Anti-Bullying Policy

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“Shine like the stars in the universe.”

Philippians 2: 14-15

Our Vision:

Preparing our children to shine brightly.

St Barnabas is a caring, family school with Christian values at our core. We want our staff, families and children to encourage, inspire, believe and achieve whilst living out our Christian values inspired by St Barnabas – love, generosity, compassion, forgiveness, service and courage.

Our Mission:

To develop all children to achieve personally and academically so that they can think for themselves and articulate their views, in a reasonable way, with the emotional resilience necessary to thrive in the ever-changing wider world.

Our Values:



Updates		
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At St Barnabas C of E Primary Academy (STB), we are committed to building a loving, inclusive and safe community in which every child is able to flourish.

Guided by our Christian vision and values, we promote dignity, kindness, compassion, courage, justice, respect and service in all relationships.

We recognise that bullying can have a significant and lasting impact on children's education, wellbeing, attendance, relationships and sense of safety. Bullying is not accepted as an inevitable part of childhood, and concerns will be listened to and acted upon promptly.

We use a whole-school approach to preventing and responding to bullying. This includes clear expectations for behaviour, high-quality teaching about respectful relationships and online safety, early identification of concerns, effective safeguarding arrangements, appropriate support for children affected by bullying, proportionate consequences for harmful behaviour, and review of incidents to identify patterns and improve practice.

We recognise that bullying may be connected to a protected characteristic, SEND, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or other characteristics or circumstances. We challenge discriminatory language and behaviour and promote equality, inclusion and respect.

Bullying may take place face to face, online or across both environments. It may occur within or outside the school premises where it affects the school community or where the school has lawful powers and responsibilities to act.

We will distinguish bullying from other unacceptable behaviour while taking all reports of harmful, discriminatory, abusive or intimidating behaviour seriously. A single serious incident may not meet the definition of bullying but may still require a significant behaviour or safeguarding response.

Where behaviour may constitute child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, a safeguarding concern or a criminal offence, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and make referrals to external agencies where appropriate.

This policy outlines how bullying is prevented, identified, reported, investigated, recorded and addressed, and how children and families will be supported.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to the legislation, statutory guidance and relevant non-statutory guidance applicable to schools in England, including, but not limited to, the following. References will be reviewed when guidance is revised.

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (including the school's responsibilities for behaviour and conduct)
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 1996, as amended (including statutory powers relating to searching pupils)
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff'
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
  DfE (2026) 'Working together to safeguard children 2026'
  DfE (2026) 'Information sharing to safeguard children and young people' and the statutory information-sharing duty applicable from 30 September 2026
  DfE (2026) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
  DfE (2026) 'School suspensions and permanent exclusions'
  DfE (2023) 'Searching, screening and confiscation in schools'
  DfE (2026) 'Preventing and tackling the bullying and harassment of school staff'
- DfE/UK Council for Internet Safety guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes, as applicable to the age and circumstances of pupils

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Trauma Informed and Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Computing Curriculum Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Remote Education Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Local Advisory Board (LAB) is responsible for:

- evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- the overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- ensuring the school is inclusive.
- analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- ensuring that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The Executive Headteacher & Head of School is responsible for:

- reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- keeping a log of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- analysing the data at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- arranging appropriate training for staff members.
- corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur.

Teachers are responsible for:

- being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the class teacher, learning mentor or designated member of the pastoral/senior leadership team of such observations.
- refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a pupil for support.

Parents are responsible for:

- informing the learning mentor and/or class teacher if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in any way.
- being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Pupils are responsible for:

- informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- seeking help from a trusted adult, moving to a safe place where possible, and not retaliating or escalating the situation.
- reporting cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

3. Statutory requirements

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

4. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is generally understood as repeated, intentional behaviour by an individual or group that hurts another individual or group and involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online. Bullying can cause significant harm even where the behaviour is not identical on every occasion.

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online"

- **Repetition/pattern: bullying normally involves repeated behaviour or a continuing pattern. A single serious incident may nevertheless require an immediate behaviour or safeguarding response.**
- **Intent and impact: bullying is deliberate or knowingly harmful behaviour. The impact on the child is important even where the child causing harm says that harm was not intended.**
- **Targeting: behaviour is directed towards an individual or group, including through exclusion or online activity.**
- **Power imbalance: there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power, which may relate to physical strength, age, status, friendship groups, social influence, access to information or technology, or other factors.**

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- pupils who are adopted.
- pupils suffering from a health problem.
- pupils with caring responsibilities.
- pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- pupils who are LGBTQ+ or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- black, asian and minority ethnic (Black, Asian and other ethnic minority) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

5. Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.
Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- verbal
- physical
- emotional
- online (cyberbullying)

Racist bullying: bullying or discriminatory behaviour based on race, ethnicity, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin. Racist bullying is not automatically a criminal offence, but some racist conduct may amount to a criminal offence or hate crime. The school will consider safeguarding, behaviour, equality and police referral requirements according to the circumstances.

