Sturminster Newton High School

Policy Name: Anti-Bullying Policy

Published:	September 26
Review Due:	September 26
Member of Staff Responsible for Policy oversight:	P Mattocks

Policy Control Table			
Document Title	Anti-Bullying Policy		
Author	Mr P Mattocks		
Date Approved			
Approved By	Awaiting Ratification by Governing Board		
Date of Next Review	September 2026		
Document History			
Version	Date	Author	Notes of Revisions
1.0	July 2020	PMM	Approved by the Governors
2.0	11/09/24	PMM	Policy Reviewed and No Amendments
3.0	5/9/25	PMM	Policy Reviewed and No Amendments
4.0	5/9/25	PMM	Policy Reviewed, amendments made to each section for clarity and to ensure compliance.

Sturminster Newton High School Anti-Bullying Policy

Sturminster Newton High School promotes a safe learning environment where everyone feels able to enjoy and achieve and where success is recognised and rewarded.

1. Philosophy

Sturminster Newton High School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which all students can learn and thrive. We recognise our legal duties under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010 to safeguard pupils, prevent bullying, promote good behaviour and foster positive relationships across the school community.
We believe that:

- All children and young people have the right to feel safe, supported and free from harm.
- Everyone within the school community—students, staff, families and visitors—should feel welcome, respected and valued.
- Positive relationships and an atmosphere of trust and safety are essential for learning and personal development.
- Bullying, harassment and discrimination of any kind are unacceptable and will be addressed promptly, consistently and appropriately.

2. Principles

Our approach to preventing and responding to bullying is grounded in a whole-school commitment to:

- Maintaining a consistent and transparent response to all bullying concerns.
- Promoting a culture of mutual respect, equality and inclusion.
- Preventing bullying through high-quality PSHE, tutor programmes, assemblies and curriculum work.
- Ensuring all staff receive regular training on recognising, preventing and responding to bullying, including online harms and prejudice-based incidents.
- Ensuring fair treatment for all and eliminating discrimination relating to any protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, and sex characteristics).
- Taking a preventative approach by analysing trends, identifying patterns and intervening early with students at risk.

The school recognises that some groups of students may be more vulnerable to bullying, including:

- Students with SEND
- Looked after and previously looked after children
- Young carers
- LGBTQ+ students
- Students from minority ethnic or faith backgrounds
- Students experiencing mental health difficulties

Additional support and monitoring may be implemented where appropriate.

3. Definition of Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying. But it is usually defined as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically, and is often aimed at certain people because of their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or any other aspect such as appearance or disability.

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- It is repeated over time
- There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves

There are various forms of bullying which can include:

- Physical, verbal or emotional
- Face-to-face, indirect, or online
- Prejudice based, including incidents related to:
- Race, ethnicity or culture
- Religion or belief
- Disability or special educational needs
- Sex, gender or gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation, including LGBTQ+
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Appearance, health needs, or social circumstances
- Young carers and looked after children
- Socio-economic background

The lives of students who are bullied are made miserable; they may suffer injury, they may attend erratically, they may lose self-confidence, they may underachieve educationally and socially. Many of the outward signs of bullying can be the same as other indicators of abuse such as:

- Low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress or anxiety
- Non accidental injuries (including self-harm)

If unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable within the school. It is not unknown for victims to become bullies of younger or more vulnerable students than themselves. Bullying can and frequently does have long term effects on victims which may impact on their adult lives.

3.1 Understanding Conflict and Bullying

The school recognises that not all disagreements or friendship issues constitute bullying.
Bullying is behaviour that is:

- Deliberate
- Repeated over time
- Intended to cause harm
- Involves an imbalance of power

Single incidents, arguments, friendship fallouts or disagreements may still require support and intervention but will not automatically be classified as bullying.

Staff will use professional judgement when determining whether behaviour constitutes bullying, peer conflict or inappropriate behaviour.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for the well-being of our school community. All staff, students, parents and the Governing Board should be made aware of the policy alongside awareness being raised of the issues associated with bullying in schools.

