SACRED HEART HIGH SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

NOVEMBER 2023

To be reviewed for November 2025

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other Sacred Heart High School Policies including the Exclusions Policy, Behaviour (Living & Learning) Policy, Drugs Policy, E-Safety Policy, Acceptable Use (Computers) Agreement; Safeguarding & Child protection Policy; and the Equality Plan

Contents

		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING	4
3	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	5
4	REPORTING BULLYING	8
5	RESPONDING TO BULLYING	8
6	MONITORING THE POLICY	10
7	MAKING A PARENTAL COMPLAINT	10
8	RATIFICATION	10

APPENDIX 1: Legal Context

APPENDIX 2: How to Recognise types of bullying

APPENDIX 3: Dealing with Bullying Incident (flow chart)

APPENDIX 4: Bullying carried out online - Cyber Bullying

APPENDIX 5: Useful websites

APPENDIX 6: Guidance for pupils

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

We are a community of faith and learning, based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, His values and teachings.

As reflected in our linked Behaviour Policy, our approach to managing pupil behaviour including bullying reflects 21st century approaches to 21st century issues but our philosophy is grounded in the values and ethos of our 19th century foundress, St Madeleine Sophie Barat, who demonstrated her commitment to value of every single individual child in the school.

For the sake of one child, I would have founded the Society.

In line with gospel values, we teach the importance of empathy, compassion, tolerance and respect for one another. Maintaining positive relationships is an important part of our approach to community.

The schools Mission Statement includes relevant text including the need for the school to

- Respect '*the uniqueness, worth and development of each individual'*
- '*Create a well ordered, stimulating, and secure learning environment'*, which *'encourages personal growth';*

We aim to ensure that each student will:

- develop *'respect, compassion, forgiveness, justice and generosity'*;
- *'Grow in self-knowledge'* and in *'dignity as a woman'*;
- express concern for others *'in the very highest standards of behaviour'*;
- *'Know about and respect the richness and variety of other races, cultures and religions'* so as *'to take a stand against everything that undermines her own dignity and that of others'*

1.2 The objective of our anti-bullying policy

The policy's primary objective is to ensure that the whole school community is clear about their roles and responsibilities, and understand how to manage a bullying incident if it occurs.

Bullying is however not confined to school, and this policy aims to make pupils aware of what action they can take both now and in their adult lives, whether as victims of bullying, or as bystanders.

1.3 Aims of our Anti-bullying Policy

This policy aims

- To develop a whole School approach and effective implementation of a policy on bullying.
- To promote a Catholic ethos which recognises bullying behaviour as counter to our gospel values.
- To use the curriculum as a vehicle to raise awareness of different types of bullying and empower all members of our school community to reject any form of bullying.
- To provide a supportive framework for victims and strategies for the bullies to change their behaviour.

- To create a safe environment where pupils, staff and parents feel they can talk openly about the cause and consequence of bullying.

2 DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

2.1 Bullying behaviour

The UK Government Definition of bullying behaviour in school states acknowledges that there is no legal definition of bullying. For a fuller legal context please see **Appendix 1.**

Bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally

Bullying can be based on (but is not limited to)

- Race and culture
- Religion or belief
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or medical conditions
- Related to home circumstances

It takes many forms and can include (but is not limited to):

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social media platforms and instant messenger)

Whilst all forms of bullying behaviour share the above characteristics, it is important to recognises the distinctive nature of different types of bullying.

How to recognise the signs of bullying, is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

2.2 Racist Bullying

Racism occurs when someone is made to feel inferior because of colour, ethnicity, nationality or race. This can result in being treated differently or unfairly, this is called racial discrimination.

Racial bullying is a type of racism where someone's bullying focuses on race, ethnicity or culture. Racism and racist bullying can happen in person or online and can include, but is not limited to:

- being called racist names or being sent insulting messages or threats
- having belongings damaged or having to see racist graffiti
- personal attacks, including violence or assault
- being left out, treated differently or excluded
- people making assumptions about you because of your colour, race or culture

- someone being made to feel they have to change how they look
- racist jokes, including jokes about colour, nationality race or culture.

2.3 Faith and Religious Identity Bullying

This is when someone is treated differently because of their faith or religion. Someone might be bullied about their:

- religion
- religious practices, like not eating meat or drinking alcohol
- clothes or symbols, eg headscarf, or cross
- where they were born
- the way someone speaks or their accent
- class

Being treated differently because of religion, lack of religion or beliefs is a type of discrimination. It's also wrong for someone to treat you unfairly because of your friend or family members' religion.

