

Anti-Bullying Policy (including Cyber Bullying)



Table of changes

Date	Version	Summary of Amendments	Author
29.09.2020	1	n/a	JC
02.05.2021	2		JC
04.10.2021	3	Moved online safety into separate policy	JC

Statement on bullying and cyber bullying

SEE is committed to supporting all students and staff who experience bullying or cyber bullying, and to prevent students and staff from engaging themselves in such harmful behaviour towards others.

All staff new to SEE receive a copy of this policy.

Definition of bullying and cyber bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally. This can take the form of cyber bullying (bullying that takes place using technology including social media sites, mobile phones, gaming sites).

Prevention of bullying

Prevention of bullying is delivered in a range of ways including:

- SEE selected schools' values of belonging, diversity and respect are promoted across the school day and the curriculum
- Students are encouraged to speak to their host families, area manager or the DSL about dealing with issues that have arisen
- Local organisations (example: For Sussex, Allsorts Youth Project and Safety Net – discuss other area specific organisations with your area manager) are used to support antibullying work

Date: 4 Oct 2021

24h emergency phone line: +44 (0)7796 997780

Review by: 4 Oct 2022

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Response to bullying

When a student of any age approaches a member of staff regarding a form of bullying they will always be listened to and supported. For initial bullying a student can approach any member staff they have confidence in who will listen to the student and help them to reflect on a situation and find ways forward for themselves, either by themselves or with the support of other students and staff. With the guidance of the adult the views of the students involved are given high priority when deciding the restorative-led outcomes. A review of the situation will take place and there should be a regular check that there continues to be a positive outcome.

For bullying incidents that are long term or have failed to respond to a previous approach, other approaches may be used if the target feels confident to use this method. If the bullying is taking place in school, SEE will contact the school's safeguarding lead and discuss the situation and possible solutions. Any strategy will have to be supported by both SEE and the school. Similarly, if the bullying takes place in a different kind of closed setting such as a sports club, SEE will contact their responsible adult and discuss co-operation.

A preferred method would be as follows: The target and the person displaying bullying behaviour come together in a supervised situation with a mediator, usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Both target and the person displaying bullying behaviour say how they feel and why. The mediator paraphrases for both of them and then each proposes solutions for improving the relationship. They agree the solution together and the mediator ensures they are both happy with the decision. The target and the person displaying bullying behaviour reconvene with the mediator at an agreed later date to report on how successful they have been. Additional meetings can be arranged to confirm the successful outcomes. Both parties feel secure and unthreatened in sorting out their problem with a member of staff present. The process supports those students who are in conflict but lack the skills to deal with it.

Students: what to do when you witness bullying

All students have a role to play to intervene to support their peers (if it is safe to do so) and to report bullying:

- Alert an adult in school / the club / the setting / the host family to any concerns
- Talk to your friends about the situation
- Above all always tell someone. Adults will usually need to intervene to stop bullying
- All of us have a responsibility to avoid encouraging or inciting bullying and to not stand by and let someone else be harmed.

Students: what to do if you are bullied (including online)

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Bullying is intentional tormenting in physical, verbal, or psychological ways. This can happen at school or through social media. It can take the form of physical or sexual assault, verbal taunting, spreading rumours, excluding someone from activities, sending inappropriate messages. If this is happening to you, don't feel embarrassed or ashamed. This is happening to many other teenagers, too – you are not alone, and it is not your fault in any way that someone is picking on you. Bullies always have problems of their own and try to feel better by making others miserable.

The best thing to do is to tell an adult. This can be a host parent, your area manager or someone at school. Together, you can work out a strategy.

Do not try to fight back. This will only escalate the situation.

Where the bullying is happening at school or in town, avoid the bully and stick with friendly people. Offer to do the same for your friends should they find themselves to be in need of support. Walk tall and hold your head high. This body language sends a signal that you are not vulnerable.

Find out if your school has an anti-bullying initiative you could join.

If you experience bullying online, block the bully from contacting you. If you don't know who is bullying you, save the evidence and report the incidents to the content provider (Instagram, WhatsApp etc). Contact details can be found on their website, or you can ask an adult to help you. Do not pass on hurtful messages. If the bullying activity constitutes a crime, report it to the police. It will be best to talk to an adult first to help assess the seriousness of the situation.

