# Anti-bullying Policy

**DfE no: 850/6107**

**Approved by:** Governing board

**Date:** November 2024

**Signed by:**

**Position:** Chair of the Governing board

**Last reviewed:** November 2024

**Next review due:** November 2026

**Monitoring arrangements**

*This policy will be reviewed at bi-annually in line with DfE, HSCP, HCC and any other relevant guidance.*

# Contents

# 1. The Inclusion Way

The Inclusion Way is based on over ten years' experience and captures our wellbeing and mental health ethos, our pedagogical approach and all aspects that affect a learner's Schoolal experience.

We know that the Inclusion Way works because:

- Our learners are happy
- Our learners tell us it works for them
- Our learners make Schoolal, emotional and social progress
- Our parents/carers tell us they feel supported by their school in caring for their child

For over ten years we have supported the most vulnerable young people in our community to become mentally healthy, resilient and successful young adults.

In this and all other policies, all of which come together to form The Inclusion Way, you will learn what we do to unlock potential in each learner and how we do it.

Before reading this policy, it is important to know our learner and the journey they have taken before they start Inclusion School:

- Our learners will have a severe and chronic diagnosed mental health need. They will be experiencing, or have experienced, self-harm, suicide ideation, depression and high anxiety. Most of our learners will be experiencing more than one of these things at any one time.
- Our learners will likely have diagnosed and undiagnosed SEND needs related to speech, language and communication (SLCN), communication and interaction needs (C&I) or a specific learning need (SpLD).
- Our learners will have experienced significant gaps in their School, (in some cases years) at primary and/or secondary level
- Our learners will have a history of non-attendance due to high anxiety and mental health needs and been identified as an emotionally based school avoider (EBSA)
- Our learners academic levels will be below age related expectations in Maths, English and Science due to these gaps in School and unmet needs
- Our learners will have experienced trauma, whether through an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) or by having been a victim of bullying in previous settings

- Our learner is a teenager exploring their identity and discovering who they are and who they want to be. They may present as having difficulties with emotional regulation and academic attainment but they are not of the cognitive ability of primary age children. They are young adults and want to be treated like one.

The Inclusion Way is designed to meet these needs so the learner can succeed. This is how we achieve this, with further information available in the most important policies:

- A PACE approach with each learner's SEN needs being met (see our SEN and Mental Health Policies)
- Establish foundations of positive and sustainable mental health on which we can build learning (see our Mental Health Policy)
- Positive, trusting and consistent relationships with adults (see our Behaviour Policy)
- Recognition that good attendance can look different for everyone at different times and should not be taken for granted. Good attendance should be celebrated because it can be lifechanging (see our Attendance Policy)
- An adaptive pedagogy and curriculum with reading, literacy, Gatsby and cultural capital at its heart (see our Curriculum and Reading policies)

An integral element to the success of the Inclusion Way is our model of triangulation between Mental Health, Quality of School and SEND. These three aspects are of equal importance and they all inform the each other.

Only by working in combination, as embodied in the school through our Deputy Headteachers (Quality of School, SEND) and Senior Mental Health Lead, overseen by the Headteacher, are our learners able to make sustained and holistic progress.
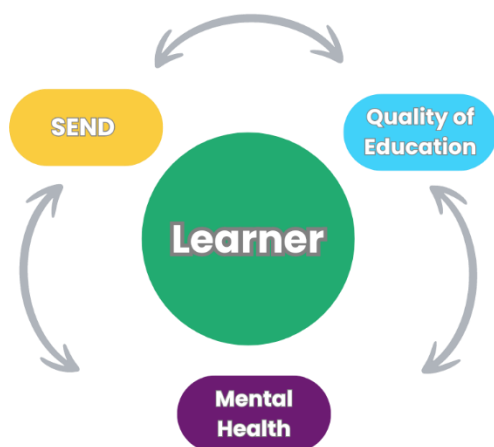
## 2. Aims

The aim of this policy is to outline Inclusion School's zero tolerance approach to bullying, in all its forms, and to give guidance to all staff, learners and parents/carers regarding what to look for, what to do and how Inclusion School will investigate and work to eliminate bullying behaviour.

## 3. Definitions

Inclusion School defines bullying as:

> *"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online."* – Anti-bullying Alliance

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **Physical** – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- **Verbal**  - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling.
- **Emotional** – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures,  ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion.
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- **Online /cyber** – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion
- **Indirect** - Can include the exploitation of individuals.

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Race or ethnic identity
- Religion or spiritual belief
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Sexual (talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic bullying)
- Sexual activity (whether real or fictionally constructed)
- Gender identity (bullying of trans or non-binary people)

- A person's disability, special Schoolal needs, learning difficulty
- A person's appearance or health
- Pregnancy and maturity
- Related to a person's home or personal circumstances, such as young carers or looked-after children

# 4. Contributing factors

Learners attending Inclusion School are often extremely vulnerable and may be previous victims or perpetrators of bullying. It is important that we are sensitive to learners and recognise that because of their vulnerabilities they can be particularly susceptible to being a victim of bullying or being the perpetrator of bullying.

Bullying is deeply damaging, potentially causing psychological damage for the person being bullied and the person conducting the bullying, and its legacy can follow young people into adulthood.

If bullying behaviour leads to concerns that any learner may be at risk of harm, the Headteacher & DSL will be informed and Inclusion School's Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed.

Nevertheless, all behaviour not in keeping with Inclusion School's values – outlined in our Behaviour Policy – should be dealt with in accordance with Inclusion School's Behaviour Policy.

# 5. Identifying signs bullying

Inclusion School will enable staff to identify the signs and symptoms of bullying and the damage that it can do to all staff and learners through regular safeguarding training.

Staff are trained to recognise behaviour patterns that may indicate a cause for concern. These could include when a learner:

- is unwilling to attend lessons or begins to miss lessons/school
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- often feels unwell
- begins to do poorly in lessons or refuses to engage in learning
- changes their usual behaviours/routine

- starts stealing money or other items (in order to pay their bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other learners
- starts stuttering
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a message is received.

It is necessary to treat cases of bullying in a different way to one-off acts of aggressive or victimising behaviour. The latter would include pushing past someone, taking another learner's possessions without genuine permission, taunting another learner, or shutting a door in someone's face. In these cases staff are expected to intervene with a firm response, indicating that such behaviour is not acceptable or in keeping with the school's values to prevent escalation into future bullying.

Please refer to the subheadings 7.2 Derogatory language and 5.3 Prejudice-based incidents for further information about how Inclusion School and its staff should challenge learners who exhibit these behaviours on singular occasions or when not personally targeted but used generally towards others.

# 6. Preventing bullying

For the issue of bullying to be tackled successfully a school culture needs to be created in which all forms of victimisation are discouraged and where reporting cases of bullying is seen as the normal and right thing to do.

The Inclusion School community will ensure the following to act to prevent bullying:

- Listen and take time to talk to our learners who disclose bullying, current or historic, and take what they say seriously and investigate the situation
- Work with staff, parents/carers and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- Actively provide 1:1 and small group opportunities to develop our learners' social and emotional skills, including their resilience, by using our Wellbeing and Engagement teams and tutors

- Work Skills and World & You lessons are used to educate on the appropriate usage of social media and internet usage and the possible consequences of inappropriate use
- Embed curriculum opportunities for addressing bullying, such as assemblies, our World & You curriculum, displays and the School Council
- Train all staff including support staff, administration and facilities staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying, including recording and reporting incidents of bullying
- Actively create "safe spaces" for our vulnerable learners. These spaces are called "Sanctuaries"
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully and those who have been bullied
- Ensuring that bullying and safeguarding are covered within our new staff induction process
- Outline the school's values and approach, including bullying, during transition visits to new admissions
- Difference and diversity are celebrated and embedded throughout the curriculum, events such as Anti-bullying week, Pride and Black History Month are promoted organisation-wide
- Stereotypes and examples of 'banter' are challenged by staff and learners are encouraged to challenge peers when they see these behaviours
- Any examples of racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, bi-phobic, or any other example of discrimination, is recorded by members of staff on our CPOMS syste.

## 6.1 Bystander Effect

The role of the bystander (those who witness bullying or acts of unkindness), and their reaction, is of also of importance.

Standing by and observing lends support to the perpetrator whilst giggling, laughing or otherwise appearing to enjoy the spectacle could be understood as complicity. Many perpetrators behave as they do to impress an audience. Bystanders should be encouraged to deny them that opportunity by informing a member of staff or if appropriate, offering support to the victim at the time and then ensuring that the matter is brought to the attention of staff, ideally accompanying the victim.

It is hard to challenge the words and behaviours of peers and friends but it is the aspiration of Inclusion School that its learners will feel safe, knowledgeable and empowered to challenge bullying, hate or discrimination where appropriate. Inclusion School staff members role model appropriate behaviour for learners to follow and educate on how to sensitively challenge bullying, use of derogatory language and prejudice-based incidents.

## 6.2 Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. It can often be excused by young people (and adults) as 'banter'. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for learners and staff found using any such language.

Staff should record all usages on CPOMS.

Inclusion School recognises the vulnerabilities and harm that many of its learners have experienced but this does not excuse this language. However, Inclusion School recognises these words as an School opportunity to challenge sensitively and firmly and to promote its culture of diversity and celebration of identity to create a positive and welcoming community.

## 6.3 Prejudice-based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the head of provision regularly reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

Like the use of derogatory language, these actions will be challenged and sanctioned appropriately but will also be used as an opportunity to promote understanding of difference to embed long-lasting positive change.

# 7. Bullying outside of school

Many cases of bullying, particularly cyber or online bullying, take place outside of Inclusion School's. However, Inclusion School reserves the right to take action against those who take part in these incidents and support the victims where necessary. Bullying acts may also be criminal acts so Inclusion School will be obliged to work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.

It is for this reason that Inclusion School does not allow its learners to be part of group chats on social media.

If a case of cyber or online bullying is brought to the attention of staff it will be reported to the safeguarding team who will undertake an initial investigation in line with the anti-bullying investigation procedure outlined within this policy. In addition to the procedure, the safeguarding team will:

- Ask the learner to show staff the mobile phone messages
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message, to include:
  - the date, time and names
  - make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
  - A take screenshot of the image using an Inclusion Education device only and ask the learner to delete the message.

# 8. Involvement of learners and parents

We will engage our learners to have a voice in determining the school's anti-bullying approach by:

- Conducting regular surveys on the extent and nature of bullying within the school
- Obtaining the views of school council
- Ensure our know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure our learners are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve our learners in anti-bullying and wider diversity and inclusion campaigns within school
- Participate in National Anti-Bullying Week
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites using various methods, particularly during holiday periods
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address any underlying issues they may have.

We will engage our parents and carers ot have a voice in determining the school's anti-bullying approach by:

- Ensuring that all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying. The first point of call should be your child's fortnightly tutor contact or by email to the school safeguarding team ([safeguarding@inclusionschool.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@inclusionschool.org.uk))
- Report back to parents/carers regarding their concerns about bullying as quickly as possible

- Conduct regular surveys with parents/carers about their child's experiences within school
- Provide updates on bullying and wider safeguarding tropics in the school's newsletter
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, promoting this by its inclusion on the policy area of the school website
- Ensure all parents/carers know where to access independent advice about face to face and cyber-bullying Independent Advice about Bullying - Independent Schools ▪
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying We expect parents/carers to:
- Inform the school of any suspected bullying, even if it does not involve their child
- Encourage their child to report bullying to a member of staff using the 4Ws: Who, What, Where and When
- Inform their child(ren) not to retaliate through violence in any situation
- If their child has been accused of bullying, work in partnership with the school and listen to evidence.

