SIR JOHN THURSBY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed:	January 2026
Date approved by Governors:	**3rd February 2026**
To be reviewed:	January 2027
Person Responsible:	Assistant Headteacher

AMBITION
RESPECT
BELONGING

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children's Act 1989
- Children's Act 2004
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 2003
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with DfE advice, including but not limited to:

- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (2017)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)

Anti- bullying leads

Ms S Talib
Mr M Smith

Policy Aim

Bullying behaviour affects everyone, not just the bullies and the targets. It also affects other children who watch, and less aggressive students can be drawn in by peer group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely resolves itself. No one person or group, whether student or staff, should have to accept bullying behaviour of any nature. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a student best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at Sir John Thursby Community College. This Policy has been agreed with staff, governors and students.

Objectives of this policy

- To minimise the incidences of bullying in school.
- To ensure that the school complies with statutory guidance on bullying.
- To ensure all staff and students are aware of what constitutes bullying.
- To ensure all members of the school community know how to respond to incidences of bullying.
- To raise student awareness of the serious consequences of bullying.

Defining bullying

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups,

for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences." (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- **Repetition**: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- **Intent**: The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting**: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance**: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Types of bullying

- Emotional - Being unfriendly, gossiping, excluding people from groups, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Verbal - Name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber- All areas of internet, such as email, chat room misuse and social networking sites including inappropriate messaging, passing on messages or sharing of personal information, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of technology i.e. camera & video facilities, AI or other emerging technology.
- Sexual (Gender related) - Sexually abusive comments, unwanted or inappropriate advances, gesture or contact of a sexual nature. Inappropriateness/invasion of personal space designed to threaten, humiliate or coerce. Inappropriate use of webcam/camera facilities, filming, sexting, altered images, misogynistic behaviour.
- LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer) related - Anything related to negative student perception of themselves and their sexual orientation including transsexuality and gender reassignment issues.
- Racist - Any action or remark about ethnicity, religion, language, accent, culture, racist taunts, threats or gestures.
- Gifted and Talented - Negative references based on perception of high level of ability or effort regarding high achievers.
- SEND - Negative stereotyping, students are excluded from activity or subject to discrimination, students are treated less favourably than others.

It is not bullying when:

- There is no intention to hurt or harm i.e. behaviour is thoughtless or accidental
- There is a one-off fight / argument between students of equal stature or strength
- There is a good reason why a student(s) cannot be included in a group activity.
- There is falling out between friends after a disagreement, quarrel or argument (though in some cases this can lead to bullying).
- There is teasing between friends without intention to cause hurt.

Friendships are complex and occasionally there are changes to friendship groups that can be temporary or permanent. It is worth bearing in mind that some issues experienced by students are sometimes done without deliberate intention, that is a person has not realised how damaging their comments, use of language or actions have been.

If it is determined that there has not been a bullying incident, but a student's behaviour has nevertheless been inappropriate, the school's behaviour policy should be followed.

Cyber bullying
The school views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy and the online safety policy if they become aware of any incidents.

- In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. This will be done in accordance with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
- If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the Headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, the school has systems in place for filtering and monitoring to prevent online bullying (see the Safeguarding Policy)

Derogatory language Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. 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 on Class Charts and/or CPOMS and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for students and staff found using any such language.

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 a group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in college, with the Headteacher 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.
More severe incidents on bullying can lead to what is referred to as child-on-child abuse. It is important to acknowledge that, as with bullying, these are not one-off incidents.
The DfE guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education reports child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:
• bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)

• physical abuse
• sexual harassment
• initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: sexual violence, violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

There is no "hierarchy" of bullying – the school will take all forms of bullying equally seriously and will respond appropriately, in line with this policy, the behaviour policy, the online safety policy and the safeguarding policy