4.1 Leadership and Governance

- Trustees and Governors are responsible for ensuring the school meets statutory duties for safeguarding, behaviour and equality.
- The Headteacher holds overall responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of this policy.
- The Assistant Headteacher (Climate for Learning) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) oversee the operational management of anti-bullying work

4.2 Staff

The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for the Climate for Learning and the Safeguard Lead have been designated to oversee the safeguarding and well-being of students. Their role includes the following responsibilities:

- To liaise with the Head Teacher on matters regarding the safeguarding of children
- To ensure all staff are aware of the contents of the 'Anti-Bullying Policy' and that its procedures are adhered to, through regular training and guidance
- To liaise with appropriate staff to ensure the implementation of whole school initiatives to highlight aspects of bullying, such as Anti-Bullying Week
- To ensure the use of appropriate assemblies to support the Anti-Bullying culture
- To monitor and record all reports of incidents of bullying. All incidents of bullying will be recorded centrally on Arbor and My Concern
- To ensure the appropriate Tutor and Head of Year monitors students involved in bullying and keeps the parents/carers informed
- Contribute to prevention through curriculum delivery and pastoral support

The Network and IT Team, with the support of SLT, are responsible for the monitoring of E-Safety and ICT. Students who do not follow expectations will receive appropriate consequences.

School staff have the following responsibilities:

- Staff should be alert to any potential incident of bullying and intervene whenever concerns are identified. Bullying that occurs off site, including online or through social media, will be investigated and addressed by the school where appropriate and where it is reasonably possible to do so. The school recognises, however, that incidents occurring outside school hours, in the home environment, on personal devices, or through private online accounts often require significant parental oversight and intervention. In line with DfE guidance and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*, schools have a responsibility to respond to bullying and safeguarding concerns affecting pupils, including some incidents that occur beyond the school gate; however, the school's ability to investigate, monitor, and enforce sanctions may be limited where behaviour takes place outside its direct control. Effective resolution of off-site and online bullying therefore relies upon a partnership between the school and families, with parents and carers playing a key role in supervising online activity, reinforcing expectations of respectful behaviour, preserving evidence, and supporting interventions designed to safeguard all children involved
- Minor incidents of disagreement should be addressed by form tutors/subject teachers and can be dealt with effectively by reference to the school's Climate for Learning Policy
- Incidents that constitute bullying should be referred to the victim/bully's form tutor(s) who will liaise with the Head of Year over action to be taken
- The Head of Year is responsible for clarifying the facts through thorough investigation and taking statements from the bully, any victims and witnesses. CCTV may be used to support evidence gathering.
- The Head of Year, having clarified the facts, will inform all parents/carers of the incident, record the incident centrally through 'My Concern' and on Arbor and liaise with SLT members where needed to agree consequences

- Bullying is considered a Level 3+ offence in the Climate for Learning Policy and following appropriate investigation and considering the circumstances and history, any of these strategies can be applied:

    - Removal from the general school population for lesson, during break and lunchtime, until investigation completed
    - School consequence – after school
    - Suspension
    - Permanent exclusion
    - Restorative discussions
    - Referral for counselling/victim support
    - Written or verbal apology
    - Parent/carer interview with HoY and SLT member leading to parental assistance in applying support or strategies or deterrents as necessary
    - Continued monitoring of victim/bully individually
    - Referral to external agencies e.g. Social Services, Educational Psychologist or PCSO (Please refer to Climate for Learning policy for further information on consequences)

4.3 Students
Students have the following responsibilities:

- Treat others with kindness and respect.
- Ensuring that previous victims of bullying are not isolated from groups of friends
- Intervening appropriately when someone is being bullied and making it clear to the bully that his or her actions are unacceptable
- Informing a member of staff that bullying is happening
- Encouraging the victim to join in activities and groups
- Discussion and consideration of bullying issues in PSHE lessons

5.Bullying outside school premises

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable. This includes bullying incidents that occur away from school, such as on school or public transport, in local shops, in the community, or online. Where incidents of off-site bullying are reported to the school, they will be investigated and acted upon where appropriate

In line with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and current DfE guidance, the school may take action in relation to bullying that occurs outside school where the behaviour:

- *affects the safety, wellbeing or education of a pupil;*
- *has a clear connection to the school community;*
- *could adversely affect the reputation of the school; or*
- *occurs online and impacts pupils within the school community.*

The school recognises that some incidents, particularly those occurring online, outside school hours, on personal devices or through private social media accounts, may take place beyond the direct supervision and control of the school. Whilst the school will investigate and support pupils where appropriate, effective resolution often requires the active support of parents and carers. Families are expected to supervise their child's online activity, reinforce expectations of respectful behaviour, preserve relevant evidence, and work in partnership with the school to address concerns. The school's ability to investigate, monitor and impose sanctions may be limited where incidents occur entirely outside the school environment and do not have a direct impact on the school community.

The Headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or the local authority of action taken. Where behaviour may constitute a criminal offence or poses a serious risk to the safety

or welfare of another person, the matter will be referred to the police and/or other relevant agencies. Any disciplinary sanction imposed by the school can only be applied in accordance with the school's statutory powers and behaviour policy.

6.The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- Advising their children to report any bullying to a member of staff and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved; Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth
- Pointing out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves

7. Cyberbullying and Online Safety

The school recognises the increasing role of digital communication in young people's lives and the potential risks associated with misuse.

Online bullying can take many forms including:

- Social media harassment
- Sharing harmful or inappropriate content
- Image-based abuse
- Impersonation accounts
- Group chat abuse
- Exclusion from online groups
- Threatening or intimidating communication

We will:

- Address online safety and cyberbullying through curriculum teaching and assemblies.
- Provide guidance to students on responsible digital behaviour.
- Ensure staff receive training on emerging online risks (e.g., social media misuse, image-based harm).
- Work with parents to support safe use of technology at home.

Cyberbullying will be treated with the same seriousness as face-to-face bullying.

8. Other potential risks of harm

Child-on-Child Abuse

The school recognises that bullying may form part of wider child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour, online abuse and prejudice-based abuse. Incidents that meet safeguarding thresholds will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSIE 2025.

Incidents that meet safeguarding thresholds will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and may involve external agencies where appropriate.

Allegations and Bullying Involving Staff

Sturminster Newton High School believes that all members of the school community are entitled to work and learn in an environment that is safe, respectful and free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and discrimination.

Any concerns, allegations or incidents involving:

- Staff towards students
- Students towards staff
- Staff towards staff
- Parents, carers or visitors towards staff

will be taken seriously and managed promptly, fairly, confidentially and sensitively.
Where an allegation is made that a member of staff has behaved in a way that may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against a child, behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm, or otherwise failed to maintain professional boundaries, the matter will be managed in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance, the Trust's safeguarding procedures, and the Allegations Against Staff procedures.

Where concerns relate to bullying, harassment or intimidation by students, staff, parents or other adults, the school will investigate the matter and take appropriate action in accordance with relevant Trust policies and procedures. This may include behaviour sanctions, restorative approaches, support measures, formal management processes or referral to external agencies where appropriate.
Relevant policies include:

- Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Behaviour Policy

Appropriate support will be offered to all parties involved during and following any investigation. The school will also take all reasonable steps to protect staff from bullying, harassment, abusive behaviour or intimidation whilst carrying out their professional duties.

9. Responding to Bullying: Procedures

Reporting Concerns - Students, Parents and Staff can report bullying concerns through:

- Speaking directly to a trusted member of staff
- Tutors, Heads of Year or safeguarding staff
- The school email and student incident reporting system (on the Student SharePoint)
- MyConcern referrals by staff
- Anonymous reporting where appropriate

All reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

The school will adopt a clear, structured response to all bullying concerns:

Step 1: Initial Identification & Record

- Any member of staff who becomes aware of bullying must intervene and ensure the incident is recorded on Arbor and if additional safeguarding concerns are present, on MyConcern.

Step 2: Investigation

- The Head of Year (or nominated lead) will gather statements, interview students involved and establish facts objectively and sensitively.

Step 3: Decision & Action
Actions may include:

- Restorative work (where appropriate and safe)
- Targeted pastoral interventions
- Educational sessions around respect and online behaviour
- Referral for counselling or external support
- Detentions or internal suspension
- Suspension for serious or persistent bullying
- Referral to external agencies where safeguarding thresholds are met
- Permanent exclusion will only be considered in the most serious cases and in line with statutory suspension and permanent exclusion guidance.

Step 4: Support for Victims
The school will ensure appropriate support tailored to the student's needs, which may include:

- Check-ins with pastoral staff
- Safe spaces
- Monitoring arrangements
- Counselling support

Step 5: Support for Students Displaying Bullying Behaviour
Support may include:

- Behaviour interventions
- Inclusion support
- Understanding underlying factors
- Mentoring or external agency involvement

Any consequence will be reasonable, proportionate and applied in line with the school's Behaviour and Climate for learning Policy and statutory guidance.

9.1 Prevention and Student Education

Preventing bullying is a key part of the school's wider personal development and safeguarding curriculum.
Students will be educated through:

- PSHE and RSHE lessons
- Tutor time activities
- Assemblies
- Anti-Bullying Week and other whole-school initiatives
- Online safety education
- Student leadership opportunities

The school values student voice and will seek feedback from students regarding safety, wellbeing and behaviour culture.

10. Evaluation and Monitoring

This policy is a dynamic document and will be updated as new guidance is produced or, in response to research, review or other events that have not previously been covered in depth.

