Anti-bullying policy

Sir John Heron Primary School

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1 Principles and Values

"Together we learn. Together we achieve."

This philosophy is central to everything we do at Sir John Heron Primary School. We believe that children should be able to learn and achieve their full potential in an environment which promotes inclusivity, tolerance, cooperation and respects the values and beliefs of all without fear of bullying. This is fundamental so that children can feel safe and are able to maintain high levels of self-esteem and social wellbeing. However, we understand that bullying can be barrier to achieving these values and we are therefore committed to preventing and challenging it.

As a school, we take bullying and its impact very seriously and have a zero tolerance approach to any incidents of bullying. Children and parents/ carers should be assured we make every effort to prevent bullying from occurring by actively promoting an anti-bullying environment in school. When incidents do occur, they are responded to in a swift and timely manner (as detailed in this policy) including support for those who have experienced bullying aimed at countering any negative effects. No form of bullying will ever be passed off as "banter," "just having a laugh," or "part of growing up."

At Sir John Heron, we are completely committed to the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of all forms of bullying or peer-on-peer abuse both within and beyond school. This policy sets out how we fulfil this commitment in line with the context of the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- School's Behaviour policy
- School's Online Safety policy
- School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- School's Child-on-child Abuse policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (June 2017)
- Teaching online safety in school (June 2023)

2 Intentions of this policy:

- To express our values that bullying is unacceptable and to provide a learning environment free of fear and threat where children's safety and happiness are treated with paramount importance as there is a close link between this, achievement and wellbeing.
- Sets out the school's strategy for preventing, identifying and appropriately managing bullying.
- Foster an ethos of respect for others and develop attitudes which value all cultures in line with British Values.
- To reduce and eradicate incidents of bullying.

- All governors, teaching and support staff, children and parents/ carers have an understanding of bullying and recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Staff should be aware of the possible signs of bullying, know school procedures for dealing with bullying, are aware of reporting procedures and are aware of how victims/ children who bully can be supported. It is important all stakeholders are aware of their duty of care for preventing and dealing with bullying.
- To ensure measures the school takes relating to bullying are communicated to children, school staff and parents/ carers as required in legislation. This policy forms part of this.
- This policy should give parents/ carers and children confidence that the school takes all reports of bullying very seriously and they will be dealt with in line with the procedures set out. This policy provides information to parent/ carers and children so they are aware how to report concerns (which can be done in a variety of ways) and are confident in doing in this. Parents/ carers should also be confident the school takes every possible measure to prevent bullying.
- To set out how the school complies with government statutory requirements and legal duties which state a school "must have measures in placed to prevent all forms of bullying" (pg. 5, Preventing and tackling bullying, June 2017) and how the school complies with relevant legislation (Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Equality Act 2010).

3 Definition of bullying

Bullying is repeated incidents which can occur in the short term or over long periods of time where harm is deliberate, premeditated and the victims (individuals or groups) are often unable to defend themselves. It can carried out by an individual or a group. A useful definition to use with children is:

"Bullying is lots of times and on purpose."

3.1 Types of bullying

Physical	Hitting, kicking, taking another's belonging, spitting, pushing, punching or any use of violence, unwanted physical/ sexual contact
Verbal/ emotional	name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks, being unfriendly, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), teasing, sexual harassment (e.g. sexual comments, remarks, jokes)
Indirect	spreading rumours, excluding from groups, cyber bullying, sharing nude and semi-nude images

3.1.1 Cyber bullying

Children have widespread access to technology which can provide a medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward content at a click. Cyber bullying can involve many of the behaviours listed in section 3.1 particularly verbal/ emotional and indirect forms of bullying. Children are taught that cyber bullying is:

"Cyber bullying is any type of bullying that happens through the use of technological devices, including mobile phones."

Cyber bullying can happen in a number of different ways including deliberately posting nasty or embarrassing content (most likely pictures) on social media without permission, sending inappropriate e-mails, prank telephone calls, writing nasty comments on social media or sending inappropriate text messages.

These behaviours can occur on a number of online forums including a range of social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), apps on smartphones (e.g. Whatsapp, iMessage, Facebook Messenger), online gaming platforms (e.g. Fortnite), video sharing platforms (e.g. YouTube) and other forms of communication such as e-mail.

Cyberbullying also includes the misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automated tools. This encompasses the creation or sharing of AI-generated bullying content, deepfake imagery, altered pictures, synthetic text designed to target or impersonate peers, or using AI chatbots and platforms to generate abusive material. Children are taught that AI-facilitated harassment is strictly unacceptable and must be reported immediately using standard cyberbullying reporting procedures.

