

Selworthy Special School

Policy for Anti-Bullying

January 2026

Reviewed:

Date	Amendments	Reviewed by

Ratified by Governors

Policy Title: Anti Bullying Policy

Date of Policy: January 2026

Date of Next Review: January 2027

Selworthy School Policy for Anti-Bullying

Introduction & Values

Selworthy School is committed to a **zero-tolerance approach to bullying**. We recognise that **pupils with SEND** are **disproportionately affected by bullying** and require **reasonable adjustments** and **targeted support** to feel safe, be heard, and access learning. Bullying of pupils or staff is unacceptable in any form, including online and cyber bullying. All members of our school community have the right to be protected from bullying and abusive behaviour. The welfare, wellbeing and safety for everyone is our key priority. [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#) [\[gov.uk\]](#)

This policy has been written with reference to and in conjunction with:

- Selworthy School Positive Behaviour Support Policy
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- TOPT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025-26
- TOPT Attendance Policy
- TOPT Online Safety Policy 2024-25
- TOPT Remote Learning Policy
- TOPT SEND Policy and Information Reports 2024-2025
- TOPT ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- TOPT PSHE Policy (Primary Schools)

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (statutory guidance; latest in force). [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE advice; includes vulnerable/SEND pupils). [\[gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)
- SEND Code of Practice 0–25 (inclusive practice; removing barriers; reasonable adjustments). [\[gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)
- Equality Act 2010 and DfE schools guidance (disability, protected characteristics, Public Sector Equality Duty). [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#), [\[gov.uk\]](#)
- Area SEND inspection framework (Ofsted/CQC) and Ofsted School Inspection Handbook expectations around behaviour, safety and bullying. [\[gov.uk\]](#), [\[elearning...dbe.org.uk\]](#)
- UKCIS Education for a Connected World (online bullying curriculum framework). [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

Aims

- All Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and carers should know what the school policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying occurs and how to report this
- All Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and carers feel assured that the school takes bullying seriously and act on this accordingly
- To communicate this policy effectively with all stakeholders

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that there is a Policy for Anti-Bullying in place and review its implementation annually

Senior leadership team have the responsibility to:

- Review and approve this Anti-Bullying policy
- Ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff support behaviour effectively
- Monitor Behaviour Smart and CPOMS logs and react promptly to suspected incidents of bullying

All staff have the responsibility to:

- Record incidents of suspected bullying on behaviour smart promptly and objectively
- Work together to implement the Policy for Positive Behaviour Support
- Promote positive behaviour
- Contribute to a safe environment where individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions
- Model positive behaviour and set a good example
- Address and not ignore any bullying behaviour

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, “bullying” is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition** – Incidents are not a “one off”; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- **Intentional** – The perpetrator means to cause harm (physical, verbal or emotional). The act is not carried out accidentally.
- **Targeted** – Bullying is targeted at a specific individual or specific group.
- **A Power Imbalance** – This may be real or a perceived power imbalance, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Bullying is any behaviour that makes someone feel upset, uncomfortable and/or unsafe. This is usually deliberate and repetitive and can take many forms such as verbal, indirect or physical.

Verbal bullying is attacking or upsetting someone in the form of speech (this also includes the use of AAC devices and signing).

Indirect bullying can take a less obvious form that you may not directly see or hear e.g. spreading rumours and cyber bullying through an online platform.

Physical bullying is usually obvious and is physical harm to another person.

Bullying can make individuals feel insecure, lower their self-esteem and self-worth and have a lasting impact.

Types of Bullying Behaviour

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying. Selworthy School is a SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) provision therefore, our approach to anti-bullying needs to consider the needs and cognitive ability of all our learners. We must take into consideration the impact that inappropriate behaviours towards others could cause harm physically, emotionally or indirectly, whilst also recognising the influence and impact that having SEND contributes to the challenging behaviour of some learners. The school recognises this dilemma whilst also combating both actual acts of bullying and the possible, whilst unintentional, incidents that may make learners and staff feel threatened, unsafe or afraid. The school will act promptly and firmly to combat bullying and aspects of behaviours that may impact upon the emotional well-being of all, whenever and wherever it occurs.

Bullying must be understood in a way that involves a “perpetrator” and a “victim”. An individual may engage in bullying as a learned behaviour due to past experiences. Thus, a victim of bullying may be a perpetrator in the future, or in a different environment. Successful intervention needs to consider bullying within the context of both: the perpetrator and the victim.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyber bullying)

Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

Homophobic and biphobic 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.

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 focuses 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 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.

This list is not exhaustive and is simply indicative of some types of bullying.

Selworthy School takes due note of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act (2010), namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Racist and homophobic incidents will be dealt with in line with current Somerset County Council (SCC) Guidance.

Bullying can happen in many places and spaces:

- The journey to and from school
- The local community
- Within the school grounds
- During extra-curricular activities
- Online

Signs That A Learner Could Be Being Bullied

Everyone should be aware of the possible signs of bullying.

- Frightened to travel to/ from school
- Changes to normal routines
- Changes to behaviours and attitudes (appearing sad, aggressive, anxious)
- Change in attendance (sudden school/class avoidance, a reluctance to come to school)
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacks confidence
- Lower self esteem
- Attempts or threatens suicide
- Runs away – from school and/ or the home
- Reports or displays a lack of sleep or nightmares
- Failing to thrive or achieve within the classroom
- Clothes or personal belongings being damaged or lost
- Requests, steals or loses money
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Shows bullying behaviours towards others
- Changes to eating behaviours
- Reluctant to communicate to anyone about what is worrying them or gives improbable explanations
- Reluctance to use the internet or a mobile phone shows frightened/sad/worried behaviours during or after internet use
- Spending an increased amount of time alone
- Lack of interest in social events or previously enjoyed activities
- Physical indications such as cuts, bruises or damaged possessions and clothes
- Verbal or physically aggressive outbursts that are unusual for the individual

Although the signs listed above may not be due to bullying, they should still be looked into and monitored further. Learners displaying any of the signs above will be closely monitored and where appropriate, approached by a familiar adult to investigate the underlying cause. Adults will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a learner is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been a victim of abuse or bullying themselves

Prevention

At Selworthy School we foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community. If there are incidents of bullying we will work together to manage the situation and to learn from what has happened for future prevention.

Selworthy School prevents bullying by:

- Creating a safe and happy environment, with positive relationships that impact on learning and achievement
- Using the TOPT SEND curriculum, assemblies and anti-bullying week to raise awareness and understanding of what bullying is and draw out anti-bullying messages
- Building a positive ethos based on respect and celebrating all types of differences
- Reporting suspected bullying/ bullying incidents quickly and ensuring they are recorded through Behaviour Smart and CPOMS
- Proactive information gathering where suspected bullying may have occurred
- Identifying and implementing appropriate interventions to support both the victim and the perpetrator
- Ensuring effective leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos
- Informing parents and carers of both the victim and the perpetrator if bullying is suspected or has been proven and will be invited to separate meetings with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted

Reporting and Recording Incidents of Bullying

Schools are advised to encourage children and young people to report bullying in confidence using appropriate methods. For school staff and volunteers there are clear and simple reporting arrangements as set out below:

- A member of staff or a volunteer concerned about actual or suspected bullying should raise this with their line manager instantly and follow this up with an objective behavioural record on Behaviour Smart and CPOMS
- If the concern regarding the suspected/actual bullying incident are more serious the Headteacher, Behaviour Lead and DSL/DDSL must be contacted to discuss and agree appropriate actions
- Any allegations or concerns about suspected bullying by a member of staff will be dealt with immediately and in accordance with the relevant HR policies- and in consultation with HR

For learners at Selworthy School reporting suspected, perceived or actual incidents of bullying can be challenging. Selworthy staff know the learners well and are quick to respond to any signs of bullying. All learners who can use spoken language and/or AAC are encouraged to communicate bullying to a trusted adult either at school or at home.

If parents and/or carers have concerns regarding their child, or their child has disclosed an incident of bullying to them they should inform the class teacher or a member of SLT immediately. Parents should not approach or confront the suspected bully or their family. If parents do not feel that their concern has been dealt with appropriately they should follow the school's complaint policy.

Recording bullying will enable the school to:

- Effectively manage individual cases and implement appropriate support and strategies for both the victim and the perpetrator
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and support
- Celebrate the work of anti-bullying within the school
- Demonstrate decision making and implementations in the event of escalation of complaints being made
- Inform and engage with multi agency teams as, and where appropriate
- Update and inform parents and carers of any actions the school is taking

Supporting the Victim and the Perpetrator

It is essential that all individuals who have experienced bullying are provided with timely and appropriate support. This may include one or more of the following:

- Active listening
- Advice
- Restorative justice
- Introducing a staff member to provide support for the individuals

Safeguarding Learners

When there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm" a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989. Where this is the case, the school staff should discuss with the safeguarding team and report their concerns to the local authority and children's social care and work with them to take the necessary and appropriate action.

Even where safeguarding is not considered to be a concern, we may need to draw on a range of external services to support individuals who are experiencing bullying as either the victim or the perpetrator. Where an incident of bullying is considered a safeguarding concern the school safeguarding policy should be adhered too and incidents, interventions and communications with external agencies recorded on CPOMS.

Additional Information for Parents and Carers

Parents are encouraged to keep a log of WHEN, WHERE, WHO and WHAT was involved if their child confides to them that they are involved in bullying incidents.

Parents and carers are encouraged to work with the school and allow the school time to act on concerns. Contact the class teacher or a member of SLT to organise a suitable time for the concerns to be discussed. Encourage the learners to attend school as it can often make returning to school harder after a period of absence.

Whilst parents and carers may be tempted to speak to the parents of the accused bully this is not helpful and can often aggravate the situation. It is best to allow the school to deal with the situation.