

# Seaham High School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Cycle</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Committee</b>
February 2022	Annually	J Henderson	March 2022	Full Governors

# Anti-Bullying Policy

At Seaham High School we endeavour to create a caring community in which all individuals are valued and feel safe. The school is committed to tackling bullying in all its forms, including bullying motivated by one of the protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. These characteristics are: sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

We acknowledge that bullying happens but at Seaham High School we believe that it is possible to take action to help out not only the victims of bullying but bullies too, who are often very troubled individuals.

At Seaham High School we recognise that bullying often takes place outside of school and there are limitations to the extent of our ability to resolve or intervene in situations outside of school hours.

At Seaham High School we seek to highlight the issue of bullying and to create a climate where students, staff and parents feel able to talk about bullying and being bullied and are confident that something will be done.

Bullying is addressed through a range of activities including: PHSE lessons, tutor group activities and assemblies. We hope that this preventative work will engender an atmosphere in which bullying is less likely to thrive.

It is clear that the effects of bullying are damaging, both in the short term through unhappiness, distress or injury and in the long term as a result of reduced school performance, poor attendance and low self-esteem and that these effects may be felt into adult life.

It is the responsibility of all members of our school community – students, staff, parents and governors– to understand the issues around bullying and to take an active role in tackling the problem.

## **The aim of this policy is to:**

- a) Provide a school environment where bullying is not tolerated and where students feel safe to tell someone, whether another child or an adult, if they are being bullied.
- b) Promote an anti-bullying message through the academic and pastoral curriculum and to encourage all members of the school to act with tolerance, courtesy and consideration to others at all times.

## **Bullying and the School Behaviour Policy:**

This Anti-Bullying policy and the school Behaviour Policy are to be seen as working towards the same end. The following statements are from our Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct:

- a) We aim to promote self-esteem, self-discipline, proper regard for authority and positive relationships based on mutual respect and understanding;
- b) We should provide a safe environment free from disruption, violence, bullying and any form of harassment. Bullying, of any kind, violates these statements and therefore will not be tolerated.

## **What is Bullying?**

*From DFE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying":*

*Bullying is 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 or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.*

## **Definition of Bullying and its effect**

Bullying, including racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic and disability bullying, is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It can take a number of forms: physical or verbal, obvious or subtle and can take place over an extended period of time.

Cyberbullying (the sending or posting of harmful or cruel messages, texts or images using the internet or other (digital) communication devices) fulfils all the above, but in addition has other components to it and is dealt with further in a separate policy document.

Bullying can cause its victim anything from short-term unhappiness and anxiety to psychological damage. In extreme cases bullying has been linked directly to victim suicide. Whilst bullying is not in itself a criminal offence, there are criminal laws which relate to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **Bullying can be:**

- Persistent
- Intimidating, fearsome, stressful
- Pre-meditated
- Intentional
- Demoralising
- Physical
- Psychological
- Humiliating, demeaning, threatening
- The use of a superior position of strength to intimidate
- A process designed to lower the self-esteem
- Carried out by individuals and by groups

### **Bullying includes:**

- Name calling
- Physical violence
- Demands for money or possessions
- Hiding someone's possessions
- Being pressured to do something that a student does not want to do
- Threatening behaviour
- Spreading nasty or false rumours by word of mouth or by electronic means
- Deliberately leaving people out or not talking to them
- Teasing and tormenting a person about their social class, race, gender, personal appearance, school · performance, possessions, disabilities
- Targeting someone based on a protected characteristic
- Being sent unpleasant notes, electronic messages or made the subject of graffiti
- Being touched by another without giving permission to do so
- Sexual harassment
- Mocking

### **A range of sanctions will be used to respond to bullying incidents:**

- In every case the incident will be taken seriously and the responses can include any number of the following: · Students will have to explain their behaviour to a member of staff
- The parents of the perpetrator may be informed of the bullying and invited into school to discuss the matter · The respective Year Manager will keep a record of the bullying in the student file for a specified period of time · The perpetrator may be asked to apologise to the victim of bullying
- Any damaged possessions may I have to be replaced by the perpetrator
- Students may be asked to attend social skills sessions where they will be made aware of how their behaviour affects the school community.
- The school will endeavour to enforce this but recognise there are limitations to its

ability to do so.