3.2 What bullying can relate to:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture/ social class
- Disability/ special educational need
- Appearance or health condition
- Sexual orientation

Children should be aware of the different elements bullying can relate to and the different forms it can take (e.g. physical). However, when explaining this to children it must not be framed as 'reasons why people bully' as this implies there is possible justifications for it for which there are none.

3.3 Vulnerability factors to bullying

Staff should also be aware of vulnerable children who maybe become victims of bullying or become bullies to ensure they are more closely monitored and report any concerns to the headteacher or deputy headteacher (see para 5.3). Children can also be identified through

termly PSHCE assessments which should then be reported to the headteacher or deputy headteacher.

Factors that may make children vulnerable to bullying (while inexcusable in all cases):

- lack of close friends at school/ isolated from peers
- being shy
- being from a different racial, religious, sexuality and ethnic group to the majority
- being different relating to appearance
- having a special educational need or disability
- behaving inappropriately
- children in care
- children in family or personal crisis
- gender

However, there is potential for bullying to take place beyond these factors.

4 Creating an Anti-Bullying culture in school

4.1 School's Behaviour Policy

The school's Behaviour policy outlines how we promote positive behaviour which effectively motivates children to maintain a high standard of behaviour and treat each other with respect.

4.2 School's curriculum

The school's curriculum also plays a central role in preventing bullying and raising awareness by:

- Regular PSHCE lessons focus on the theme of bullying. Lessons focus on developing children's understanding of the school approach to bullying and how they can play a part in preventing and reporting it (see below for outcomes of lessons). Children are also taught how to constructively manage relationships with others. The PSCHE Leader of Learning (LoL) is responsible for initiating and developing an anti-bullying programmes for this aspect of the curriculum.
- However, PSCHE lessons focus on other themes which may provoke bullying as part of the Jigsaw scheme of work. In lessons, assemblies, workshops etc issues of difference and tolerance are addressed with the children. The themes covered are dependent on particular issues which may need addressing with the children in this school.
- Curriculum enrichment events take place focusing on bullying such as Anti-Bullying week which takes place every November which is led by the PSCHE LoL.
- Bullying is discussed in many other areas of the curriculum including in literacy (through Power of Reading texts), RE, in the context of British Values and SMSC. Teachers are responsible for introducing anti-bullying material when relevant to the curriculum.
- Regular assemblies, workshops, circle times, social stories sessions, developing children's emotional literacy (expressing of feelings and conflict resolution) also take place focusing on bullying.

Outcomes of the curriculum relating to bullying should be:

- Children are aware of the school's zero tolerance approach to bullying and the possible consequences of engaging in such behaviour.
- Children are aware of the different forms bullying can take (e.g. physical)
- Children are aware of what bullying can relate to (e.g. race), can define each when asked (see para 3.2) and they know that prejudice based language is always unacceptable.
- Children are aware of the potential impact bullying can have on victims (e.g. mental health)
- Children are aware of how bullying can be reported including anonymously and where to gain support outside of school such as Childline.
- Children are also aware it is not acceptable to be a bystander and they have a responsibility to report any concerns they have regarding bullying. It is their responsibility to:

TO MAKE SOME NOISE!

This aims to promote the profile of the school's anti-bullying values and improve the children's understanding of the issues surrounding bullying. Children should be reminded regularly of the procedures for reporting bullying.

4.3 Online safety

Regular online safety lessons are taught in Computing and across the curriculum when the use of technology is required. Teachers should address online safety (including cyber bullying) and appropriate behaviour in an age appropriate way that is relevant to the children of the school.

Online safety lessons with a focus on cyber bullying should focus on:

- What positive, healthy and respectful online relationships look like and the effects of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful online behaviour.
- Help children recognise acceptable and unacceptable online behaviour, for example:
    - Looking at how online emotions can be intensified resulting in mob mentality
    - Teaching techniques to defuse arguments
    - Unacceptable behaviours are not passed off as so-called social norms or just banter. Not accepting misogynistic, homophobic or racist language.
- Children should be taught to recognise when they need support and how to follow the different stages of dealing with cyberbullying:

1) **SAVE >** any evidence of the bullying and show an adult
2) **BLOCK >** messages or the person. Do not respond to them in any way
3) **LOG OFF >** the site where the cyber bullying is happening
4) **TALK >** to someone you trust about it