Homophobic and bi-phobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.

Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.

Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

6. Signs of bullying

All staff have a vital role in identifying and addressing bullying at the earliest opportunity. By remaining vigilant and observant, staff can recognise the signs that a pupil may be experiencing bullying. Prompt recognition and action are essential to ensure that pupils feel safe, supported, and confident that concerns will be taken seriously.

Detailed below are key signs of bullying that school staff should be aware of:

Emotional and Behavioural Signs

- Sudden withdrawal or becoming unusually quiet
- Increased anxiety, sadness, or tearfulness
- Low self-esteem or lack of confidence
- Reluctance to go to school or participate in activities
- Unexplained anger or mood swings
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits

Social Signs

- Avoiding friends or social situations
- Being excluded or isolated by peers
- Sudden changes in friendship groups
- Reluctance to talk about school or friendships

Physical Signs

- Unexplained injuries such as bruises or scratches
- Damaged clothing, books, or belongings
- Frequent complaints of feeling unwell (to avoid school)

Digital/Online Signs

- Becoming upset after using devices or going online
- Secretive behaviour around phones or computers
- Sudden changes in online activity or social media use
- Blocking or deleting contacts or accounts

Verbal Indicators

- Talking negatively about themselves

- Expressing fear of certain people or places
- Mentioning being picked on, teased, or left out

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional, or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will also be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours. Pupils may bully others for a variety of complex and often overlapping reasons. including, but not limited to, the following:

Low self-esteem or insecurity
Pupils who feel powerless or inadequate may try to assert control or gain status by targeting others.
Lack of empathy
Some pupils struggle to understand or care about how their actions affect others, especially if they haven't been taught emotional awareness.
Problems at home
Exposure to conflict, neglect, abuse, or inconsistent discipline at home can lead to pupils replicating aggressive behaviours at school.
Peer pressure or desire for attention
Some pupils bully to fit in with a group, gain approval, or avoid being targeted themselves.
Copying behaviour
Pupils may imitate bullying they've seen in siblings, adults, media, or online environments.
Unmet emotional needs
Bullying can sometimes be a way for pupils to express frustration, anger, or sadness when they lack healthy coping strategies.

Understanding these underlying causes is essential to respond effectively—not only by supporting the victims but also by helping the child who is bullying to change their behaviour through guidance, empathy-building, and appropriate intervention.

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the learning mentor, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

7. Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is taken seriously and is never tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', or 'part of growing up'. It can manifest in many forms, including bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse, sexual violence and harassment, upskirting, and initiation-type violence. Our school recognises that all pupils are capable of causing harm to others and that both the victim and the child displaying harmful behaviour may need support. All staff are trained to identify the signs of child-on-child abuse and understand the procedures for reporting and responding to concerns.

Preventative education is delivered through our PSHE and RSE curriculum, which promotes respectful relationships, empathy, and personal safety. Any concerns are dealt with promptly, in line with our safeguarding and behaviour policies, and always with the best interests of the child at heart.

All staff will:
- be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.

- be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.
- always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- sexual “jokes” or taunting.
- deliberately brushing against someone.
- displaying images or videos of a sexual nature.
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence).
- online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

We are committed to ensuring that every pupil feels safe, heard, and supported. Pupils are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they have any worries or concerns, including about bullying or peer relationships. In particular, they can approach the school’s Learning Mentor for a confidential conversation. Additionally, pupils can use the 'Something I would like *** to know' box to share concerns. This provides an accessible and non-confrontational way for pupils to communicate issues they may find difficult to express verbally. All concerns raised are taken seriously and followed up in line with our safeguarding procedures.

8. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

The school does not tolerate cyberbullying and will respond proportionately and promptly to concerns.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- threatening, intimidating, or upsetting text messages
- threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- silent or abusive phone calls
- using the victim’s phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name
- menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online.
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times.
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity.
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising.
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator.

Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Staff will report incidents to a senior leader for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Pupils will report incidents to a trusted member of staff.