**Depending on the severity of the bullying incident one or a combination of the following will apply:**

- The perpetrator may be placed in a detention after school or at break or lunchtime
- The perpetrator may be placed on daily or weekly report or contact
- The perpetrator may be isolated from lessons for a limited period
- The perpetrator might be suspended from Seaham High School for a fixed term or permanently · The perpetrator may have to explain their actions to the police if an assault on another student has taken place or if malicious rumours or images have been circulated electronically

**How the school will work to promote the anti-bullying message:**

- All staff will praise and encourage co-operative, caring behaviour
- We will promote positive relationships by showing, through our own behaviour, that it is better for everyone to respect and care for each other
- We will provide an environment where children feel accepted and valued
- We will promote anti-bullying strategies across the academic and pastoral curriculum · Staff will treat all allegations of bullying seriously and will investigate each incident.
- Our Year Managers work closely as a team and can monitor incidents occurring with students across year groups. Cabinet meetings can be used as an opportunity to discuss individual cases of bullying
- Alternative sources of support for the bully and the bullied can be accessed via the members of the Student Guidance Team
- Every effort will be made to ensure that any sanctions imposed are fair and appropriate and that they are applied in a non-humiliating, non-bullying way.
- Staff will watch for signs of distress in students. This might show itself as deterioration of work, late arrival for lessons, hanging back when the lesson is over, regular “illnesses”, isolation, wanting to be with adults rather than peers.
- We will use school assemblies to promote this anti-bullying policy.
- Each department will where appropriate, incorporate the anti-bullying message into their teaching.
- Children who are identified as victims of bullying will be counselled by staff in school and/or our specialist Counsellors.

**Information for Students:**

What Should You Do If Bullying Is Taking Place?

If you are being bullied or you know of someone else being bullied – TELL SOMEONE. Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

## **Remember:**

- Tell your parents and in school tell your form tutor or any other adult you trust.
- If it is urgent TELL the nearest adult. If they do not listen TELL SOMEONE ELSE. Do not give up. If you do not tell, things could get worse.
- If the person you want to tell is very busy ask them when they can see you and spend some time with you. · Walk away from any dangerous situation and GET HELP.

## **As well as telling, you can help stop bullying by:**

- Being friendly towards people you know are being bullied, including them in your discussions, games, break and lunchtimes
- Not laughing when someone is being bullied
- Saying out loud that you don't like what is going on
- Not joining in
- Letting an adult know if you see that someone else is being bullied

## **Things to look out for in victims of bullying:**

- Regularly feeling sick or unwell in the mornings
- Reluctance to make the journey to and from school
- Money or possessions going missing
- Clothes or school bag torn
- Wanting extra pocket money for no particular reason.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Taking different routes to school
- Unexplained behaviour changes, e.g. moody, bad tempered, tearful
- Unhappiness
- Nightmares
- Not wanting to leave the house
- Reluctance to talk openly about school friends and playtimes

## **What you should do if you think your child is being bullied:**

Please remember bullying is **NOT** a one-off incident. It is behaviour that is repeated over time

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience. Make a note of what your child says particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing in telling you about the bullying and that there is nothing wrong with him/her. Encourage your child to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year even if

your child is reluctant that you do so. We can only do something if we know there is a problem:

- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.
- Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's nature.

### **What to do if your child is bullying other children:**

Many children may be involved in bullying others at some time or another. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying and may find it difficult to accept that their child could be involved.

- Talk with your child. Explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy. · Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see your child's Form Tutor or Year manager. Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing. Discuss with the teacher how you and school can stop him/her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is cooperative or kind to other people.

### **Useful Websites:**

[www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)