- Children should understand what they need to do for each stage. For example, ensuring children understand safe ways in which to seek support if they are concerned or upset by something that has happened online this should include trusted adults, the police, CEOP reporting service, Childline and Internet Watch Foundation. And helping them to understand that various platforms and apps will have ways in which inappropriate contact or content can be reported.
- Lessons involving technology should also remind children of the Acceptable Use Policy. At the beginning of each year children sign the school's Acceptable Use Policy. It details how children should behave towards each other and the role of the bystander. Statements include: "I am KIND and polite to everyone" for KS1 children and "I am not a bully – I do not post, make or share unkind, hurtful or rude messages/ comments and if I see it happening, I will tell my trusted adults" for KS2 children. This is fully explained to the children before they sign the policy. Copies of the AUPs are available from the Computing Leader of Learning.
- Automated IT filtering and monitoring alerts (e.g. flags for cyberbullying terms, hate speech, abusive language, or inappropriate image searching) are reviewed jointly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) team and IT leads to ensure prompt safeguarding action.
- Online safety education explicitly addresses emerging digital risks, including how to recognise AI-generated content/deepfakes and the steps children must take if they encounter or are targeted by AI-facilitated cyberbullying.

4.4 Isolated incidents

Isolated conflicts can occur between children or groups which do not constitute bullying but may have the potential to accelerate into bullying - it is therefore essential the school prevents this from occurring. Intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour is essential. A member of staff is expected to deal with an isolated incident when it comes to their attention in line with the school's behaviour policy. The incident must be recorded using Track-It Lights. Once the Learning Mentor is made aware they will monitor the situation to ensure it is not repeated or develops into a pattern of bullying. Monitoring should include 'catch up' sessions with the children. 'Conflict Resolution' sessions may be necessary in order to prevent situation escalating into bullying and will be conducted by the Learning Mentor. All isolated incidents and subsequent follow-ups will be recorded on Track-It Lights by the Learning Mentor and when the situation resolved will be recorded. This is for monitoring and tracking purposes.

Prejudice based incidents such as racism are not treated as isolated incidents in any circumstances even if it only happens once. Such incidents must be referred to the deputy headteacher or headteacher.

4.5 Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme (The Diana Award charity)

The school is part of the Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme run by the Diana Award charity. The school has ten children who are Anti-Bullying Ambassadors from Years 2 to 6. The children are trained by the Diana Award aimed at giving them the skills and confidence to address different situations both on and offline. Children made are aware of who the

Ambassadors are and what their role is. If children require support, they are easily identifiable in the playground as they wear hi-vis jackets labelled 'Anti-bullying Ambassadors.' The Ambassadors are aware they can discuss any issues or concerns they have with the PSCHE Leader of Learning.

4.6 Other strategies for preventing bullying

Strategies include:

- Children who have been identified as being vulnerable to bullying or potential bullies (see para 3.3) will have close involvement with the Learning Mentor who will closely monitor them to ensure possible issues are prevented. These children are also supported by the Learning Mentor through social skills groups where their confidence is developed.
- An Anti-Bullying Charter will be introduced at the beginning of each school year (see appendix 1). Class teachers will go over the charter which children will sign pledging not to bully others, report incidents they have witnessed and respect and tolerate others in line with British Values. This will be displayed in all classrooms and referred to when appropriate.

5 Dealing with bullying when it occurs

While we endeavour to prevent bullying, unfortunately incidents can occur although infrequently at our school. Nevertheless, the school has procedures in place to ensure bullying is dealt with effectively so that the effects of it are minimised and it is eradicated promptly upon being discovered. We recognise no one deserves to be bullied and therefore do everything we can to change behaviours of a bully and help victims feel safe and secure while preventing potential damage to mental health.

5.1 Signs and symptoms of bullying

Children may not be aware they are a victim of bullying or be able to communicate they are being bullied due to age or special educational need or be too intimidated to report it. It is therefore essential all staff are aware and remain vigilant to the possible signs of bullying so that cases can be identified and dealt with quickly and effectively even when children do not disclose they are being bullied.

Possible signs of bullying:

- is frightened of walking to and from school/ wants to be driven to school
- changes in usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares

- feels ill in the morning
- quality of work they produce decreases - applies less effort
- clothes/ possessions are torn or damaged
- unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- bullying others including siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- is afraid to use internet
- lack of eye contact
- becomes short tempered
- clinging to adults

These may indicate social and emotional or safeguarding problems but bullying should also be considered a possibility as well.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends. Friendship groups may lead to individuals being exploited or manipulated or could lead to the exclusion of others. Staff should look out for these patterns of behaviour and respond in accordance with this policy.