Host parents: what to do in cases of bullying

- Listen and talk to your child about the situation and discuss and agree next steps
- Contact your child's tutor if you are worried or concerned
- Monitor social networks/computer use
- Reinforce the value of good behaviour

All staff and families should understand that risk taking is part of growing up. People take risks online that they wouldn't take in person because they might not understand the implications, have fewer inhibitions and feel unmonitored. Teenagers frequently have little understanding of their own vulnerability or digital footprint. Any discovery or disclosure must be treated calmly and with respect. Reactions should be measured: Expressions of shock or anger, accusations of ignorance, interrogation or emotional outbursts are to be avoided. A student over 16 can choose not to give consent for information to be shared unless a crime has been committed or others are in danger. If it is not clear if that is the case, the recipient of a disclosure should not promise secrecy. If asked, tell the student the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed and will know what to do. Please also refer to SEE's Safeguarding Policy.

Adults ought to listen calmly and with sympathy to the student's account of bullying. They must avoid blaming the student – anyone can be targeted by bullies. Reassure your teenager that telling you was the right thing to do. Adults should not be tempted to take charge immediately as this will reinforce the student's feeling of powerlessness. Ask the student how you can help,

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and find a solution together, taking into account the advice given to students in the following paragraph. You can always ask your area manager or the Designated Safeguarding Leads Juliet and Eve (contact details at the bottom of this page) for advice and help. If the situation is such that you are concerned about the student's mental or physical wellbeing, or that third parties (school, parents of the bully, natural parents) need to be involved, please contact South England Exchange immediately.

Additional information can be found here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/> (focussing on cyber-bullying)

SEE Staff: what to do if confronted with bullying

- Take seriously any report of bullying
- Record it in the unusual incidents from on Zoho and report it to the student's tutor / the DSL
- Challenge the behaviour and ideas of the person doing the bullying and help them to understand that what they said or did was hurtful and not in line with the school's values, ethos or policies
- Consider the intentions of the perpetrator before applying sanctions and consider carefully cases where the perpetrator was retaliating following ongoing bullying
- Let other students that have witnessed the incident know that the behaviour was unacceptable and that it is being dealt with
- Keep the target of bullying and their host parents informed about progress and any actions taken and a review date
- Record in the unusual incidents database whether the incident has been resolved and whether the target and their host parents / natural parents (if informed) are satisfied with the outcome
- Identify clear times to 'check in' with those involved (and including host parents) to ensure issues have been resolved

Where bullying behaviour is denied and evidence is hard to find those involved will be closely observed and monitored. The student saying they are being bullied will be asked to record and report any incidents which cause them concern.

Sanctions

Sanctions will be used where appropriate and to send a clear message about the seriousness of the behaviour. These might include:

- Official warnings to cease offending or sanctions could be applied
- Involvement of the Neighbourhood Schools Officer (the Police)
- Parents and carers of those involved will be informed of any action taken
- Exclusion from trips (if perpetrator is a SEE student)

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- End of programme (if perpetrator is a SEE student)
- Records will be kept on students' files

In addition, sanctions can be requested from the school / setting in which the bullying takes place. Such sanctions can include detention, exclusion, exclusion from parts of the premises.

Possible signs that a student might be a victim of bullying or cyber-bullying:

Host families and staff must be aware of the existence of internet risks and informed to look for possible indications. It is natural and sometimes correct to feel that we have to respect the privacy of an exchange student more than we would that of our own children. It is also understandable that we feel we have less authority to set boundaries than natural parents would have. However, families should discuss with the student as well as the Area Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead, Juliet Cassells (contact details below) if they notice any of the following symptoms:

- A change in behaviour or unusual behaviour
- Being upset after using the internet or their mobile phone
- Unwilling to talk or secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use
- Spending much more or much less time texting, gaming or using social media
- Many new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses appear on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet
- After texting or being online they may seem withdrawn, upset or angry
- Not wanting to go to school
- Difficulty sleeping
- Low self-esteem

If a SEE student bullies others

Where a SEE student is accused of bullying others, the host family and /or area manager should talk to the student to find out if the accusations are true. They should also contact the school or, if the alleged incident is happening outside school, the accuser or their parents and establish all facts. The school's safeguarding lead and anti-bullying policy should be consulted to ensure everyone is following procedure.

If bullying behaviour is admitted or likely, it is important to establish the cause for this. Often, a bully is dealing with their own problems (which may be that they are being bullied in turn or that they are trying to fit into a group they are trying to impress). Together with the adult, the student can tackle the underlying issue. It is important not to see their behaviour as a permanent reflection of their character, but nevertheless give a clear message which behaviour is unacceptable.

In severe cases, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will have to contact the partner agency abroad and through them, the natural parents of the student.

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