

Anti Bullying (Including Hate Incidents Policy)

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Ratified by:	Board of Trustees	Date:	16th July 2025
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Note: Each academy may have ‘local’ policies to reinforce this Trust-wide statement.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Sussex Learning Trust is committed to ensuring that all students/pupils are able to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. If bullying does occur, all students/pupils should know who to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- 1.2 Bullying occurs when an individual or group uses strength or power to hurt, either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others. It is usually persistent, is often covert and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Perpetrating impacts on its victims’ attendance and attainment at school and can have a life-long impact on some young people’s lives.
- 1.3 Anyone can be bullied. People with protected characteristics¹ can be more likely to be victims of bullying
- 1.4 Bullying includes:
 - 1.4.1 **Physical** – pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, taking belongings and other forms of violence or threats.
 - 1.4.2 **Verbal** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, insulting, making offensive remarks.
 - 1.4.3 **Emotional** – excluding (‘sending to Coventry’), tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating.
 - 1.4.4 **Racist** – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
 - 1.4.5 **Homophobic** – any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males or bisexuals or those perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.
 - 1.4.6 **Transphobic** – any hostile or offensive action against transsexuality or transsexual or transgender people.

¹ Protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and neurodiversity

- 1.4.7 **Cyber** – mobile threats by text messaging and calls; all areas of internet such as email and chat room misuse; misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera and video facilities.
- 1.5 Although bullying can occur between individuals, it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who can become the ‘bystanders’ or ‘accessories’. In cyber bullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators – by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate or by taking part in on-line polls or discussion groups. Students/pupils may not recognise themselves as participating in perpetrating, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. They will be made aware that their actions can have severe and distressing consequences and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated.
- 1.6 Name-calling is the most common direct form of bullying. This may be because of individual characteristics, but may also be because of their ethnic origin, appearance, religion, nationality or colour; sexual orientation; gender identity or some form of disability.

2 AIMS

- 2.1 Each academy will ensure all staff receive appropriate training in identifying bullying and the ‘signs’ of bullying and will aim to:
 - 2.1.1 Prevent ALL bullying.
 - 2.1.2 Encourage everyone to take responsibility for stopping and preventing ALL perpetrators and supporting bullied students/pupils.
 - 2.1.3 Offer victims of perpetrating comfort and practical support.
 - 2.1.4 Encourage and support all perpetrators to change their behaviour and attitudes towards others, using restorative practices.
 - 2.1.5 Create a climate where the perpetrator and victims can meet to discuss openly the incident(s) involved.
 - 2.1.6 Create a climate where it is accepted that, because perpetrating is wrong, it is ‘Okay to tell’.
 - 2.1.7 Increase the awareness and understanding of ALL students/pupils, pupils, staff, parents/carers and Governors to issues associated with bullying.
 - 2.1.8 Make it clear to everyone that bullying will not be tolerated.
 - 2.1.9 Make everyone aware that to see incidents of bullying and take no action gives the impression that such behaviour is being encouraged and condoned.
 - 2.1.10 Make everyone aware of the procedures for reporting any incidents of bullying.
 - 2.1.11 Make everyone aware that perpetrators have a problem and need help and to employ strategies to prevent re-offending.
 - 2.1.12 Whenever possible to involve parents/carers in discussions. It must be remembered that those who perpetrate or are victims may be experiencing difficulties outside the academy.

3. PREVENTION

- 3.1 Prevention is clearly the strategy of choice. This is addressed in a variety of ways:
- 3.1.1 At whole-school level – through assemblies when students/pupils are informed of the school’s zero tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place. Assembly time will also be used to challenge the notion that there can be innocent, neutral bystanders with regards to the issue of bullying.
 - 3.1.2 We recognise that there are particular times when students/pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning/end of the school day. Arrangements will be made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.
 - 3.1.3 There are locations around the school where incidents of bullying are more likely to occur and arrangements will be made to ensure that these are properly supervised or students/pupils will be forbidden access to those areas.
 - 3.1.4 students/pupils will have the opportunity to contribute to the academy’s Anti-bullying Policy through the Student Council.
 - 3.1.5 Stereotypical views are challenged and students/pupils encouraged to appreciate and view positively the differences in others
 - 3.1.6 Promoting a clear understanding (and ethos) that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

4. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- 4.1 Each academy is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved as a victim or a perpetrator of bullying.
- 4.2 Parents/carers who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with the academy at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with the academy to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Where parents/carers have concerns with regard to bullying they should contact the appropriate pastoral leader or teacher.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 All staff involved in the teaching and/or supervision of students/pupils will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall within the academy’s definition of bullying and ensure that the victim receives the report required; the perpetrator is informed of the unacceptability of their behaviour and a record is made of the incident.
- 5.2 All students/pupils need to be aware that staff want to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when perpetrating is reported.

- 5.3 Each academy will take firm and decisive action to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff. When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a student may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated. The academy will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to students/pupils who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular student/pupil's individual needs and may include:
- 5.3.1 Immediate action to stop the incident and secure the student's safety.
 - 5.3.2 Positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do.
 - 5.3.3 Reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the perpetrator.
 - 5.3.4 Strategies to prevent further incidents, eg 'circle of friends'.
 - 5.3.5 Sympathy and empathy.
 - 5.3.6 Counselling – if required.
 - 5.3.7 Assertiveness training.
 - 5.3.8 Extra supervision/monitoring.
 - 5.3.9 Creation of a support group.
 - 5.3.10 Peer mentoring.
 - 5.3.11 Informing/involving parents/carers.
 - 5.3.12 Adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim – restorative justice.
 - 5.3.13 Arrangements to review progress.

This will be followed up regularly to ensure that bullying has not resumed.

- 5.4. All racist 'hate' incidents will be reported to the West Sussex Harm Reduction Team. A termly report will be made to each academy's Local Governing Body with comparisons made to previous years to identify 'trends'. This will determine future areas of focus.

6. FOR THE PERPETRATOR

- 6.1 Each academy takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable perpetrators to behave in a more prosocial manner. Steps will be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the perpetrator, as well as ensuring access to any help that they may need. We will respond to incidents of bullying in a proportionate and therapeutic manner – the more serious the cause for concern, the more serious the response. When consequences are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. These consequences may include: detention, internal supervision or fixed-term suspension. In the case of persistent perpetrators, permanent exclusion may be considered.

Document Version Control

Date	Version	Comment	Ratified by	Reviewer
10.7.25	4.3	Reviewed. No changes.	Board of Trustees (16.7.25)	J Morris
Document History				
5.6.17	2	Edited to be adopted by all SLT academies	Board of Trustees (12.7.17)	J. Morris
1.7.18	3	Annual review. Amendment to clause 1.3.6 and 1.3.7.	Board of Trustees (18.7.18)	Headteachers of NWPA, WPSA, WPPA
25.4.19	4 (Formerly SLT/P/100/v4)	-Include the academies' responsibility to provide training in identifying perpetrators and 'signs of perpetrating. -Redaction of descriptions of signs of perpetrating	Board of Trustees (22.5.19)	J. Morris
12.5.21	4.1	Regular review. Minor update to clause 5.4 to clarify reports are regularly made to LGBs.	Board of Trustees (26.5.21)	J Morris
26.5.23	4.2	Change of language to reflect therapeutic approaches.	Board of Trustees (7.6.23)	J Morris CEO/Head teacher of each academy (each academy may have 'local' policies to reinforce this Trust-wide statement)