5.2 Reporting procedures for children

Reporting issues of bullying should be easy for children so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents are acted on. Children should be made aware they can report bullying in the following ways:

- ➔ Children who are being bullied can report this to any adult in the school, a school friend or parent/ carer who should refer the matter to the headteacher or deputy headteacher as soon as possible.
- ➔ Children who see others being bullied should report the matter to any adult in school, a school friend or parent/ carer
- ➔ Children can report about incidents in the 'I want to talk to…' box outside the headteacher/ deputy headteacher office. They have the option of doing this anonymously. This is monitored by the Learning Mentor.
- ➔ Children are made aware of ways they can report their concerns outside of school such as Childline.

5.3 Responsibilities of all staff members for reporting bullying

It is the responsibility of all staff members to remain vigilant to bullying at all times to ensure it's either prevented or dealt with effectively even when it has not been disclosed by a child. All staff have a responsibility to ensure such incidents are reported especially when involving vulnerable children. It is essential all staff members follow up or ensure incidents (including suspected incidents) of bullying are dealt with.

Even if staff are unsure bullying is taking place, any concerns should always be reported in the same way a safeguarding issue would be. Bullying should never be ignored even when suspected.

How staff should report and deal with different incidents:

If bullying suspected	**Report to the headteacher or deputy headteacher** (who will investigate). A record will be kept on Track-It Lights. (see 5.4, 5.5 for procedures HT/ DHT will follow)
If child discloses bullying	As above
Isolated incidents and follow ups	**Should be dealt with by member of staff approached** and then they should log this on Track-It Lights and complete an incident form. The Learning Mentor will then investigate and monitor the situation Staff should indicate if they are aware of certain patterns or number of incidents which may suggest bullying **Prejudice based incidents such as racism are not treated as isolated incidents in any circumstances even if it only happens once. Such incidents must be referred to the deputy headteacher or headteacher.**

It is important any incident of bullying or reports of isolated incidents are recorded in accordance with this policy. The school will use this information to evaluate its approaches, monitor incident numbers and identify where bullying is recurring between the same children. Reports can be run on Track-It Lights in order to ascertain this information.

5.4 What should happen when incidents of bullying are reported to the HT/ DHT

The headteacher or deputy headteacher will do the following:

- Investigate what has happened by interviewing all children involved
- Seize electronic device including mobile phones and examine data or files (and delete if deemed necessary) when investigating concerns relating to cyber bullying.
- Inform relevant staff members including the class teacher and give advice of what they should do (e.g. support for the victim)
- Inform parents/ carers of the victim and the children who have bullied - arrange to meet them in school if necessary
- Decide what the outcome (including strategies for changing behaviour) should be and inform relevant parties (see 5.5.1)

- When incidents are very serious, consider informing the police. For cyber bullying issues electronic devices will be handed over if they contain evidence. Such evidence will not be deleted.
- Ensure a record is kept on Track-It Lights.
- If deemed a safeguarding issue where there is a 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm,' the bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989 and therefore must be referred to Newham MASH and work with them to take appropriate action.
- Consider if the support of external agencies are required even when there are no safeguarding concerns such as Newham Behaviour Services.
- In cases of sexual violence or harassment, a DSL will complete an immediate risk and needs assessment and consult with Newham MASH if necessary.
- Where bullying behaviours indicate wider contextual vulnerabilities, trauma, or family pressures, referrals will be made in accordance with local multi-agency safeguarding procedures. The school will engage with statutory Family Help pathways, Early Help services, and local health/wellbeing partners (e.g., CAMHS) to ensure coordinated, multi-agency support is provided for both the victim and the perpetrator's wider family network.

5.5 How bullies will be dealt with and what they should be told

The following will be made clear to children responsible for bullying others:

- We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable and that we expect it to stop immediately
- We will seek a commitment for bullying behaviours to end
- We will affirm that it is right for children to report incidents of bullying and that they have a right to be safe in school.
- We will advise children responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure bullying has stopped.
- They will be asked to genuinely apologise and guarantee they will stop bullying

5.5.1 Disciplinary measures

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy e.g. being placed on a behaviour chart
- official warnings to cease offending
- detention
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- suspension
- permanent exclusion (as a last resort in line with DfE statutory exclusion guidance)

5.6 Supporting children who have been bullied

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- They will be told about the action that will be taken to ensure they feel safe and be told what to do if they continued to feel anxious or threatened.
- They will be reassured they do not deserve to be bullied and it is not their fault. They should also be assured they were right to report the incident and that now it can be stopped and they can continue to feel safe and happy in school.
- They will be treated sensitively and provide them with time where they can speak privately and without fear.
- Engage them in making choices about how the matter can be resolved
- Discuss strategies for being and staying safe
- Ensure they report any further incidents which may take place
- Will provide them with peer-on-peer support (a 'buddy system') involving friends or older peers
- Counselling sessions can be provided with the School Counsellor aimed at restoring self-esteem and confidence
- They can be referred to the Learning Mentor who will have them on their caseload
- PSHCE/ circle times lessons can be taught to explore issues around particular incidents of bullying (e.g. race)
- Co-ordinate support from external agencies if needed such as CAMHS.
- Attendance and attainment should be monitored and continued support put in place if negative effects are highlighted in these areas.