<u>Preventing Bullying</u>

The school is committed to raising awareness of bullying issues by providing the students with learning opportunities throughout the curriculum, but particularly within GCSE Citizenship and PSHE, Form time and Assemblies. Posters, competitions and special events and national initiatives will also contribute to preventing bullying and promoting the positive values that underpin daily interactions between members of the school community. Guest speakers and external intervention support groups will be invited to attend and work with identified students. The involvement of students in these initiatives is paramount – the anti-bullying strategy should be something done with students not for students. The students themselves will be actively encouraged to play a major role preventing bullying e.g. student cabinet and anti-bullying ambassadors. There is also a genuine commitment to CPD for staff in order to raise awareness and equip staff with the skills and knowledge to deal with bullying sensitively and effectively and to understand peer on peer abuse and the impact that severe negative behaviours and bullying can have on individual students. The school has invested in increasing staff supervision at breaks and lunch. CCTV facilities assist with monitoring corridors and outside areas.

The role of the Anti-bullying Ambassador:

An Anti-Bullying Ambassador is someone who has been trained by an Anti- Bullying Lead. Their role is to help educate their peers on bullying, lead on anti-bullying campaigns, promote a culture which celebrates and tolerates difference and help keep their peers safe both online and offline.

Identifying and reporting concerns about bullying

Students

Sir John Thursby Community College encourages all students to report bullying whether directly involved or as a witness to a bullying incident.

Bullying can be reported by:

1. Telling a member of staff with whom the student feels comfortable to make a disclosure.
2. Telling a parent who should contact the relevant Year Team as a matter of urgency.
3. In the event of a student feeling unable to make a face-to-face disclosure to an adult at school, using Whisper, which is the school's anonymous reporting tool. Students can access this through the school website.
4. Telling an anti- bullying ambassador who is trained to respond appropriately and offer support.

A log of all bullying concerns will be kept using CPOMS. Where it is determined that bullying **may** have taken place the relevant investigative procedures **must** be followed.

Parents / Carers

Where parents /carers wish to raise the issue of bullying, initial enquiries should be directed to the relevant Year team via phone, email or in person.
A record of the discussion will be kept for future reference. Concerns should be dealt with quickly to demonstrate the school's commitment to tackling bullying. The parental disclosure should trigger the investigative procedures. It is important the school maintains a dialogue with the parent/carer until the issue has been satisfactorily resolved. In the unlikely event of a parent/carer being unhappy with the school's response, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

Staff

Where staff witness behaviour, which has any of the hallmarks of bullying, they should intervene immediately and talk to the student to establish what has happened. If the student claims that he/she is not being bullied, the details of what has been witnessed should still be passed to the relevant Year team, as a matter of urgency, for their consideration and to build the big picture. This should be logged on CPOMS as a minimum and via direct contact if there is an immediate threat. Many students who are being bullied are reluctant to report it and we should remain open to all information.

Visitors

If a visitor witnesses bullying, they should discuss it with the member of staff they are visiting. The member of staff should then pass on the information to the relevant Year team.

Roles & Responsibilities

School Responsibilities:

Prevention is at the forefront of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Everyone should be made aware that bullying will not be tolerated, and all members of the school community should clearly understand:

- The school's definition of bullying
- The school's procedures to deal with bullying (Appendix 1), this will be achieved through CPD, the Staff Handbook, form time, Citizenship/PSHE, the Assembly Programme and external intervention programmes.

Staff Responsibilities

- Staff should be vigilant during form times, during lessons and whilst on duty, so that bullying does not pass undetected.
- Staff treat reports of bullying very seriously.
- Staff do not ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- All staff take action immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; and should report any allegations of bullying to the relevant Year team.
- Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying is not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the target has given consent to. If the member of staff believes the student is in serious danger, e.g. of being hurt, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Staff should ensure promptness to lessons and duties in order to prevent situations developing.
- Staff encourage student co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.
- All types of bullying are discussed as part of the curriculum, and diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through all lessons.
- Seating arrangements in class will be changed and organised in a way that prevents instances of bullying.
- Potential targets of bullying are drawn into working groups with students who do not abuse or take advantage of them.
- Staff should never bully, torment or be sarcastic to students, and should not tolerate this from others in lessons.
- Form teachers are alert to social dynamics in their class and are available for students who wish to report bullying. They also provide follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- All members of staff ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the student's form teacher of such observations.
- All staff will avoid gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- All staff understand the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the targets of bullying.
- All staff have a duty to report any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support.

Student Responsibilities

- Students should be expected to treat others with care, respect and kindness as stated in the Sir John Thursby Community College Strategic Vision of Ambition, Respect and Belonging.
- Students should report any incidents of bullying either of themselves or others to a member of staff, a trusted adult or an anti-bullying ambassador
- Students should ask for help from a member of staff in diffusing a difficult situation. They should not retaliate.
- Students are taught not to make counter-threats if they are alleged targets of bullying.
- Students are taught to walk away from any dangerous situations and avoid involving other students in incidents.
- Students are advised to retain all evidence of cyber bullying and not respond to it.
- Students who are anti- bullying ambassadors should always report incidents to the appropriate Year team even when they feel that a situation has been resolved.
- Students may wish to use 'Whisper' to report concerns which can remain anonymous.

Parent / Carer Responsibilities

- If parents / carers have any concerns about bullying, they should inform their child's Year team.
- Parents / carers must keep any malicious text messages, comments on social networking sites or emails received by their children as evidence and not respond themselves.
- Parents / carers are encouraged to report to external agencies should the alleged bullying be malicious, physical or threats of violence.

Managing Incidents

- Any disclosure by a student must be taken seriously. It is not for that member of staff to decide if the disclosure is worth passing on.
- Staff members should listen carefully and avoid interrupting or asking leading questions. In the case of a student telling a staff member that he/she is telling them in confidence, it should be explained that you want to help and may have to pass on information to key members of staff in order to do this.
- Where there is alleged bullying and a possible threat to the student the member of staff must first ensure the physical safety of the alleged target. The student should then be escorted by a member of staff, to the relevant Year team.
- On arrival at the Year office, the procedures should be explained quietly and calmly to the alleged target, including telling the student that evidence will be kept on file
- An account of the incident with dates, times, places and names will be gathered.
- The student should be asked what support they feel is necessary and an appropriate discussion about what is suitable by the year team.
- Alleged perpetrators and witnesses should be given opportunity for their statements to be taken.
- The Assistant Headteachers - Culture will be notified in all instances of bullying. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, the school's DSLs should work collaboratively to make a joint and

informed decision and be alerted via CPOMS of all information. Where necessary, Child Protection procedures will be applied.

- If allegations are sufficiently supported by the evidence, contact should be made with the parents / carers of all involved including the target. Parents/carers should be advised on how to support their child.
- If it is established that bullying has occurred, a school sanction should always be imposed. The level of sanction should be proportionate to the act of bullying and should take into account any previous acts of bullying. This will help to demonstrate the school's commitment to tackling bullying. Explain to all students involved what the school's actions will be, including any intervention strategies and reduce any anxiety where possible.
- The details should then be logged as Repeat Peer Issue on classcharts for the perpetrator, and CPOMS for the target and perpetrator, including school actions against perpetrators and target support. All accounts of bullying and alleged bullying are reviewed by year teams and DSLs to ensure appropriate action.
- A Repeat Peer Issues Follow Up Sheet (pink sheet) should be completed where issues of bullying has occurred. These completed sheets will be uploaded to CPOMS.

We may support the targets in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their form tutor, class teacher, year team or another teacher if they choose
- by informing the target's parents or carers
- by offering continued support when they feel they need it
- nurturing social skills
- by referring them to Counselling, Mental Health and Wellbeing support, Nurture and Emotional Literacy if they feel that would help.

We also provide interventions to try to help the perpetrators in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved
- try to find any underlying reasons (perhaps problems at home) and offer appropriate support.
- set goals, reinforce improved behaviour
- teach social skills, how to deal with things
- by informing the perpetrator's parents/carers
- by continuing to work with the perpetrators in order to change behaviour and attitudes by taking one or more sanctions described below to prevent further bullying incidents
- by referring them to Counselling, Mental Health and Wellbeing support, Nurture and Emotional Literacy if they feel that would help.

Follow up

Provision for ongoing support for the target must be made in all cases where bullying is identified.

1) Teaching staff of identified students are alerted to monitor and support.

2) Weekly pastoral updates sent to teaching and student-facing support staff to alert them of concerns
3) The Assistant HOY will make follow up checks:
    - 5 x daily check in – reducing to once per week if no further concerns.
    - After 3 weeks of no further concerns, the student is advised to seek year team support if further incidents occur.
    - Any further incidents of alleged bullying are recorded on CPOMS and addressed.

Sanctions, intervention and support for students exhibiting bullying behaviours

The following sanctions and interventions will be applied as deemed appropriate:

Letters of apology / personal apologies
Restorations
Repair Room
Some time in reflection at a partner school
Peer / Adult mediation
Break and lunchtime restrictions for perpetrators
Break and lunchtime support for targets if requested and appropriate
Restorative conversations
Parental meetings
Suspensions
Anger management support
External group work
Counselling / Mental Health and Wellbeing / Nurture / Emotional Literacy
Permanent exclusion
Liaison with Police/External agencies

Any incidents of bullying and discrimination regarding ethnicity and race, sexual orientation and disability will be reported to either the Assistant Headteachers – Culture (Mr Smith or Mr Rashid) or Deputy Headteacher - Inclusion (Mrs E Black) and these will be reviewed with appropriate sanctions and / or educational work to support all students involved. Outcomes of decision making to be recorded on CPOMS.

Support for targets of bullying

Support for the target is paramount. The student's Form Tutor is a key point of contact, but further support may be required from the Year team, School Counsellor and Leadership team. The following options should be considered and applied appropriately, with the consent of the target:

Befriending
Peer / Adult mediation
Access to supervised 'safe space' e.g. student support
Self-esteem building intervention

Counselling
Enhanced adult vigilance
Moving form / curriculum groups

Monitoring & review of policy

This policy was approved by the Governing Body in February 2026
This policy will be monitored and reviewed in January 2027
The named Governor for anti- bullying is: Mr A. Anwar

The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied. Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.

Procedures for dealing with complaints

Parents may at any time request a copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy, which can be found on the school website. Complaints with regard to bullying should be put in writing to the Headteacher in the first instance.

Appendix 1- What happens if bullying is reported?

When a report of bullying is received by the school it should always be taken seriously and passed to the relevant Year team. The incident will be logged on CPOMS.

The Year team will listen to the student's explanation of what they are experiencing and decide whether an investigation into the alleged bullying is required.

Is the student at significant risk of harm?

No – the alleged bullying will be investigated in school asap. The target of alleged bullying would immediately receive support.

Yes – the matter should be reported to the school's DSL as a matter of urgency and child protection procedures followed.

If the alleged bullying is supported by evidence, parents of all students involved will be informed, an appropriate sanction should be given to the perpetrator.
Details of incidents will be logged by the Year team on class charts (perpetrator) and CPOMs(target and perpetrator).

Ongoing support for the target. Weekly pastoral updates will ensure staff are aware of students who may benefit from additional support and monitoring. In addition, they will be placed on the follow up monitoring system with their Assistant AL through the 'Pink Sheet'. If bullying is repeated the monitoring period will be extended.

Ongoing monitoring and re-education for the perpetrator of bullying. Year teams will place perpetrators of bullying under close monitoring. When students do not accept that they need to change their behaviour or engage in further bullying, the school will intervene appropriately e.g. counselling, behaviour contract or punitive sanctions.