



3E: Preventing Bullying Policy

Reviewed: AW/SMT - March 2026 (annually)

Ratified by Board: May 2026

Full Review date: Spring Term 2027

EDI Check: SSET does not currently identify any EDI impact of this policy; should new information come to light, this will be considered at the next review.

This policy relates to bullying where students are involved only. There is an alternative Anti-Harassment and Bullying to address incidents amongst staff (see Staff Handbook).

Introduction

At The Sheiling Ringwood (TSR), we believe that 'Everyone has the right to learn and work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination, where they feel safe.'

Any behaviour where one individual 'takes steps' to hurt, to threaten, or to frighten another person, where the incidents are repeated and occur over a period of time is considered to be bullying behaviour.

As a responsible organisation, we have a duty to be alert to occasions where a student may be at the receiving end of bullying behaviour and, should this arise, pay due diligence to the procedures below.

Bullying is defined as abusive, offensive, malicious, intimidating, or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions, which make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable or which undermines their self-confidence. Bullying can take place either in person or by alternative means e.g. online. It can be ostracising or excluding of an individual.

Bullying can take many forms but there are three main types:

1. Physical – e.g. hitting, kicking, mimicking, pulling faces and taking belongings.
2. Verbal / written – e.g. name-calling, teasing, taunting, insulting, making offensive remarks, cyber bullying (see Online Safety Policy)
3. Indirect – e.g. being ostracised by a peer group, provocation, being picked on and forcing someone to act against their will.

Bullying can be seen as an exploitation of an inequality of power. Bullies are often motivated by getting their own way, having an experience of controlling and may get pleasure from other people's pain, fear and humiliation.

In cases of bullying, it is difficult for the victim to defend themselves.

Bullying by staff

At The Sheiling Ringwood, we are committed to promoting an environment free from bullying in which all staff and students feel comfortable and where each individual is treated with respect and dignity, and regardless of status with regard to any protected characteristic or status as set out in the Equality Act.

As such, we will not tolerate bullying by staff to any other person and, should this arise, staff report this under the safeguarding procedures (students) and Whistleblowing (staff).

Bullying by student

At The Sheiling Ringwood, we recognise the potential for and the need to monitor and respond to behaviours between students that could constitute child-on-child abuse. This includes all staff being alert to and able to respond and report such events in line with our Safeguarding policy. Such behaviour could include physical abuse in the form of bullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.

Some students, due to their cognitive abilities and levels of understanding, may have little or no conceptual understanding of what it is to bully another. Behaviour that could be perceived as 'bullying' could be unintentional yet still impactful to the person having such behaviour directed towards them. Other students may have more awareness of the impact

of their actions or behaviours on others or could, albeit rarely, be seen as deliberately or intentionally communicating or acting in a way that is intended to cause hurt or harm to others, i.e. intentionally bullying.

In dealing with incidents of peer-on-peer abuse or behaviour directed from one student to another that could be perceived as bullying, senior leaders will seek to take a proportionate view of the level of understanding, intentions and reasons behind the behaviour. Decisions on how to support and teach a person perceived to be showing bullying behaviour to adopt more socially appropriate and safe behaviours will be informed by this proportionate view. Any use of sanctions or consequences will also be informed by this proportionate view.

The frequency, type, intensity and impact of behaviour from one student to another will be taken into account in determining the likely causes and intentions of the behaviour and whether this constitutes bullying. Behaviour incidents are recorded in detail. Even if behaviour is not meant to be malicious, or if it is "just a joke," it can still be considered bullying if it is unwanted, repetitive, and creates a power imbalance that causes physical or emotional harm. Consideration will always be given to the impact on the person having behaviour directed towards them- whilst bullying may not be intentional, it may still be interpreted as bullying through the detrimental impact it is having on the recipient.

Having due consideration to the above, we have a duty to be alert to occasions where a student may be at the receiving end of behaviour that may make them feel bullied, continually assess if any student may have capacity and be exhibiting bullying behaviour and, should this arise, follow the procedures outlined below.