# 9. Responsibilities and procedures

If a report of bullying is disclosed by a learner, or their parent/carer, this will trigger an investigation into the allegations of bullying, led by the Headteacher and Safeguarding Team.

The Behaviour and Child Protection & Safeguarding policies will be followed on initiation of the investigation.

If a member of staff of the safeguarding team identify a repeated pattern of incidents that may indicate bullying they should explore all the evidence available (including speaking to both parties involved).

If a bullying incident is identified the school's Behaviour and Child Protection & Safeguarding policies will be followed.

# 10. Links with other policies

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy

# Appendix 1 - LGBTQ+ Glossary

This glossary is designed for staff to be able to sensitively support LGBTQ+ young people and challenge homophobia, biphobia and transphobia where it occurs.

It is important to remember that:

- the terms people use to describe themselves may change over time
- sexual orientation and gender identity are not the same thing
- not everyone thinks of themselves as 'male' or 'female'
- not everyone identifies with the sex that they were assigned at birth

For more information, please read Stonewall's '*Toolkit for preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in secondary schools'*.

**Biphobia**
The fear or dislike of someone who identifies as bi based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about bi people. Biphobic bullying may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, bi.

**Bi, or bisexual**
Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.

Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, queer, and some other non-monosexual and non-monoromantic identities.

**Cisgendered or cis**
Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

**Coming out**
When a person first tells someone/others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans.

**Deadnaming**

Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition.

**Gay**

Refers to a man who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality – some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian.

**Gender dysphoria**

Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity.

This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Gender expression**

How a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.

**Gender identity**

A person's internal sense of their own gender, whether male, female, or something else (see nonbinary below).

**Gender reassignment**

Is another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo gender reassignment usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender. Gender reassignment is a characteristic that is protected in the Equality Act 2010.

**Gender stereotype**

The ways that we expect people to behave in society according to their gender, or what is commonly accepted as 'normal' for someone of that gender.

**Gender variant**

Someone who does not conform to the gender roles and behaviours assigned to them at birth. This is usually used in relation to children or young people.

**Heteronormative**

Denoting or relating to a world view that promotes homosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation.

**Homophobia**

The fear or dislike of someone who identifies as lesbian or gay.

**Homosexual**

This might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has an emotional romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.

**Intersex**

A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female.
Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary.

Stonewall works with intersex groups to provide its partners and stakeholders information and evidence about areas of disadvantage experienced by intersex people but does not, after discussions with members of the intersex community, include intersex issues as part of its current remit at this stage.

**Lesbian**

Refers to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women.

**Lesbophobia**

The fear or dislike of someone because they are or are perceived to be a lesbian.

**LGBTQ+**

The acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer/questioning. The '+' is used to include all other communities, including such those who are pansexual, agender and gender queer.

**Non-binary**

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

**Orientation**

Orientation is an umbrella term describing a person's attraction to other people. This attraction may be sexual (sexual orientation) and/or romantic (romantic orientation). These terms refers to a person's sense of identity based on their attractions, or lack thereof. Orientations include, but are not limited to, lesbian, gay, bi, ace and straight.

**Outed**

When a lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else without their consent.

**Pronoun**

Words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation – for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they / their and ze / zir. Staff should use a young person's chosen pronouns at all times.

**Queer**

Queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism etc). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who have embraced it.

**Questioning**

The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

**Sex**

Assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. Sometimes the terms 'sex' and 'gender' are interchanged to mean 'male' or 'female'.

**Sexual orientation**

A person's sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with romantic

orientation, this forms a person's orientation identity.

### Trans

An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, genderqueer (GQ), genderfluid, non-binary, gender-variant, genderless, agender, nongender, third gender, bigender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois.

### Transgender man

A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male.

### Transgender woman

A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to female.

### Transitioning

The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this.

Transitioning also might involve things such as telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.

### Transphobia

The fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans.

### Transsexual

This was used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone who transitioned to live in the 'opposite' gender to the one assigned at birth. This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender.