preventing child sexual abuse.
The Survivors Trust - UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

Note: *Additional links can be found in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (June 2018)*
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying