

## School Supplementary Policy

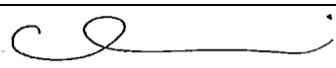


### Title: **Anti Bullying**

This guidance is to be read in conjunction with related National Autistic Society Policies

#### Declaration

The Sybil Elgar School does not promote partisan political views. The school will have regard for The Human Rights Act, 1998, The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, as amended by The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001, including new duties 2002, and The Principles of the New Code of Practice, 2001, with special focus on Student Empowerment, Parents in Partnership and Consultation and Joint Working initiatives. In addition, the school has regard for the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

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| <b>Policy lead (s)</b>                     | <b>Safeguarding Lead,<br/>Psychologist</b>   |
| <b>Date of document</b>                    | <b>December 2015</b>   |
| <b>Latest revision</b>                     | <b>March 2021</b>  |
| <b>Signed Chloe Phillips<br/>Principal</b> |  |

## Introduction

Thirty-four percent of children on the autism spectrum say that the worst thing about being at school is being picked on (Reid, B. (2011). *Great Expectations*. London: The National Autistic Society). Autistic students have difficulty 'reading' social situations and knowing how to engage in ever-changing social contexts. They find it hard to predict other people's behaviour and to interpret and/or infer their body language and expressions to guess what they are thinking or feeling. This makes it difficult for autistic children to understand other people's intentions, and makes them an easy target for bullies.

The Government has made tackling bullying in schools a key priority and the Department for Education (DfE) has made clear that no form of bullying should be tolerated. DfE guidance is set out in *Preventing and Tackling Bullying – Advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies* July 2017.

## Safeguarding

The Sybil Elgar School has a very strong ethos and programme in place to support and safeguard all staff, students and families. The school will have due regard to the need for everyone to **be** safe and **feel** safe.

We will ensure that our students are overtly taught and have modelled for them the values of courtesy, honesty, tolerance kindness and respect for others, through a robust curriculum, clear and effective policies and well-established procedures, practice and protocols.

We will not tolerate abuse in any form, including peer on peer abuse and we will ensure that we: **inform prepare and respond**

- Inform (ensure students, staff and families know the risks, how they present and the potential support/outcomes)
- Prepare (ensure that students, staff and families can identify the risks, report and respond)
- Respond/Help (ensure that responses to reports of CSE are dealt with effectively, keeping children safe, helping those involved).

The school has an open culture and we encourage families/students and staff to talk about their concerns safely.

Our students are autistic and this presents clear and extra challenges. The majority of our student population have severe cognitive delay, highly complex needs and a lack of understanding about the impact of their behaviour on others. They may be perceived to be behaving without respect 'abusing' others without intent, both their peers and staff who work with them. The school will not tolerate instances of abuse, violence and

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harassment in any form. Instances of this from or between students will be dealt with following the NAS school's behaviour policy and school protocols.

Staff training and support is key to ensure that our students are supported sensitively and robustly to manage their difficulties in a positive way and to ensure that they are taught the skills to enable them have the best possible quality of life and enable them to live and work with others in their adult lives.

### **Types of Bullying**

Bullying can take place between students and young people, between students and staff, by individuals or groups, face-to-face or indirectly via one of several cyber bullying methods. The school will consider that a student is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over duration of time to harmful actions carried out by one or more of the other students.

At this school there are some behaviours that if displayed intentionally and over time will be considered to be examples of bullying. These are as follows:

Verbal abuse, such as name calling, teasing with harmful intent and gossiping

Non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or text messages

Emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone

Exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone

Undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours

Controlling or manipulating someone

Racial, sexual or homophobic bullying

Physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing

Making silent, hoax or abusive calls

On-line or cyber-bullying NSPCC (2015)

Hitting, kicking and any display of aggressive behaviour directed towards a specific student with harmful intent

Imitating the behaviours of other students with harmful intent

Teasing with harmful intent

Taking possessions from another student without permission

### **The Impact of Bullying**

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A single student who bullies can have a wide-ranging impact on the students they bully, students who observe bullying, and the overall climate of the school and community.

### **Bullying of Students on the Autism Spectrum**

Our school works to differentiate between student's behaviours that result from, or are associated with autism, and those that can be described as bullying. In order to be classified as bullying the behaviour should have the characteristics of being directed, intentional, wilful and meant to cause harm or create stress in the targeted individual.

In this case immediate and effective action should be taken.

### **Strategies to Deal with Bullying**

Please see attached flow chart and refer to Behaviour Management and Safeguarding Policy

The above principles are translated into a number of general strategies to be used at school, class and individual levels. (Please refer to Behaviour management policy and guidelines, sensory policy and Studio III policy)

The school believes that the most effective approach is to work on three levels:

#### **School Level**

Preventative Strategies

Should be based on the following principles:

Effective leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.

Use of curriculum/learning opportunities (Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education) can be used to draw out anti-bullying messages.

Use of opportunities throughout the school/service calendar and at certain times of the day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year; and school assemblies).

Engaging children and young people, as well as parents/carers/guardians in the process of developing the anti-bullying policy and promoting open and honest reporting.

Reviewing the school/service environment. In particular looking at staff supervision patterns.

## **Anti-bullying Strategies**

The aims of the school anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:

To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.

To respond to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.

To safeguard the child or young person who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for him/her.

To apply corrective and supportive strategies to the child or young person responsible for the bullying and ensure that they can resolve and be equipped at their level of functioning about potential causes.

Any use of sanctions must be appropriate to the age, understanding and individual needs of the child or young person.

It is important to create a school environment characterised by warmth, positive interest and involvement from adults on the one hand and firm boundaries to unacceptable behaviours on the other.

Individual Behavioural Support Plan (ISP) focused on Positive management of challenging behaviours.

Bulletin daily briefing - The aim of the bulletin is to increase supervision and inform staff who do not necessarily work closely with a specific student of appropriate responses to specific behaviours. It also aims to increase awareness among all members of staff and therefore increase the protection of the students who may be bullied.

Admissions, exclusions, attainment, attendance, progress and assessment will be monitored carefully to analyse any trends and to ensure all equal opportunity policies are being adhered to.

Planning will consider the principle of anti discrimination and recognise and value diversity.

Staff Training – All staff are trained in Studio III low-arousal approach which aims to positively manage behaviours which

challenge in a non-confrontational manner. Anti-Bullying training will form part of Safeguarding Training.

School promotes e-safety with clear guidelines and training for all staff and students

There are student friendly policies, also available electronically, about Anti-bullying and about E-Safety

A high profile is given to National Anti-bullying initiatives and focus weeks

We will involve Parents through face to face, emails and telephone appointments as appropriate.

Parents will be informed and asked to co-operate with school staff in eradicating bullying behaviours. They will be invited to participate in discussion groups regarding bullying through the Parents in Partnership forum and on an individual basis whenever appropriate.

### **Class/ Group Level**

Ant-Bullying is given high priority as part of the Personal Social, Health and Careers Education (PSHCE) Curriculum

Staff, as appropriate, meet with their key group in order to elaborate clear and concise rules, which the students will be expected to follow. The communication of these rules may have to be adapted through the use of pictorial means to help students of different abilities to understand them.

Students will always be encouraged to speak to their Keyworker, if they are the victims or witnesses of a bullying event.

Posters, visual information and The Student Anti Bullying and related Safeguarding Policies are displayed prominently around school and used with groups and Individuals.

### **Individual Level**

The School Curriculum is weighted towards the teaching of self-management skills and positive social interaction. This is supported by the teaching of Play and Occupational Skills.

Every student has a comprehensive Individual Support Plan. Students who engage in bullying behaviours will be redirected and supported to engage in constructive activities.

### Making the Environment Safe

Staff will always be aware of the vulnerability of individual students and seating, classroom use and staff supervision will be organised accordingly.

### Positive Reward Systems

As part of the Behaviour Policy school will always emphasise and reward positive interactions. Individual strategies to support a student will be tailored to meet their needs and carefully monitored. (For example, Assertiveness Skills Training, Social Skills Training)

### **Signs that a Student is being bullied**

An individual who is being bullied may display some of the following common responses:

- increased anxiety (displayed through increasingly obsessive behaviours; hand movements, repetitive questioning and statements or short temper)
- withdrawal
- aggression
- seeming over-sensitive or over-reacting to minor occurrences (being 'on-edge')
- seeking revenge, retaliation
- Repeatedly exposing him/herself to the same kind of bullying situation. (Although the student may know it as a negative interaction, they may still consider this better than no interaction at all)

Students who have been victims of bullying will be taught strategies to protect themselves from those acts. Possible strategies might be:

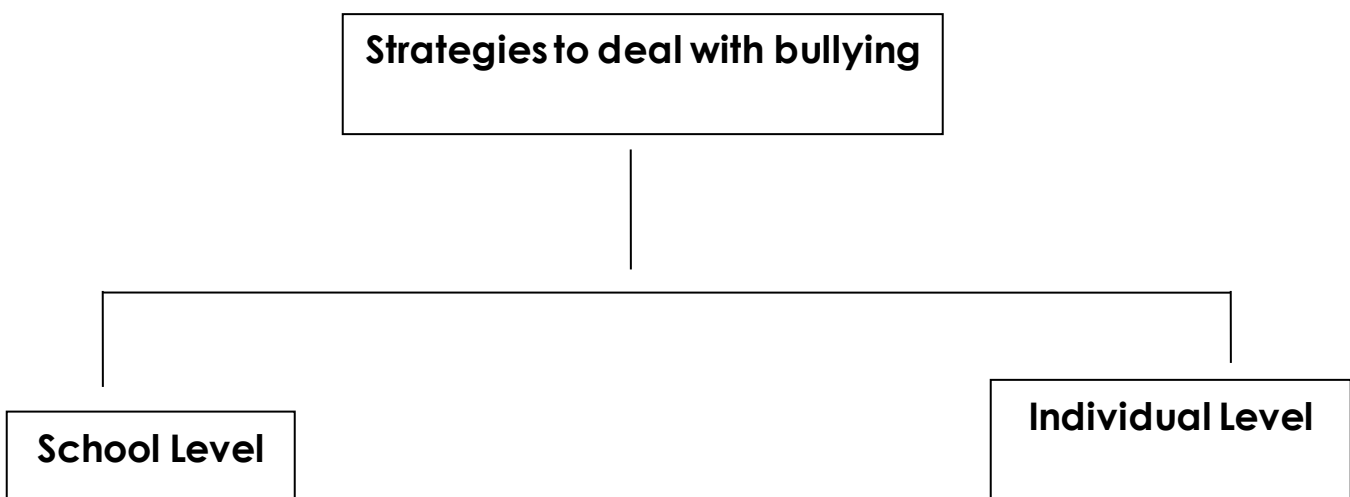
- Talking to Keyworker
- Learning to avoid confrontational situations
- Learning to say 'No'
- Programmes of Positive Behaviour Management and Modification

See section on Behaviour support in Schools and Services policy  
Counselling

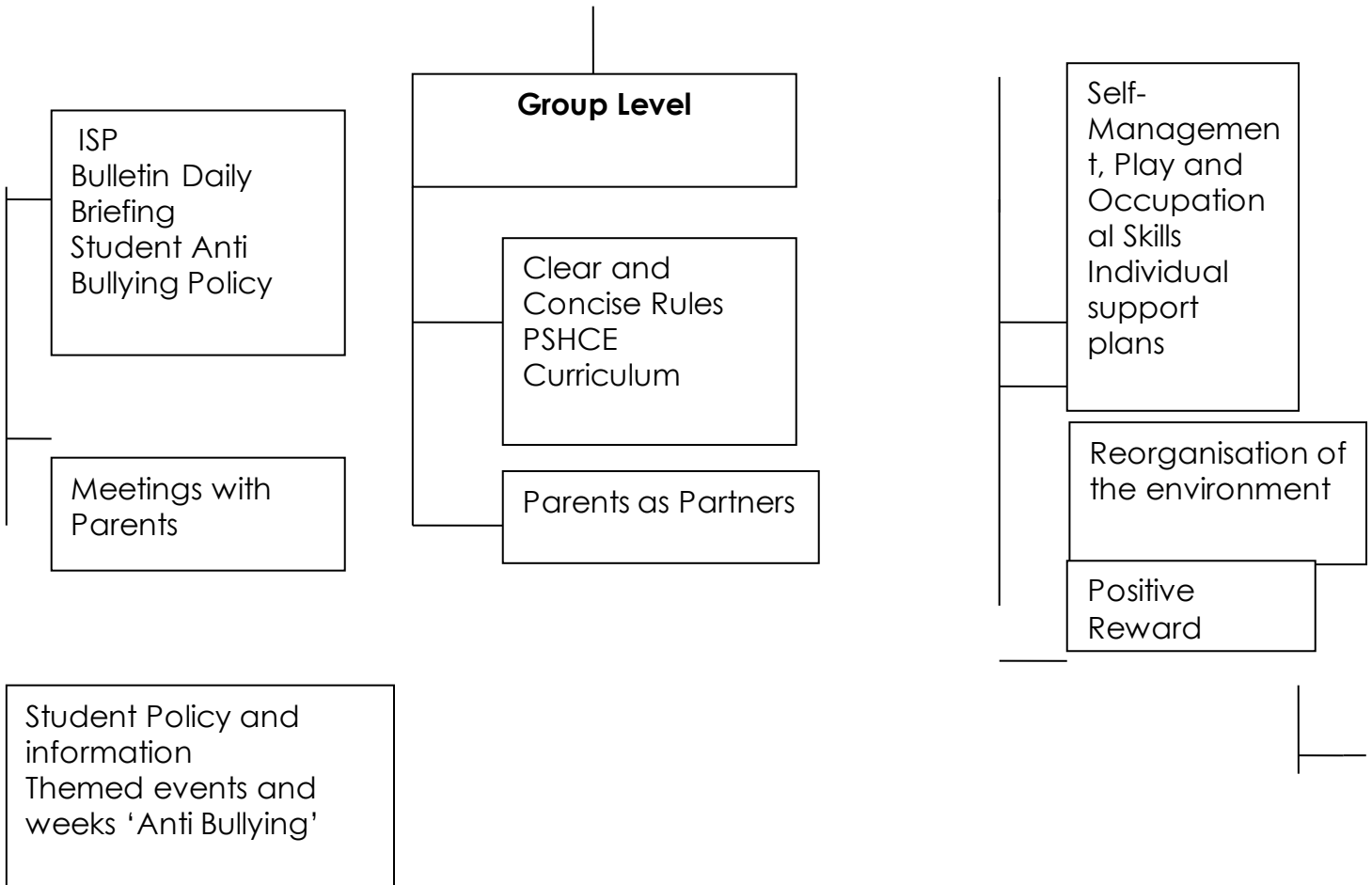
Students who have communication skills and have been victims of bullying will have the opportunity to talk about their own feelings, their worries and strategies for protecting themselves in the future.

### **Recording of Bullying**

Bullying incidents will be recorded in the information report forms. (Appended)







\*For the purposes of this policy and for fluency the term 'student' is used to describe all learners from the Early Years through to 16-22 Provision

Please also refer to:

Assessment and Recording Policy

High Alert Records

Individual Support Plans

Behaviour Policy

Studio III Policy

Sanctions Policy

Safeguarding Children Policy

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**This policy was written with reference to:**

Teaching about relationships, sex and health (DFEE) Published: 24 September 2020 last updated: 16 March 2021,  
Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)

- Respectful School Communities: Self-Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).
- National Citizen Service guidance for schools