



SOMPTING ABBOTTS SCHOOL

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

The Policy is for the whole school including EYFS and Before and After School Care

This policy adheres to Independent School Standards Regulations Part 3 paragraph 10 for anti-bullying, and part 3 paragraph 7 for Safeguarding.

Further guidance can be found in the document 'Preventing Bullying (2017).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

It needs to be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, The Code of Conduct for Staff; and the Online Safety Policy.

Aims and Definition

The family nature of Sompting Abbots prides itself on a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable.** If bullying does occur, all pupils and their parents should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We expect that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will tell a member of staff. Staff are expected to familiarize themselves with this policy. Mr. Douch has overall responsibility for monitoring Anti-Bullying in Main School; as Head of Pre-Prep, Mrs Miles has this responsibility in the Pre-Prep. It is the responsibility of all adults to implement the Anti-bullying Policy consistently throughout the school.

What is Bullying? (From Preventing Bullying (2017))

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group **either physically or emotionally**. **Our staff are aware of the emotional impact, including the psychological impact and implications for a child, as well as the physical impact bullying can have.** Bullying can take many forms, for instance it can be done face to face, through third parties, or cyber-bullying sending messages or images by email, text, or over the internet. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, 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.

We also recognise the school's responsibility to tackle incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, which take place out of school hours, and away from school premises.

Discretion may be applied to an isolated one-off incident (one sole occurrence of name-calling, for instance may be a single piece of bad behavior and not yet bullying); however, no intentional act designed to hurt another will be tolerated.

Examples of Bullying

Examples of bullying behaviour:

Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.

Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Emotional: excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures) intimidation.

Religious and Cultural: including verbal.

Racist : racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Sexual: unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.

Homophobic: unwanted abusive comments.

Gender: male/female.

Cyber (use of ICT): mobile phone, internet, chat rooms, websites, digital cameras. For more information on cyber-bullying please refer to the end of this document.

Disability: unwanted physical, verbal or emotional actions relating to disability.

Special Educational Needs: verbal comments and/or abuse directed at a person's special educational needs.

Personal: comments about home background, for example if a child is adopted, or about a child's carer.

Whole school strategies to prevent bullying

Sompting is a small school with very high staff to pupil ratios that engenders a caring family atmosphere; and staff enjoy not only very close links with pupils but parents too. Staff are in frequent contact with pupils and are quick to note any behavioural changes that may indicate potential bullying and therefore quick to prevent an event escalating into something more serious. **Staff must always be alert to children who may be vulnerable and at risk from bullying.**

Staff and older pupils set examples of good behaviour. Our head pupil and deputy pupil are chosen because they are noted for their kindness to others.

In form time at the start of each term guidance is given to pupils so they are clear that bullying isn't tolerated, how to report bullying and the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

The PSCHEE programme provides a range of opportunities across the key stages for pupils to discuss issues to do with honesty in friendship, relationships, working together and caring for each other in communities, as well as discussing bullying as a specific topic. Cyber bullying, and the responsibility of the school to deal with bullying incidents outside of school, are also dealt with as specific issues.

The subject of bullying is embedded across the curriculum, both implicitly and explicitly, throughout Sompting Abbots, particularly in PSCHEE, Drama, English and RS.

Assemblies, given by staff and pupils, frequently focus on issues such as respect, friendship, choices and bullying itself, which contribute to the school's ethos of caring and mutual respect. Examples of good and kind behaviour are brought to the attention of the school in assembly time and pupils may receive a good mark; these are noted on their half and end of term reports.

Parents joining the school are made aware of the School's Policy, (see Appendix 1 Anti Bullying Policy for Parents) and pupils will have a simplified version of the policy explained to them; and will be asked to sign. (Bullying Policy for Pupils See Appendix 2)

The Code of Conduct for Staff policy outlines the need for staff to treat all pupils with respect, fairness and justice, which provides a model for personal interactions in school, and minimises the extent to which teachers may unwittingly contribute to creating potential victims. Staff must also be aware to avoid prejudiced language.

Two members of staff supervise the pupils at morning and lunch break, and at lunchtime, staff serve in the dining room. These measures provide the pupils with the opportunity to talk if it becomes necessary.

All teaching staff have a pastoral role in the school but form teachers are usually the first point of contact and often the Head of the Preparatory School will be involved.

The school's Behaviour Policy makes clear the consequences for bullying behaviour towards other pupils.

In our Classrooms, Friendship Rubrics are displayed to help staff discuss any negative behavior towards others, and also to promote positive models for future interactions.

Staff at the School periodically receive training so that the principles of the school policy are understood, legal responsibilities are known, action is defined to resolve and prevent problems, and sources of support are available.

What to do if bullying happens

All pupils (or their parents) are instructed to tell a member of staff if they are being bullied, or if they know someone else is being bullied. This could be the designated teacher for Child Protection, their form teacher, the Head of Pre-Prep, or any member of staff they feel comfortable speaking to, or an older pupil (e.g. in the case of KS1 or lower KS2 pupils).

Identifying victims of bullying

Victims of bullying may be pupils who are new to class or school, different in speech or appearance, suffer from low esteem, they may be nervous or anxious or they may demonstrate reactions which 'entertain' other children when teased or provoked. Children who are being bullied may exhibit:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Excessive anxiety
- Becoming inward and quiet or reluctant to say what is wrong
- Books, bags or belongings suddenly going missing
- Change to established habits
- Low/diminished self confidence
- Frequent visits to the front office with headaches, stomach aches etc.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absences or late arrivals to class
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- A desire to move places in class

Procedures for dealing with bullying

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated.

Teachers should listen carefully to all accounts, and try to avoid making premature assumptions. Staff are encouraged to take notes. The pupil's form teacher should deal with most reports of bullying with support from the Headmaster, Mr. Douch or Head of the Pre-preparatory School, Mrs. Kirsty Miles if necessary.

When dealing with incidents of bullying, our first priority will be to stop the bullying and support the victim, and secondly to deal with the bully. Those involved in bullying often find it difficult to control some aspects of their character. They may feel empathy or guilt about what they are doing to others, and may themselves be victims of bullying.

We understand the need to help both the victim and the bully. The bully needs to accept responsibility for his or her action whilst understanding what went wrong. She or he must be provided with support so as not to repeat offensive behaviour. Some children who bully suffer from low self-esteem and part of the healing process will involve strategies to help with this. At times blame is not one sided and the full truth may sadly never be fully established. Exclusion is extremely rare and sometimes counselling may need to take place.

The Headmaster holds a central record of bullying incidents (this is the file of Behaviour and Consequence sheets) and this would enable him to identify any patterns. There is also a school incident log that all teachers contribute to which helps keep track of any friendship issues or conflicts.

The school employs a variety of strategies when dealing with cases of bullying.

At the staff meetings, the incident will be discussed and a plan will be formulated. An informal report of the meeting will be given to the victim, and to her parents, if appropriate. Monitoring or review meetings will be held to ensure that the victim notices an improvement in the situation, and that this improvement is maintained.

Some cases may be best dealt with through mediation by adults, where a teacher discusses inappropriate behaviour directly with the bully, and agrees targets, which will enable her to change his or her behaviour. The teacher will also discuss behaviour and attitudes with the victim, and follow up to check there has been no repetition of the bullying.

In all cases the teacher will keep a dated record of the incident, monitor the situation, and check frequently that there has been no repetition of the bullying behaviour.

In all cases the teacher will discuss what is being planned or done with the victim, to make sure she is happy and confident about what is happening.

The parents of pupils who report bullying should be reminded about the school's policy, and kept informed about what is being done to deal with the incident, and to monitor the situation afterwards.

Parents of pupils who are reported as bullying may also be reminded about the school's policy, and be invited into school to discuss how best to support their child in recognising and changing their behaviour. This may depend on the nature and severity of the bullying incident, and/or whether the pupil has been involved in previous incidents.

If pupils do not respond positively to attempts to stop bullying behaviour, or if the bullying behaviour is sufficiently serious, they will be dealt with according to the School's Behaviour Policy. Counselling and support may be offered (including referral to external agencies), or appropriate sanctions applied; more extreme or long-term cases may lead to **suspension or exclusion**, or consultation with the police. **Strong sanctions such as suspension or exclusion should be applied in serious cases of severe or persistent bullying.**

Bullying of School staff by Pupils

This is an extremely unlikely event. However, the school takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard members of staff against bullying behaviour by pupils and any incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, will be dealt with according to the school's behaviour and discipline policies and procedures. Extreme cases may lead to exclusion, or consultation with the police.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Technology (IT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to hurt or upset someone else. Cyberbullying may consist of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation, defamation or impersonation. Cyberbullying may involve the use of email, VLEs, chat rooms, web sites, social networking sites, mobile phones, digital cameras, games and virtual world sites.

Some features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying: Cyberbullying can take place 24/7, intruding into the home and places that have previously been regarded as safe and private. The audience can be very large and rapidly reached. The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means that the scope and scale of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. The profile of the person being bullied and bully may not rely on traditional power imbalances.

The target of the bully will have evidence of its occurrence through the 'digital footprint', which can potentially be used as evidence. There may not be a clear intention to hurt or distress, in some cases. The person responsible may not realise that remarks are publically accessible or persistent or the amplified effect that technologies produce.

Cyberbullying and the Law

Whilst there is not a specific criminal offence called cyberbullying, activities can be a criminal offence under a range of laws including:

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

The Malicious Communications Act 1988

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003

The Public Order Act 1986 The Defamation Acts of 1952 and 1996.

Acceptable Use Policies

These govern both pupil and staff use of technologies.

All pupil and staff users of ICT within the College agree to abide by and within these policies. The policies scope includes:

Rules on the use of equipment, software and network access provided by the school (e.g. desktops, laptops and Chromebooks, VLE, internet access).

The use of staff and pupil owned equipment and internet access routes, where they are used on school premises (e.g. mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras).

Acceptable behaviour for pupils and employees, including behaviour out of school where potential harm to others or bringing the school into disrepute might be occasioned.

Combating Cyberbullying

All pupils in the Main School are trained in E-Safety awareness, including age-appropriate information about grooming, internet sites containing violent or adult content, and sharing personal information or photographs.

The School has participated in activities for UK Safer Internet Day (this has been taught by the Head of IT, Mr. Chris Gunn).

Our police liaison officer is invited to speak to all our pupils about E-safety annually. Our PCLO is PC Andy Price. The School's Police Liaison Officer talks with Years 7 and 8 about cyberbullying and the law annually.

The Behaviour Policy, the Code of Conduct, and the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policies all outline school guidance and information relevant to cyberbullying.

The School's commitment to the ICT infrastructure, to developing teaching and learning strategies using the VLE and investing in new IT machines and to fostering independent learning ensures that engaging use of technologies is supported and the positive use of technology is modelled through safe and effective practice.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when using ICT and are aware of their responsibilities in their use of such technologies. The school's technical provision and infrastructure filters and monitors inappropriate content and alerts the school to safeguarding issues.

Procedures for dealing with cyberbullying

Teachers should respond as for any bullying incident, with the addition that:

The victim should be advised to keep any records of the abuse – text, emails, voice mail, web site or instant message.

Screen shots should be taken of messages or web pages and a careful record taken of time, date and site address.

The member of staff should collect such information as is immediately available (e.g. copies of emails, text messages, photos) and pass on this material/ evidence to those undertaking further investigation.

The victim should be advised not to retaliate to incidents. If brought into school, a phone / iPad/ other device which is deemed likely to have been used in cyberbullying should be removed from the likely perpetrator and may be searched.

Dissemination of information and consultation about this policy

This policy has been discussed by the Head of Preparatory School, the Head of the Pre-preparatory School and the School staff.

The policy is available on request from the school office and website.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces

the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and also covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, 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; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Schools are required to comply with the Equality Duty.

Bullying and discrimination will not be tolerated at Sompting Abbots. We treat our pupils and parents fairly and with consideration, and we expect these views to be reciprocated.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored by the Headmaster and Head teacher of the Pre-Preparatory School.

Stuart Douch

SignedS.J.Douch..... Date09/03/2022



SOMPTING ABBOTTS SCHOOL

Anti- Bullying Policy –Parent’s Document

Is it bullying?

It is if individuals or groups are:

- repeatedly calling your child names
- threatening him/her
- pressuring your child to give someone money or possessions
- hitting your child
- damaging your child's possessions
- spreading rumours about your child or your family
- using text, email or web space to write or say hurtful things about your child (cyberbullying).

It is also bullying if your child feels hurt because of things said about their ethnic background, religious faith, gender, sexuality, disability, special educational need, appearance or specific issues in your family.

What should you do if your child is being bullied?

Talk to school staff about the bullying. At Sompting Abbots School your first contact point to report concerns about is bullying is the form teacher. It will help to sort out what action to take if you can bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.

- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened; give dates, places and names of other pupils involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child.
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

What will Sompting Abbots School do?

Sompting Abbots School does not tolerate bullying. This is what we do about bullying:

- work to make sure that the person being bullied is safe
- work to stop the bullying happening again
- provide support to the person being bullied
- take actions to ensure that the person doing the bullying learns not to harm others.

Families who feel that the school is not addressing their concerns appropriately might like to consider the following steps:

- check with the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed
- discuss your concerns with other parents
- make an appointment to discuss the matter with the head teacher and keep a record of the meeting

If you need further support and information at any stage or the problem remains unresolved, ring the helpline at Parentline Plus **0808 800 2222** or contact other local and national support groups.



SOMPTING ABBOTTS SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy – Pupils' Document

Is it bullying?

It is if you feel hurt because individuals or groups are:

- repeatedly calling you names
- threatening you
- pressuring you to give someone money or possessions
- hitting you
- damaging your possessions
- spreading rumours about you or your family
- using text, email or web space to write or say hurtful things (cyberbullying).

It is bullying if you feel hurt because of things said about your ethnic background, religious faith, gender, sexuality, disability, special educational need, appearance or issues in your family.

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What should you do?

Talk to someone you trust and get them to help you take the right steps to stop the bullying.

If you feel you are being bullied:

- try to stay calm and look as confident as you can
- be firm and clear — look them in the eye and tell them to stop
- get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- tell an adult what has happened straight away or, if you do not feel comfortable telling an adult, tell another pupil.

If you have been bullied:

- tell a teacher or another adult in your school (your head of year, form tutor or learning mentor will all be able to help)
- tell your family
- if you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- keep on speaking until someone listens and does something to stop the bullying
- don't blame yourself for what has happened.

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

- what has happened to you
- how often it has happened
- who was involved
- who saw what was happening
- where it happened
- what you have done about it already.

If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring ChildLine on freephone 0800 1111. This is a confidential helpline. If you are hard of hearing you can use the textphone 0800 400 222. You can also write to Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR. The phone-call and letter are free.

Reviewed March 2022