Aims and objectives

It is the policy of The Sheiling Ringwood that bullying and harassment behaviour is not tolerated. Active steps will be taken by all staff to counter it in all situations and aspects of community life.

This policy, as an aspect of the Positive Behaviour Support Policy, places emphasis on anticipation, prevention and de-escalation in good time and the use of minimum levels of restraint appropriate to the incident and level of aggression. This is in line with PROACT-SCIP®-UK and additionally is referenced specifically within the updated issue of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).

Taking action and making both parties involved in bullying aware of their actions and inter-dependence are important steps in dealing with bullying and should occur as soon as bullying is observed, as is appropriate to their level of understanding. In this way, we support and guide both parties in their growth towards maturity and empower them to develop appropriate social skills. In line with our Positive Behaviour Support Policy (Policy 3), debriefing will be used with students to address behaviour with both students involved where there is an incident or contact that could be perceived by the student(s) as bullying or feeling 'bullied'.

We recognise that it can be difficult for those at the receiving end, or witness to bullying behaviour, to come forward. However, staff need to make the internal Safeguarding Team aware that an incident occurred between two students without delay. The procedures below set out the steps that staff should take with regard to bullying behaviour. Students are strongly encouraged to report any such behaviour to staff via the student-friendly preventing bullying policy.

Procedures

These procedures are intended for staff to respond to incidents of bullying. There is a student-friendly policy related to supporting students to understand and deal with bullying behaviour. As most bullying occurs when students are less supervised, the individual member of staff should in the first instance:

All staff involved in day-to-day support for students will:

- Ensure that students are supervised as per agreed level of support and be aware of risk assessments in place.
- Act quickly and decisively when an incident occurs / is observed.
- Follow proactive, active and reactive strategies as described in individual Positive Engagement Plans to deal with the behaviour displayed.
- Offer reassurance and a possibility of a debrief, if appropriate, to the person to whom the behaviour was directed.
- Record all incidents using the Cause for Concern or incident reporting procedure.
- after the event, inform the Sheiling Safeguarding Team and agree initial actions.
- Implement strategies that would be beneficial to minimise the risk of the behaviour reoccurring and avoid possible retaliation.
- Monitor the student that was targeted for any delayed signs of upset.

Follow-up and support for students who have been bullied (including peer-on-peer behaviour that may not constitute bullying). The following is not an exhaustive list and the mechanisms of support will be adjusted to individual circumstances and needs.

- It will be appropriate to provide nurture, support, emotional warmth and acknowledgement of the student's feelings. This can involve a number of interactions and conversations with familiar staff with whom the student feels comfortable to communicate with.
- Ensure parents/ families and social care professionals, when involved with a child, are informed.
- Restorative approaches (see below).
- Teaching of appropriate strategies of self-support through skills teaching, for instance, asking for help or emotional regulation skills.
- Changes to environment, routines, activities or level of staff support both to support the student but also to minimise recurrence of another incident happening.

Follow-up and support for students who have bullied others:

- Ensure parents/ families and social care professionals, when involved with a child, are informed.
- A debrief will take place with the student. Students will always be reminded that bullying is totally unacceptable. A restorative approach will be used. This will utilise the following questions and will be adjusted to the needs of the student. What happened? What were you thinking about at the time? What have been your thoughts since? Who has been affected by what you did? In what way have they been affected? What do you think needs to happen next?
- A restorative approach will also allow, where appropriate, for the student to make amends, for instance, by apologising or taking steps to 'put right' what has happened. This can only be implemented where a student has the capacity to understand the concept of apology. A student should never be forced to apologise and a student cannot be forced to accept an apology.
- The PSHE&C curriculum will be utilised so that teaching can support the student to understand and utilise socially appropriate behaviour. This can focus on appropriate

skills development, such as knowing what to do if they feel overwhelmed, or how to resolve conflicts with their peers and friends.

- Where verbal or written communication, including online, has been a factor in bullying behaviour the THINK framework is a helpful tool: Is it t true? Is it helpful? Is it inspiring? Is it necessary? Is it kind?
- A range of strategies, teaching resources and tools will be utilised in supporting restorative practice and many of these are illustrated in the Respectful School Communities Self-Review and Signposting Tool (DFE).
- Some students may need time before they are able to reflect on their behaviour. Attempting to utilise debriefs and restorative approaches immediately following an incident or when emotions are still heightened will seldom be the appropriate time.
- Learning contracts may be utilised. These will be structured so that they are a commitment on the part of the student for what they will do (rather than phrased as what they should NOT do) and what the Sheiling will do to support them. This is personalised to the student, for instance, 'if I feel cross or upset, I will talk to staff'. Sheiling will also hold responsibilities with such contracts, cocreated and agreed with the student, for instance, to 'listen to me' or to 'make learning fun'.

Monitoring:

Recording and tracking of behaviour will be used to monitor instances of bullying.

The Positive Behaviour Support team will:

- ensure the appropriate targeted support for students takes place, including reviewing the Positive Engagement Plan accordingly.
- identify the function of the behaviour and suggest a risk reduction plan
- provide data to the Sheiling Safeguarding Team to highlight if there are any patterns of behaviours.

The Sheiling Safeguarding Team will:

- assess the impact and severity of each incident.
- assess which parties need to be informed of the incident – i.e. parents, social workers, local Safeguarding Teams, Ofsted/CQC
- assess the impact and efficiency of agreed strategies in minimising the risk of bullying.

Intervention techniques

The Sheiling Ringwood aims to provide a proactive environment in line with PROACT-SCIP®-UK which supports students to learn positive behaviours and to respect others. All staff receive training in how to deal with incidents of behaviours of concern, as well as how to actively support an individual student to communicate if they are worried.

The extended day curriculum - which aims to support choice and the ability for all student to have a voice - includes the following:

- Weekly house meetings and termly Student Council meetings, 'talk' time, Talking Mats sessions and debriefs - students are encouraged to express their feelings and needs around safety, understand their rights and responsibilities, relationships and personal space, within a social setting of a house community or classroom as is appropriate to their individual needs and abilities.
- Social skills/ 'chat' groups – students learn about individuality and how to respect others.

- 'Helping hand' - students are encouraged to create a 'helping hand'/have a visual story which shows trusted people and friends who can be called upon when 'in need' as is appropriate to their individual needs and abilities.
- Ensuring that teaching students about bullying and its impact is embedded within the curriculum offer.
- PHSE sessions - sessions where students learn to label and name their feelings and emotions and learn about private and public spaces.

Sometimes, instances of bullying may be a one-off occurrence and propagated by, for instance, frustration, lack of social understanding or being scared or frightened of behaviour of other students. Some students who exhibit bullying behaviour may experience naturally-occurring consequences, for example, needing to access a planned, favoured activity in a different way at a different time if this is to ensure safety. In significant cases, bullying others may constitute grounds for the Principal to consider exclusion for one or more fixed periods or to consider permanent exclusion. In line with DfE guidance to education settings, this protects the rights of all students to an environment free from disruption and to enable all to learn in a safe environment.

The Sheiling Ringwood undertakes to:

- Ensure the procedures for preventing bullying and harassment in The Sheiling Ringwood are made available to parents, students and staff.
- Ensure that all parents, students and staff know that bullying is unacceptable and that they will be supported if they report and otherwise help to stop bullying.

References

- Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Staff Handbook: Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour in Schools - Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DFE, February 2024)
- Improving Behaviour in Schools, Guidance Report (Education Endowment Foundation, October 2021)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2024)

Appendices

Student-friendly Preventing Bullying Policy



Bullying Policy



Bullying

means making



people



feel



sad



or scared



Bullying

is



wrong.



Bullying



is against the rules



Bullying

means



hitting,



kicking,



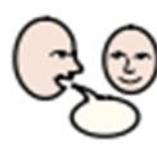
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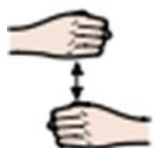
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doing



unkind



things

If you feel sad or scared you can tell



staff



Staff

will



help

you

If you bully others, staff will help



you

to



stop

End of document.