Monitoring of the policy will involve consideration of the following data; any reduction in the number of incidents referred for attention; monitoring individual victims/bullies with a view to improved circumstances; positive feedback from parents, students and staff; monitoring of the willingness in students to report instances of concern; tracking of incidents to inform future decisions around safeguarding of students around the site and with regards ICT access. Additionally, the school will check and track disaggregated data collection (e.g., protected characteristic, SEND, type of bullying). The school will also implement early-identification mechanisms to identify emerging patterns or vulnerable students and support as appropriate.

Senior leaders and governors will regularly review:

- Bullying trends and patterns
- Prejudice-based incidents
- Online safety concerns
- Vulnerable group data
- Student voice and wellbeing surveys
- Attendance and behaviour links

Findings will inform future safeguarding priorities, staff training and curriculum development.

11.Links with Other Policies

This policy has been developed and evaluated with a view to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all our students.

This policy should also be read alongside and links to internal policies:

- Climate for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- E Safety and ICT Policy (Student)
- Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Allegations Against Staff Policy

This policy should also be read alongside and links to external policies:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying Guidance
- Online Safety Act guidance and related safeguarding procedures

Sites for Further Information

- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Childline
- Childnet
- CEOP
- UK Safer Internet Centre
- Internet Watch Foundation

Sturminster Newton High School Anti-Bullying Charter

Bullying is when you as an individual or as part of a group intentionally make someone upset or hurt their feelings through unwanted and persistent physical or verbal abuse in person or online, or just disrupt their lives on more than one occasion. Different ways vary from verbal, social, physical, emotional/psychological, racist, homophobic, sexual, cyber bullying

As a school we will:

- Take bullying seriously when it is reported
- Support the victims of bullying and help them to feel safe within school
- Take action against the bully/s and support them in changing their behaviour
- Work with parents/carers of any student who is involved in bullying to support and encourage the student/s in finding solutions
- Either internally or fixed term exclude pupils who bully and do not try to change their behaviour

As a student you will:

- As part of the Sturminster Newton High School community I have a responsibility to help combat bullying by supporting other students
- I will not gang up on other students
- I will not join in when students are making fun of another student
- I will not turn a blind eye to victimisation or bullying, I will **tell** someone
- I will follow the acceptable language guidance within the Climate for Learning Policy

If I see someone being bullied I will:

- Report it via email or tell my tutor or find another member of staff who I can speak to

If I am being bullied:

- I will report it via email or in person to my tutor or another member of staff who will listen and support me
- I can report anonymously if I am more comfortable with this
- I understand that I can speak to a prefect who will listen and support me
- I understand that action will be taken against the person who is bullying me

If I display bullying behaviour:

- I accept that my behaviour will have to change with immediate effect
- I will be listened to and helped as to why I am behaving in this way
- I will accept support and encouragement to change my behaviour
- I accept if I continuously bully people I will be punished with either an internal or fixed term exclusion

I will sign the Charter to show that I support and will adhere to the Sturminster Newton High School Anti- Bullying Charter.

Signed_____

Printed Name_____

Dear……..

I am writing to inform you that unfortunately, [NAME] has been reported to have been involved in the bullying of one or more other students.

At Sturminster Newton High School, we strive towards an environment where young people can be supported in addressing their education, emotional, spiritual and social needs and achieve their full potential. All forms of bullying interfere with this, therefore such behaviour will not be ignored and your support with this matter is appreciated.

The accusation against (NAME) is

At present the actions that have occurred are

Continuation of the described behaviour is unacceptable and may result in further, more serious consequences such as, SLT detention, internal isolation, withdrawal from lessons, fixed term exclusion or in extreme cases, permanent exclusion.

We want young people at Sturminster Newton High School to feel confident that, as far as possible, they will be protected from bullies. However, it is recognised that the bully's own motives need to be examined and their needs addressed. Bullies are themselves often emotionally insecure and lacking self-esteem and staff at Sturminster Newton High School will support your child in managing their behavior more appropriately. Both bullying and target behaviour is learned and so can be unlearned.

For further information, please refer to the school's 'Anti-Bullying' Policy.

If you would like the opportunity to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact your child's Tutor or Head of Year.

Yours sincerely

Dear Parent,

I am writing to you as your child has reported an incident of bullying to us and I wanted to reassure you that we take bullying seriously at Sturminster Newton High School.

We want young people at the school to feel confident that as far as possible, they will be protected from bullies.

At Sturminster Newton High School we strive towards an environment where young people can be supported in addressing their education, emotional, spiritual and social needs and achieve their full potential. All forms of bullying interfere with this, therefore such behaviour will not be ignored and your support with this matter is appreciated.

For further information, please refer to the school's 'Anti-Bullying' policy. In addition please be aware of the 'Connect' system which can be used to report any concerns regarding bullying.

If you would like the opportunity to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact your child's tutor or Head of Year.

Yours sincerely