Where offensive content is posted online targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who posted it is known to the school, the principal will request they remove it directly.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.

The school may search pupils and, where permitted by law, examine or delete files on electronic devices in accordance with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation arrangements and the applicable statutory guidance. Searches will be lawful, reasonable and proportionate, carried out by authorised staff and recorded where required. Staff will consider safeguarding, privacy, data protection and the best interests of the child. The school will not routinely access or share personal content beyond what is necessary and lawful.

All members of staff will receive training on an annual basis on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively. Many of the signs of cyberbullying are similar to those found in the 'Signs of bullying' section of this policy.

We recognise the vital role parents and carers play in safeguarding children from cyberbullying. To support this, the school website provides accessible information and guidance on recognising the signs of cyberbullying, how to respond, and where to seek help. We encourage all parents to familiarise themselves with this content so they can confidently support their child's online wellbeing at home. By working in partnership with families, we aim to create a consistent and informed approach to preventing and addressing online harm.

9. Prevention of Bullying

The STB Trauma Informed and Relationships Policy plays a central role in preventing bullying by fostering a school culture rooted in relationships, empathy, consistency, and the Christian values of respect, compassion, and justice.

The Trauma Informed and Relationships policy actively works to prevent bullying in the following ways:
Strong Relational Foundations

- The policy is trauma-informed and relational, prioritising positive relationships across the whole school community.
- Pupils are explicitly taught how to build, maintain, and repair relationships through The STB Way: *Ready, Respectful, Safe*.
- These relational expectations promote mutual respect and empathy, reducing the likelihood of bullying behaviour emerging.

Values-Led Culture

- Christian values—Respect, Compassion, Justice, Hope, Perseverance, and Service—are embedded in all interactions.
- Bullying is incompatible with these values, which are actively taught, modelled, and celebrated, reinforcing pro-social behaviour.

Clear Expectations and Positive Behaviour Teaching

- The policy outlines explicit behavioural expectations under *Ready, Respectful, Safe* that guide daily conduct.
- Respect includes listening, celebrating others, sharing, patience, and inclusion—behaviours that directly counter bullying.
- Pupils are taught how to recognise and report unkindness or exclusion, giving them confidence to take a stand.

Prevention Through Early Intervention

- Staff are trained to notice early signs of distress, exclusion or conflict, and to respond with emotional check-ins, co-regulation, and restorative practices.
- A graduated response system supports pupils who show early signs of difficulty with regulation, before patterns of bullying can develop.

Emotional Intelligence and Reflection

- Regular emotion coaching and check-ins help children understand and regulate their feelings, reducing reactive behaviour.
- Pupils are taught to reflect on their actions, engage in restorative conversations, and understand how their behaviour impacts others.

Safe Reporting and Voice

- Pupils are encouraged to speak to trusted adults and have access to communication tools like the "something you want us to know" box.
- This promotes a safe culture of disclosure, helping to identify and address bullying early.

Restorative Practice Instead of Punishment

- When harm occurs, the school may use restorative approaches where they are safe, appropriate, voluntary for the child who has been harmed, and likely to support repair. Restorative approaches do not replace safeguarding action or proportionate consequences where these are required.
- This approach helps to repair relationships, build empathy in those who may have caused harm, and prevent repeat behaviours.

Inclusive and Predictable Environment

- Visual timetables, consistent adults, and structured routines create a predictable and emotionally secure environment, especially for vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils with additional needs are supported through individualised plans, preventing behaviours that might lead to or stem from bullying.

Encouraging Peer Responsibility and Leadership

- Pupils are given roles of responsibility (e.g. play leaders, school council, worship leaders) that foster positive peer leadership and model respectful behaviours.
- These roles encourage a sense of ownership and accountability within the pupil body for maintaining a bullying-free environment.

The STB Trauma Informed and Relationships Policy doesn't just react to incidents of bullying—it creates a proactive, inclusive, and values-led culture that makes bullying far less likely to occur. Through deep relationships, restorative practice, and emotional education, the school empowers every child to contribute to a community where all can flourish, together.

10. Curriculum Provision @ STB

At St Barnabas C of E Primary Academy, bullying prevention and response are embedded not only in our behaviour expectations but also within our broader educational approach. Bullying is explicitly addressed through our PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) and RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) curriculum, which is designed to promote respectful relationships, empathy, emotional literacy, and digital safety. Through age-appropriate lessons from Early Years to Year 6, pupils learn to recognise bullying behaviours, understand their impact, develop strategies for conflict resolution, and know how to seek help. This proactive, curriculum-based approach reinforces our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all.

An overview of where bullying is addressed within our PSHE and RSE curriculum provision is detailed below:

Respectful Relationships

- Understanding bullying: Pupils are taught about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), its impact, and the role of bystanders.
- Challenging stereotypes: Lessons help children understand and challenge stereotypes, which are often at the root of bullying behaviour.
- Respect and empathy: Pupils learn about the importance of respecting others, even when they are different.

Caring Friendships

- Healthy friendships: Lessons focus on mutual respect, kindness, and resolving conflicts.
- Recognising unhealthy relationships: Pupils learn to identify when a friendship is making them feel uncomfortable and how to seek help.

Online Relationships & Safety

- Cyberbullying: Pupils are taught how to behave respectfully online, recognise harmful content, and report concerns.
- Digital boundaries: Lessons cover privacy, consent, and the risks of online interactions.

Mental Wellbeing

- Impact of bullying: The curriculum acknowledges the lasting emotional effects of bullying and promotes early help-seeking behaviour.
- Emotional literacy: Pupils develop vocabulary and strategies to express and manage emotions.

St Barnabas C of E Primary Academy Computing curriculum supports our anti-bullying strategy by embedding online safety and digital citizenship education throughout all year groups. Pupils are taught how to recognise and respond to cyberbullying, understand respectful online behaviour, and protect their personal information. Through age-appropriate lessons, they develop the skills to critically evaluate online content, identify risks, and seek help when needed. This proactive approach ensures that children are equipped to navigate the digital world safely and respectfully, reinforcing our whole-school commitment to preventing bullying in all its forms.

An overview of where bullying is addressed within our Computing curriculum provision is detailed below:

Dedicated Online Safety Units

Each year group includes a dedicated online safety unit that teaches pupils how to:

- recognise and respond to cyberbullying.
- understand the importance of respectful online behaviour.
- identify fake profiles, grooming, and unsafe communication.
- use privacy settings and protect personal data.
- evaluate online content critically and avoid persuasive or harmful content.

Digital Literacy and Critical Thinking
The curriculum aligns with the Education for a Connected World framework, helping pupils:

- understand that people may behave differently online.
- learn how to report abuse or harmful content.
- develop the confidence to seek help when something online feels wrong.

Remote Education

All learning at home will follow procedures outlined in the Remote Education Policy. During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of pupils staying safe online and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

11. Staff principles

Staff bullying and harassment

The school also recognises its responsibility to protect staff from intimidation, harassment and bullying. Concerns involving adults will be managed under the school's staff conduct, grievance, safeguarding and complaints procedures as appropriate, with regard to current DfE guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff.

Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and will not ignore signs of suspected bullying. Staff will act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident. Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another will always be challenged and will never be ignored.

Staff will respect pupils' privacy and handle information sensitively. Staff must not promise a pupil absolute confidentiality. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding, data protection and information-sharing requirements. Any safeguarding concern will be reported to the DSL or deputy without delay; where a child is in immediate danger, emergency services will be contacted as appropriate.

Follow-up support and monitoring will be provided to the child who has experienced bullying and to the child who has used harmful behaviour for as long as needed to ensure safety, address impact and reduce the risk of recurrence.

12. Procedures for Investigating

All reported incidents will be passed promptly to the appropriate member of staff, who will investigate in line with this policy and the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures. Appropriate leaders will be informed, and proportionate consequences and support will be agreed.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- Separate accounts will normally be obtained from the child reporting the concern, the child alleged to have caused harm and relevant witnesses. A restorative meeting will not be used as the initial fact-finding process.
- Staff will consider immediate safety measures and, where necessary, prevent contact between pupils while the concern is assessed and investigated, including online contact.
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to a first aider.
- A second member of staff will be involved where appropriate, particularly for serious, sensitive or safeguarding-related incidents.
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the alleged victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture.

- An appropriate senior leader will coordinate the gathering and preservation of evidence in a cyberbullying incident;
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete.
- Pupils will be asked not to share confidential details or identify other pupils involved. Staff will explain that information cannot always be kept confidential where safeguarding or legal duties apply.

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

The school will communicate with parents/carers at an appropriate stage and in a way that supports the child's safety and the integrity of the investigation. Information about other children will not be disclosed. Where safeguarding considerations mean that contacting a parent/carer immediately would not be appropriate, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures.

13. Sanctions

Where bullying has occurred, the child who has used harmful behaviour will be subject to proportionate disciplinary consequences

In addition, we prioritise restorative conversations to help the perpetrator understand the impact of their actions, take responsibility, and work towards repairing harm. In attempting reconciliation, an apology may be obtained from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future. This dual approach supports behaviour change while reinforcing the STB Way; Ready, Respectful, Safe.

The school will avoid unnecessarily criminalising pupils for bullying or abusive behaviour where possible, as young people with criminal records face stigma and discrimination in future aspects of their lives. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

The school will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour and will not exclude pupils unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with the Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

14. Supportive Framework

Following a bullying incident, STB school is committed to supporting both the victim and the perpetrator in line with our trauma-informed approach.
Victims are offered:

- A safe space to express their feelings and are supported through emotional check-ins, restorative conversations, and ongoing pastoral care, including access to the Learning Mentor.
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident, and that appropriate action will be taken.
- Liaison with their parents to ensure a continuous dialogue of support.

- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff.
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online.

For the perpetrator, we focus on understanding the underlying needs driving their behaviour through co-regulation, emotion coaching, and restorative dialogue. Where appropriate, a Positive Regulation Plan may be developed to support behaviour change and emotional development.

Both parties are guided through restorative conversations to repair harm, rebuild trust, and promote accountability. This approach ensures that all pupils feel heard, supported, and empowered to make positive choices moving forward.

15. Bullying outside of school

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The headteacher/principal has statutory powers to regulate and, where permitted, sanction certain behaviour outside the school premises, subject to the law and the school's behaviour policy.

Teachers have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, e.g. on school or public transport, trip or excursion, outside the local shops, or in a town centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only sanction the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The principal is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

16. Record keeping

All staff will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions. Staff will use appendix 1 to record any incidents.

The principal, supported by the senior leadership team, will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled

The school will use information-sharing powers and duties lawfully and proportionately. Data protection will not be used as a reason to prevent necessary safeguarding information from being shared.

Where incidents may constitute a criminal offence, the school will consider police involvement in accordance with safeguarding procedures and relevant local arrangements. The school will avoid unnecessary criminalisation while recognising that serious offences and safeguarding concerns must be reported appropriately.

Where a concern involves sexual violence or sexual harassment, the school will follow current safeguarding guidance, consider the safety and wishes of the child who has experienced harm, assess risk to all pupils, preserve relevant evidence, and seek advice or referral from appropriate safeguarding partners or the police where required.

Bullying concerns may overlap with child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, discriminatory abuse, exploitation, coercive behaviour, self-harm, mental health concerns or other safeguarding risks. Staff will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and report concerns to the DSL/deputy without delay. Staff will not attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns beyond their role or delay referral while establishing whether behaviour meets the definition of bullying.

17. Monitoring and review

The annual review will consider, where available and proportionate:

- patterns by year group, location, time, type of behaviour and protected characteristic or other relevant factor;
- repeat incidents and whether support and interventions have reduced recurrence;
- pupil, parent/carer and staff feedback about safety, belonging and confidence in reporting concerns;
- the effectiveness of curriculum, supervision, online-safety education and pastoral support; and
- whether any groups of pupils experience disproportionate bullying or barriers to reporting.

Findings will inform the school's safeguarding, behaviour, equality and curriculum improvement work. The school will maintain appropriate records and use them to identify patterns while protecting pupils' personal information.

This policy is reviewed annually by the principal. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders. The scheduled review date for this policy is September 2027.

Appendix 1: Record of Bullying Incidents

Record of Bullying Incidents	
Name of staff member	
Name of the person reporting the incident	
Date	
Time	
Location	
Name of alleged victim	
Additional information linked to the alleged victim ie EHC plan, SEND	
Name of alleged perpetrator	
Additional information linked to the alleged perpetrator ie EHC plan, SEND area of need, regulation plan etc	
Incident Details: Victim	
Description of the incident (including what happened; where did it take place; when did it occur?)	
According to the victim, how long has this been happening for?	

Incident Details: Alleged Perpetrator	
Details of the restorative conversation	
Outcome of the Incident	
Support Framework	
Sanction(s)	
Signed staff member	
Monitoring of Incidents (to be completed by a senior leader)	
Number of incidents involving the victim	
Number of incidents involving the perpetrator	
Any patterns of concerning behaviour	
Next steps (if applicable)	
Signed and date	