2.4 Sexual Orientation Bullying

Homophobia is when someone is scared of, or dislikes, gay/homosexual people.

Transphobia is when someone is scared of, or dislikes, transgender people.

Homophobic and transphobic bullying can include:

- making comments about gender or sexuality that deliberately make someone uncomfortable
- calling names or teasing
- hitting, punching or hurting
- making sexual comments or asking sexual questions
- ignoring or excluding
- making comments about another person online

3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body, Headteacher and staff will ensure that the policy is implemented equally in all cases, without regard to ethnic origin, cultural differences, gender, disability or sexuality issues. They will ensure that pupils are listened to and that their concerns are appropriately addressed. Further detail on roles and responsibilities is shown below.

3.1 The Governing Body and Headteacher

The Governing Body will regularly review this policy which the Headteacher will consider in determining measures to promote good behaviour and discipline.

The Governing Body may also bring to the Headteacher's attention such further measures as they consider necessary, and offer guidance, as they consider appropriate, to promote safeguarding and the welfare of pupils.

The governors will appoint a Safeguarding Governor who will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in school to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding including the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying are being implemented effectively. The current Safeguarding Governor is Michael Phelan.

3.2 Headteacher and Senior Staff

The Headteacher and senior staff have overall responsibility for implementations of this policy. Incidents will be managed according to the circumstances and will be recorded and analysed to see whether patterns emerge from the nature of the bullying or the identity of the perpetrators.

See flow chart in **Appendix 3**

Additionally, the Headteacher and senior staff will

- Ensure that all incidents of bullying both inside and outside school are dealt with immediately and will be managed and/or escalated in line with the procedures set out in this policy and the Behaviour for Learning and Living in a Sacred Heart Community Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure that parents/carers are informed and attention is drawn annually to this Anti-bullying policy so that they are fully aware of the school's responsibility relating to safeguarding pupils and their welfare.

3.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will

- Ensure that all staff know that they need to report any issues concerning serious bullying and those that focus on protected characteristics to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Sharon O'Donovan).
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Prevent Duties. (The Designated Prevent lead is Eleisha Maton)
- Provide training to raise staff awareness of how to identify bullying and pupils at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to make a referral when a child is at risk.

3.4 The Assistant Headteachers

The Assistant Headteacher at each key stage will:

- Oversee and coordinate the investigation of a bullying incident
- Ensure parents are informed an investigation is being carried out.
- Ensure the completion of an incident report
- Monitor the impact of follow up actions/outcomes.

3.5 Heads of Year

Heads of Year will:

- Coordinate the taking of statements (including witnesses) in conjunction with pastoral support manager.
- Reprimand/sanction bullying behaviour on the first occasion (dependent on severity)
- Inform pupils/parents of the consequences of any further bullying. This will be pupils will be subject to stage three sanctions of the school's behaviour policy.

3.6 Pastoral Support Managers

Pastoral Support Managers will:

- Coordinate the taking of statements including witnesses in conjunction with year team leads.
- In their capacity as operational safeguarding leads ensure that records of responses to serious (including those related to protected characteristics) bullying are uploaded to Safeguard and complete the bullying or racist incident log.

3.7 All staff

All staff (teachers, support staff and volunteers) share responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied. Mutual support amongst all staff is essential for creating a high quality and safe learning environment promoting good behaviour and implementing the agreed policy and procedures consistently.

All staff have the responsibility to ensure serious bullying and bullying incidents relating to any protected characteristics and to cyber bullying must be logged and recorded using Safeguard.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils will be expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and will be made fully aware of this policy, the procedures arising from cases of bullying and the rationale behind them. All pupils have a collective responsibility to ensure that they are considerate towards one another and respectful of each other's differences.

- Pupils should be made aware of what they should do if they are being bullied. The emphasis should be on empowering pupils to report any incidents to a trusted adult. If a pupil or someone else is the victim of bullying, they must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, or a member of staff, or an Anti-bullying Ambassador at Sacred Heart High School.
- Pupils can also report bullying via our yellow worry boxes which are checked daily by pastoral staff; and they can also approach student anti-bullying ambassadors in the library at set times as advertised on posters around school.

3.9 Parents and Carers

It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be bullying. The school informs parents of the anti-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with bullying.

- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy, monitoring their daughter's internet use, including social media platforms and mobile phone use and informing the school of anything they come across involving potentially unsafe behaviour which endangers pupils or brings the school into disrepute.
- Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying
- If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything

- Parents should contact the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with a relevant member of the key stage pastoral and/or safeguarding team
- If the incident falls in the holidays, in the evening or weekends, as outlined in the school's behaviour policy. the school has the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

4 REPORTING BULLYING

Pupils are encouraged to report all forms of bullying, whether carried out by another pupil or by an adult. The hope is that by reporting the problem in the first instance, this will become the first step in empowering the victim to overcome the bullying through the defined stages that will then be put into action. Whenever a pupil experiences bullying, it should be reported, whether by the victim, friends of the victim, bystanders or via parents. Information can be reported to a member of staff, a tutor, a year team leader, Pastoral Support Manager or a member of Senior Management.

When a problem occurs outside of school and please inform the school as soon as possible. If the nature of the bullying incident constitutes a crime, then parents/carers are advised to call the non-emergency helpline 101 and report the crime.

5 RESPONDING TO BULLYING

Sacred Heart High School adopts a three-stage approach to dealing with bullying as set out below

5.1 Stage 1 - Prevention

Sacred Heart aims to create a safe learning environment and anti-bullying culture.

Bullying is a **whole school** issue. Every member of the School Community is responsible. The issues of behaviour, good order and bullying should form part of regular discussion and review:

- In PSHE, whole school curriculum and by the School Council, Staff, Parents and Governors.
- Regularly as part of tutor time
- At Parent Information Evenings e.g. Internet Safety
- During Anti-Bullying Week
- During Safer Internet Week
- Through regular surveys to evaluate the current climate of the school

The school also seeks to discourage bullying by:

- School Council designing an Anti-Bullying Charter and ensuring that all tutor groups are able to review the charter before a final copy is distributed
- Whole school Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- pupil supervision at non-lesson times
- providing safe places for vulnerable pupils to go at break times and lunchtimes e.g. the Kairos Centre
- supervision of corridors between lessons
- opportunities for pupils to discuss bullying issues as part of PSHE lessons and School Council and the Inclusion and Diversity committees

- All pupils will receive guidance on appropriate use of the internet and the consequences of misuse.

5.2 Stage 2 – What happens if bullying takes place

All staff should first immediately secure the safety of the young person before following the school's procedures –see flow chart **Appendix 3**.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

Investigation

Year Team leads, Pastoral Support Managers (PSMs) and the Assistant Headteacher at each key stage investigating the incident should ensure the following procedures are carried out:

- The 'victim' should record the incident or series of events in writing (statements) and have the opportunity to talk through the situation with an adult.
- The 'bully' should also record the incident or series of events in writing (statements) and have the opportunity to talk through the situation with an adult.
- Any witnesses should also be asked to write statements
- Parents/carers of those pupils who were bullied and who bullied should be contacted by phone or asked to meet face to face (depending on the severity of the incident) by the year team lead or the Assistant Head teacher at the key stage.
- **The assistant head teacher at the key stage should produce a final incident report which is passed onto the headteacher to determine appropriate action which may include level three sanctions; a fixed term or permanent exclusion.**
- Every effort should be made to resolve the problem for the bully and this may include the use of outside agencies where appropriate.
- Pupils will be supported in modifying their behaviour through regular monitoring/mentoring by the PSM as part of a pastoral support plan
- PSMs will maintain an overall log of bullying incidents using the bullying or racist incident proforma. This will outline the type of bullying, action taken and the impact of that action. This will overseen by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for each Key Stage.
- **PSMs have a duty to log and record all incidents of bullying that are connected with protected characteristics on Safeguard (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and also all those classed as cyber-bullying.**

The Restorative Approach

- Where appropriate, and with the agreement of parents and the victim, a restorative approach will be used. This encourages the reporting of incidents by reducing the victims' anxieties about repercussions and educates the perpetrators, by increasing their understanding of the difficulties caused by bullying, and encouraging perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions.
- This might mean asking pupils, staff and parents to share their views within a meeting with a facilitator who would ensure that all participants were able to say how they had been affected by the bullying behaviour and what needed to change. As a way forward, if thought appropriate and agreed upon, a contract would be written between the pupils.

- There would then be a series of meetings held between those involved and the Pastoral Support Managers to ensure that the contract was working and that problems had not re-emerged.