5.7 Supporting bullies with an aim of changing behaviours

It is important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Pupils who bully peers will be supported by:

- A joint problem solving approach will be adopted where we ask the child involved what solutions can be sort to cease their behaviours including taking more responsibility for the emotional and social wellbeing of others
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents/ carers to help change the attitude of the pupil and providing them with strategies for this
- Provide counselling sessions or Learning Mentoring time to address any social or emotional issues which may be motivating anti-social behaviours.
- Referral to Triple P programme or Early Help to support families who are struggling to give strategies to help change behaviours
- Referral to outside agencies (e.g. CAMHS) if significant mental health concerns
- Engagement with local multi-agency Family Help provisions to address underlying contextual risks, emotional difficulties, or systemic family needs that may be driving bullying behaviours, working collaboratively with parents, carers, and local support teams.

6 Training for staff

Staff will be provided with regular training so they are able to fulfil and are aware of their responsibilities relating to bullying in accordance with this policy. Staff are trained to be alert to the possible signs of bullying and are made aware of how concerns should be reported. All staff are now required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education in full.

7 Working with parents/ carers

Parents/ carers will be informed of the policy and procedures during parent/ carer information meetings and through regular updates in the school's newsletter and website. Parents/ carers will also be given opportunities to attend e-safety workshops as well. Parents/ carers will be encouraged to speak to a senior member of staff if they concerned about incidents of bullying. Where appropriate, parents/ carers will be involved in problem solving any incidents of bullying and will be kept fully informed of how the school is dealing with such incidents.

Parents/ carers should not deal with incidents of bullying themselves by talking to the suspected bully themselves and should not encourage children to 'bully back.'

8 Bullying outside of school

Bullying can take place outside of school, including via the internet and mobile phones. When such incidents are discovered the school will investigate and deal with it in accordance with this policy in order to eliminate any such bullying. Disciplinary sanctions while at school may be applied. In the event of incidents involving children from other schools, the school will be contacted where a shared strategy will be developed for how bullying can be avoided and ultimately stopped. Parents/ carers will also be notified if their child is involved. Contacting the police or Newham MASH may also be necessary in certain circumstances.

9 Governing body

Where appropriate, incidents of bullying will be reported to the governing body.

10 Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will also be updated to take account of a range of developments including in technology and contextual circumstances of the school.

Effectiveness of this policy will be measured using the following:

- Number of incidents reported over a given period
- Children's perceptions of bullying in the school through Pupil Survey
- The number of days of absence which are thought to arise as a consequence of bullying

11 Conclusion

All children, staff members and parents/ carers are expected to support the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures and act in accordance. We should encourage children to be positive members of the school community rooted in an atmosphere of an anti-bullying culture. When behaviours fall below expectations, this should be addressed swiftly while supporting those who are victims. Therefore this policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

This policy will be used at the school's discretion to respond flexibly and in an appropriate manner to each incident.

Appendix 1 - Sir John Heron Anti-Bullying Charter

Bullying is:

"Bullying is lots of times and on purpose."

We do not accept bullying at our school and do everything we can to stop it!

At Sir John Heron Primary School, this is what we do to make our school a happy and safe place for all:

- **Treat everyone kindly and with respect in the same way we want to be treated**
- **We celebrate everyone's values and beliefs**
- **We are good friends to everyone**
- **We always make new people feel welcome**
- **We include others in our games, play and learning**
- **If we see bullying, we tell an adult what has happened - WE MAKE SOME NOISE!**

- **We support and help each other when it's needed**

All children to sign agreeing to the Sir John Heron Anti-Bullying Charter

Class:

Appendix 2 – Recording incidents on Track-It Lights

1) Search for the relevant children by entering their name
2) Select the type of incident – choose from bullying or isolated incident
3) Select the pencil icon when on Track-It Lights beneath the green, yellow, amber and red icons on the side of the screen.
4) Record information about the incident in the 'Comments' box
5) Select the status of the incident from the drop down box
6) Press OK once completed.

NB – concerns of bullying should always be reported in person to the DHT or HT and then recorded on Track-It Lights.