Sanctions and Follow-up Actions

- Pupils who bully will be subject to Level 2 or Level 3 sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour Policy (dependent on severity). Level 3 sanctions may include a fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Repeated bullying behaviour towards other pupils will be treated as defiance and will automatically be escalated to a Level 3 fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Based upon legislation in the Children Act (1989), in serious cases, bullying should be seen as a child protection concern if *'there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'*. Where this is the case, the school must report their concerns to the Local Authority, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub team and may draw on external professionals to support the victim or to tackle issues which have contributed to a child becoming a perpetrator of bullying.
- The school may report a bullying issue to the police; particularly if staff feel that the nature of the bullying contravenes the law and other measures have been unsuccessful in preventing its recurrence.

6 MONITORING THE POLICY

The measures taken and sanctions imposed will be recorded and used to inform pastoral staff of trends, or to indicate which measures are most successful in ensuring that further bullying is prevented. This will be logged on the school's Inclusion Drive.

As part of evaluating the effectiveness of our policy pupils will be asked to give their views as part of learner voice activities through PSHE and School Council

7 MAKING A PARENTAL COMPLAINT

If a parent is not satisfied with the way a bullying issue has been addressed, the appropriate Assistant Headteacher should be contacted. If the matter is still not satisfactorily dealt with the Associate Headteacher will be involved and if necessary, then also the Headteacher.

If the steps prescribed above have not fully resolved parents' or carers' concerns about bullying, the Governors can be contacted directly through the email address provided on the school website.

8 RATIFICATION

This Policy has been approved and ratified by the headteacher and governors' Ethos Committee in November 2023. The policy will be reviewed again for November 2025.

Mrs S O'Donovan
Headteacher

Michael Phelan
Chair of Ethos Committee

APPENDIX 1: LEGAL CONTEXT

Legal and Government Policy Context

This policy draws on Department for Education Guidance on dealing with bullying, particularly 'Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, July 2017'; Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff, 2014; and Advice for Parents and Carers on Cyberbullying, 2014.

Key Issues

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, Obscene Publications Act (1959) and Computer Misuse Act (1990) and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed, the Headteacher will contact the police. For example, under the **Malicious Communications Act 1988**, any person who sends an electronic communication which conveys a message which is **indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender, is guilty of an offence if their purpose in sending it was to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Headteachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off the school site.

The Act also provides a defence for staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

Bullying carried out online (**cyber-bullying**) is generally criminal in character:

- It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

See further detail about cyber bullying in **Appendix 4.**

APPENDIX 2: HOW TO RECOGNISE TYPES OF BULLYING

Types of Bullying Behaviour may include

- Severe beating
- Kicking, hitting, pinching, scratching, hair pulling, punching, flicking, poking, arm twisting etc.
- Name calling
- Ridiculing weakness
- Mimicking
- Taking equipment without permission
- Vandalising property
- Ignoring peers
- Mocking
- Blackmail
- Destroying or damaging work
- Teasing, taunting, coercion
- Making demands or threats
- Pressure to hand over money or possessions
- Referring to family, home life, clothes, hair, ethnic background, disability
- Spreading rumours, gossiping
- Producing offensive graffiti
- Excluding people from groups
- 'Cussing'
- 'Bitchiness'
- 'Stirring'
- 'Dropping people in it'
- Failing to act in order to stop bullying
- Online bullying: using text, email or web space to write, send or say hurtful things
- Social exclusion by groups

Signs or Behaviour Indicators
A victim may indicate by signs or behaviour that she is being bullied. These may include:

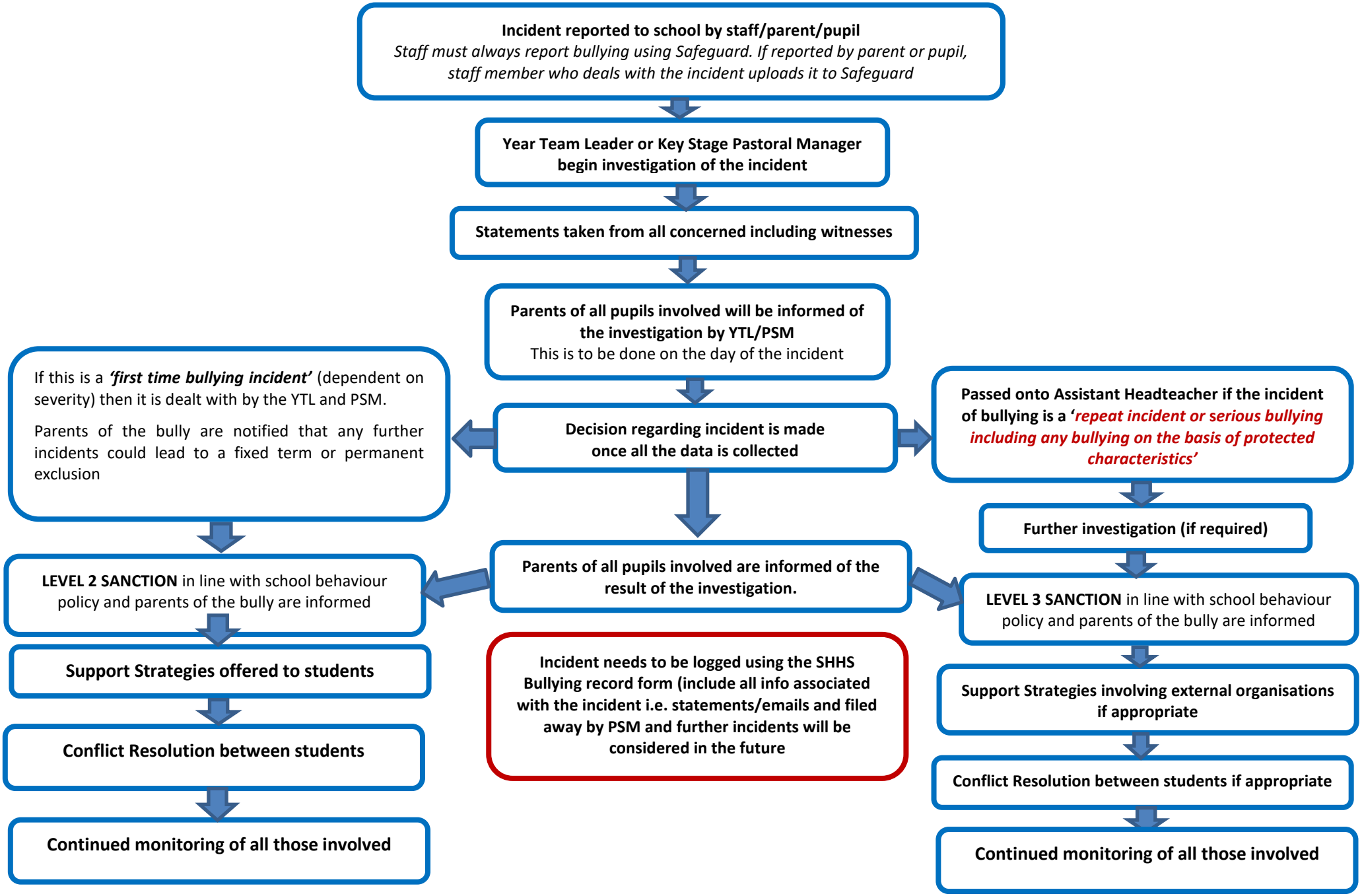
- reluctance to attend school
- unwillingness to travel on the school bus/public transport
- truancy from specific lessons
- damage to clothing or possessions
- 'losing' more items than usual
- unexplained bruises/swellings
- deterioration of school work/academic performance
- being afraid to use the Internet
- becoming jittery about receiving text messages
- unkempt uniform
- bullying towards siblings
- taking money without permission

Symptom Indicators. These may include:

- loss of appetite headaches
- stomach aches
- stammering
- sudden changes in behaviour lack of confidence
- signs of depression
- nervous/edginess
- difficulty in concentration
- lack of motivation to complete work

These are only examples and not a definitive list.

APPENDIX 3: DEALING WITH A BULLYING INCIDENT IN SCHOOL



APPENDIX 4: BULLYING CARRIED OUT ONLINE (CYBER BULLYING)

Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'.

It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online).

It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:

- by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.
- the potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim
- the potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.
- through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying
- the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying.
- the profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.
- many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information.

Targets and perpetrators – the people involved in cyberbullying may have a different profile from traditional bullies and their targets

In cyberbullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, for example, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. Such bystanders are accessories who actively support cyberbullying.

APPENDIX 5: USEFUL WEBSITES

UK Government Definition of Bullying behaviour in school (https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition)

Anti – Bullying Alliance: Information Tool for Parents and Carers: https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/course/147/information-tool-parents-and-carers

Anti- Bullying Alliance- CPD Training for Staff: https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/free-cpd-online-training

Childline

https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying