



Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission: To enable all young people at Uffculme to lead meaningful and enjoyable lives

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

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Chair of Governors:	John Garrett
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Student Voice and Lived Experience

Autistic children and young people who experience bullying often report being targeted because of visible or perceived differences in communication style, behaviour, interests, sensory needs or social interaction. Such experiences can include being misunderstood, excluded, mocked or exploited, rather than intentionally involved in conflict. For many autistic pupils, bullying is experienced as ongoing and cumulative, impacting feelings of safety, belonging and self-worth. Uffculme School recognises that these experiences reflect barriers within social environments, not personal failings, and is committed to listening to pupils' lived experiences in order to reduce harm, improve understanding and strengthen inclusive practice.

Uffculme School is committed to ensuring that pupil voice is central to how bullying is understood, addressed and reduced. The School values the lived experiences of pupils and recognises that listening to pupils' perspectives enables adults to better understand risk, impact and effective support.

Pupils will be supported and empowered to share their experiences of bullying in ways that are safe, developmentally appropriate and accessible. The School recognises that communication may take many forms, and pupil voice may be expressed through:

Verbal communication

- Alternative and augmentative communication systems
- Visual methods
- Behavioural indicators
- Supported or adult-mediated conversations
- Written, symbolic or creative means

The School acknowledges that some pupils may require additional time, trust and support to share experiences and that disclosure may occur gradually.

Empowerment and Safety

Pupils will never be pressured to share their experiences. Participation in discussions about bullying will be voluntary, and pupils' emotional safety, dignity and wellbeing will always be prioritised.

Pupils will be reassured that:

- Their experiences will be taken seriously
- They will not be blamed for being bullied or for reporting concerns
- They will be listened to with empathy and respect
- Sharing concerns helps adults to keep them and others safe

Learning and Improvement

Information gathered through pupil voice will be used to:

- Improve safeguarding and protective strategies
- Identify patterns, risks or emerging concerns
- Improve staff practice and training
- Shape preventative education and support
- Inform whole-school reflection and improvement

Contents

1. Position and Values.....	3
2. Legal Framework.....	3
3. Clarification of Terms	4
4. Roles and Responsibilities.....	8
5. Strategies to Reduce Bullying.....	12
6. Reporting, Sanctions and Monitoring	15
7. Changes.....	17

1. Position and Values

The aim of the policy is to prevent bullying of any sort and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the School community including, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is and be familiar with the School policy on bullying. The aim of this policy is to help members of the School community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, more importantly, to prevent it.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously. To protect the rights of all students to have a safe and secure learning environment, Uffculme School will continuously work towards preventing acts of bullying, harassment and other forms of aggression and violence. These behaviours are unacceptable and interfere with both our School's ability to educate children and impact a child's ability to learn. If such a case arises, the staff at Uffculme School will follow the anti-bullying guidelines laid out in this policy. This will enable staff to:

- Identify children displaying unacceptable behaviour and know how to support them in order that they develop the necessary skills to contribute to the School community positively.
- Keep all other children safe, happy, and confident.

2. Legal Framework

2.1. This policy has due regard to the most recent statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025) and reflects current safeguarding, online safety and equality expectations.

- Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2025
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying – DfE update anticipated 2025 (most recent edition)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children – 2023 updated guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – 2023
- Online Safety Act 2023 (now highly relevant to cyber-bullying) Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988

- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- NSPCC – Exemplar Anti-bullying policy guidance

2.2. This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017.

DfE 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in Schools and colleges' 2018 DfE 'Mental Health.

3. Clarification of Terms

3.1. Definition of bullying

For the purpose of this policy, 'bullying' is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. All children have upsets and squabbles; these are not classed as bullying and are dealt with through the Positive Behaviour Support (Behaviour Policy)

Uffculme School recognises that some behaviours which may appear bullying-like can be rooted in differences in communication, emotional regulation, sensory processing or social understanding. These behaviours are addressed through Positive Behaviour Support and are **not** automatically defined as bullying unless the criteria of intent, repetition and power imbalance are met.

Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over a period of time.
- Intent: The student responsible for the behaviour(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.

Vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people may have towards those who are different from themselves.

3.2. Definition of cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology such as mobile phones, email, chat rooms or social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter to harass, threaten, embarrass, intimidate or target a child. Unlike physical bullying, cyber-bullying can often be difficult to track as the cyberbully (the person responsible for the acts of cyber-bullying) can remain anonymous when threatening others online, encouraging them to behave more aggressively than they might face to face.

3.3. Types of bullying:

- **Physical:** Deliberately physically hurting individual or groups of children on a regular basis.
- **Verbal:** Deliberately hurting feelings through name-calling etc.
- **Ostracising:** Making someone feel left out and different by deliberately setting out to exclude them
- **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- **Homophobic Bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. People may be a target of this type of bullying because of their appearance, behaviour, physical traits or because they have friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning or possibly just because they are seen as being different. Homophobic bullying is the most frequent form of bullying after name calling.
- **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender variance or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate, or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- **Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal, or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- **Child/Young Person on Child/Young Person:** It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. This is further outlined in Safeguarding Policy 2022
- **Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, e.g., SEND or mental health issues. Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating, and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.
- **Online (Cyber)** Uffculme School has a separate Acceptable Use Policy that addresses online safety and the use of mobile technology, social media, appropriate online activity, security, access, and monitoring procedures in place.

3.4. Types of cyber-bullying:

Flaming: Online fights usually through emails, instant messaging or chat rooms where angry and rude comments are exchanged.

Denigration: Putting mean online messages through email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or websites set up to make fun of someone.

Exclusion: Intentionally leaving someone out of a group such as instant messaging, friend sites, or other online group activities.

Outing: Sharing secrets about someone online including private information, pictures, and videos.

Trickery: Tricking someone into revealing personal information then sharing it with others.

Impersonation: Pretending to be someone else when sending or posting mean or false messages online.

Harassment: Repeatedly sending malicious messages to someone online.

Cyber-stalking: Continuously harassing and denigration including threats of physical harm.

3.5. Actions NOT considered to be bullying:

- Not liking someone
- Being excluded
- Accidentally bumping into someone
- Making other children play a certain way on occasion.
- A single act of telling a joke about someone.
- Arguments
- Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others
- Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation, or meanness
- Students trying to 'befriend' another, without understanding social rules
- Inappropriate behaviours linked to social understanding or disability.

3.6. Reasons for bullying

- Some reasons why children might bully someone include:
- They think it's fun, or that it makes them popular or 'cool'.
- They feel more powerful or important, or they want to get their own way all the time.
- They feel insecure or lack confidence or are trying to fit in with a group.
- They are fearful of other children's differences.
- They are jealous of another child.
- They are unhappy.
- They are copying what they have seen others do before, or what has been done to them.

3.7. The effects of bullying

All forms of bullying cause psychological, emotional, and physical stress. Each child's response to being bullied is unique, however some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Depression and anxiety.
- Increased feelings of sadness, helplessness, decreased self-esteem, and loneliness.
- Loss of interest in activities they use to enjoy.
- Unexplainable injuries.
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewellery.
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness.
- Changes in eating habits, such as suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Children may come home from the School hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares.
- Declining grades, loss of interest in their work, or not wanting to attend the School.
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations.
- Self-destructive behaviours such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

By law, all Schools must have a behaviour policy in place and displayed on their website and must also follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within the School. Additionally, Uffculme School have developed this anti-bullying policy, a copy of which is available from the School office and on the School website, for parents/carers, staff, and students to access when and as they wish.

Academies have the legal power to ensure students behave and do not bully outside of School premises for example, on public transport or in nearby public communal areas. If seen as appropriate, the Head teacher or staff can choose to report bullying to the police or local council. During School hours, including while students are taking part in School visits, after School clubs and through preventing cyber bullying the School has direct responsibility to ensure children feel safe and secure.

4.1. The Role of the Uffculme Governing Body

The Governors at Uffculme School support the Headteacher with the evaluation, review and implementation of this policy and ensures the School adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards differences and promotes an inclusive culture. The Governing Body also supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the School and will not condone bullying in any form. Any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The School monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The School board requires the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the School Governing Body, on request, about the effectiveness of the School's antibullying strategies.

A parent/carer who is dissatisfied with the way the School has dealt with a bullying incident can use escalation procedures outlined in the Complaints Policy and make a complaint to the Chair of Governors. The complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the complaints policy which can be accessed from the School's website.

4.2. The Role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the School's anti-bullying strategy, to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the School policy, and that they know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher will ensure that the School keeps accurate records of all incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for detailed analysis of all the data collected. The Headteacher will ensure there is analysis of the data in the student displaying bullying behaviour records at termly intervals (minimum) to identify any trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.

It is the Headteacher who must ensure that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in the School. The Headteacher will draw the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with the children why bullying is wrong.

The Headteacher will ensure that all members of staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher will set the School climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming School, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

4.3. The Role of the Staff

Members of staff must be alert to social dynamics and be alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they report any concerns to the Senior Leadership Team.

Members of staff will do all that they can to eradicate bullying; they will ensure that they follow the School's Anti-bullying policy.

All members of staff will receive training that equips them to identify bullying and to follow School policy and procedures with regard to positive behaviour support.

Staff will use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They will use drama, roleplay, stories etc. within the curriculum, to help students understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practice the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. 'Ring fenced' time will also be used to praise, reward, and celebrate the successes of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Members of staff will keep a vigilant watch on suspected 'bullies'; any incidents will be handled carefully. It is important that the child responsible for initiating the student displaying bullying behaviour is dealt with appropriately. The person dealing with the incident will need to collect all the relevant information and then provide the Headteacher with a copy in order that he/she can decide on an action. All cases are considered on an individual basis and various strategies will be employed by the Headteacher to address the issue.

Teachers and support staff will do all they can to support a child who is being bullied ensuring that they are treated with empathy and respect.

Teachers and support staff will do all they can to support the child who is the student responsible for the behaviour (alleged or actual) of bullying ensuring that they are treated with empathy and respect.

4.4. Bullying in the Workplace

Incidents, where it has been deemed that a member of staff has been bullying a child, will be taken very seriously. The Headteacher will deal with this and formal action will be taken where necessary. Such action will also be taken if it is deemed that a member of staff is bullying other members of staff.

In the event of the Headteacher being involved in such incidents, reports will be given immediately to the Chair of Governors who will also take formal action where necessary.

4.5. The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers should be watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and inform relevant staff of any changes.

Parents/carers, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied or who suspect that their child may be the student responsible for the behaviour of bullying, should contact the Senior Leadership Team. If they are not satisfied with the action taken, they should contact the Headteacher.

If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the escalation procedures detailed in the School complaints policy. Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the School's anti-bullying policy by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the School and this expectation of support is outlined in the home/School agreement.

4.6. The Role of Students

Students are encouraged to tell somebody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the student displaying bullying behaviour continues, they must continue to let people know; the children are taught a number of strategies to help them with this.

Students are encouraged to not make 'counter threats' if they are the victims of bullying.

Students are encouraged to walk away from dangerous situations and avoid involving other students in incidents.

Students are encouraged to keep any evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.

Students are also encouraged to participate fully in activities that raise their awareness about bullying in order that they clearly understand what to do if they, or another child, are being bullied.

Students are requested to be open to restorative dialogues.

4.7. Statutory Implications

The School understands, under the Equality Act 2010, it has responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The School understands, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it, if it allows the rights of children and young people at the School to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

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:
- violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

5. Strategies to Reduce Bullying

Uffculme School has adopted a range of strategies to prevent and reduce bullying, to raise awareness of bullying and support victims and those displaying bullying behaviour, including:

- The consistent promotion of the School's Code of Behaviour which requires all students to respect the rights of others.
- The reinforcement of the clear message that violence has no place at Uffculme School.
- Take part in initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week.
- Training for all members of staff on anti-bullying policy and strategy.
- The supervision by School staff of all play areas at lunch times and break times.
- Providing information to all parents on the symptoms of bullying and the steps to take if they suspect their child is being bullied.
- A clear policy of mobile phones not permitted to be used during School hours.
- The celebration of all student's backgrounds and cultures through assemblies.
- Assemblies and PSHE learning sessions will discuss and explore bullying issues with students.
- Raising awareness of cyber bullying and teaching children to safely use technology (including mobile phones, email, internet)
- Staff will encourage student cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work.
- All websites accessed by the School are screened. The software screens the language used in all documents, emails and websites.
- Rude or offensive emails, websites, documents are sent to the Headteacher and appropriate action will be taken and recorded.
- Effective recording systems are implemented by the School.
- Work with multi-agency teams including police and children's services as appropriate.
- Contact the parents/carers of both the child being bullied and the student displaying bullying behaviours.
- Challenge sexual content within verbal abuse, especially challenging the word 'gay' and other homophobic language.
- The School will be alert to and address any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst students, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.
- All reported instances of bullying will be investigated by a senior member of staff/SEND/DSL.
- All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the curriculum.
- The School will ensure that potential bullies are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.
- Diversity, difference, and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying; opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

5.2. Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from School.

- Asking to be driven to School.
- Unwillingness to attend the School.
- Truancy.
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence.
- Students saying that they feel ill in the morning.
- Decreased involvement in School work.
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions.
- Missing possessions.
- Missing dinner money.
- Asking for extra money or stealing.
- Cuts or bruises.
- Lack of appetite.
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices.
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages.
- Lack of eye contact.
- Becoming short tempered.
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home.

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional, or mental health issues, so are worth investigating.

Students who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the student becoming aggravated.
- They have been the victim of domestic abuse.
- Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed.
- If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify DSL/SENDCo, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

5.3 Cyber-Bullying and Online Harm

Social Vulnerability and Increased Risk for Pupils at Uffculme School

Uffculme School recognises that pupils with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) and associated communication, social interaction and emotional regulation differences may be at increased vulnerability to cyber-bullying and online harm. This vulnerability arises not from individual deficits, but from social vulnerability within online environments that are not designed to meet neurodivergent needs.

Online spaces can remove the protective factors present in face-to-face interactions, such as adult supervision, structured routines and immediate support, increasing risk for pupils who already experience challenges in interpreting social cues, intent and boundaries.

Factors Increasing Social Vulnerability Online

Pupils at Uffculme may experience increased risk of cyber-bullying due to a combination of the following factors:

- Difficulties interpreting social intent, sarcasm, humour, teasing or manipulation in online interactions, increasing the likelihood of misunderstanding harmful behaviour or failing to recognise exploitation.
- Literal interpretation of language, which can lead pupils to accept harmful messages, threats or coercion as truthful or binding.
- Strong desire for friendship, validation or belonging, which may increase susceptibility to grooming, peer exploitation or repeated targeting.
- Challenges recognising social hierarchies and power imbalance, particularly in group chats, gaming platforms or social media environments.
- Reduced awareness of online safety boundaries, including sharing personal information, images or responding to requests that feel socially expected.
- Delayed recognition of harm, meaning cyber-bullying may go unreported until distress becomes significant.
- Difficulties asserting refusal or blocking others, especially when worried about conflict, rejection or social consequences.
- Increased likelihood of repetitive engagement, where pupils may continue to interact with harmful peers due to routine-based behaviour or difficulty disengaging from negative interactions.

The School recognises that these factors can make pupils persistent targets rather than isolated victims and require proactive, protective safeguarding responses.

Forms of Cyber-Bullying Relevant to Social Vulnerability

In addition to traditional cyber-bullying behaviours, Uffculme School recognises increased risk in the following areas:

- Manipulation or coercion through repeated messaging or pressure to comply with requests.
- Impersonation or deception, where pupils may be tricked into trusting false identities.
- Exploitation within online gaming or group chats, including exclusion, ridicule, or pressure to conform.
- Image-based abuse, including pressuring pupils to share images or threatening distribution.
- Group targeting, where one pupil becomes the focus of repeated messages, jokes or exclusion across multiple platforms.
- Persistent low-level harassment, which may appear minor in isolation but causes cumulative distress.

Safeguarding, Protection and Support

The School adopts a protective, preventative and educative approach to cyber-bullying, recognising that pupils may not always be able to protect themselves independently in online spaces.

Key protective measures include:

- Proactive teaching of explicit, concrete online safety skills using clear language and visual supports
- Reinforcement that online harm is never the pupil's fault
- Close liaison between staff, parents/carers, the DSL and external agencies where appropriate
- Monitoring patterns of online interaction where concerns arise
- Timely safeguarding responses where exploitation, coercion or repeated targeting is suspected

Pupils will not be penalised for reporting online harm, even where their actions may have contributed to vulnerability. The focus will remain on safety, learning and support, not blame.

Reporting and Communication Differences

Uffculme School recognises that pupils may:

- Struggle to articulate online experiences verbally
- Communicate distress through behavioural changes, withdrawal or dysregulation
- Minimise incidents due to embarrassment, confusion or fear of losing access to preferred online activities

Staff are trained to recognise indirect indicators of cyber-bullying and will respond proactively when concerns arise.

Alternative methods of reporting and disclosure will be supported, including:

- Trusted adults
- Visual or scaffolded communication
- Adult-led interpretation of evidence (messages, screenshots, gaming logs)

Balance Between Safety and Independence

The School aims to balance:

- The right to digital engagement and developing independence
- With the duty to safeguard pupils from harm

Where online risk is significant, protective measures may include increased supervision, restricted access or parental guidance, applied proportionately and reviewed regularly.

6. Reporting, Sanctions and Monitoring

6.1. How to report bullying

Any member of staff can be approached to report incidents of bullying, and they in turn will report to Senior Leadership.

Senior Leaders have overall day-to-day responsibility for dealing with reported incidents and will forward details to the relevant member of staff to investigate.

6.2. Procedures

The following steps must be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- a) If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached, or who suspects/observed the student displaying bullying behaviour.
- b) Senior Leadership must be informed immediately.

- c) A clear account of the incident will be recorded in writing either by the victim or the member of staff recording the victim's verbal statement.
- d) A member of the Senior Leadership Team will interview all concerned and will record the incident on the School's Anti – Bullying Log.
- e) Parents will be kept informed by a Keyworker/Learning Mentor or if required a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- f) Subject teachers will be kept informed and asked to monitor the situation.
- g) In the first instance the School will seek a restorative and educative approach to bullying. It may also be appropriate to employ a range of consequences used as part of this approach.
- Typical consequences could include restrictions of break and lunchtime activities, less unsupervised time, reparation, and in the event of persistent bullying, fixed term exclusion. Where appropriate the Headteacher may inform the police.
- h) There will be regular audits and analysis of incident logs and interventions to continually improve practice.

The School has set procedures to follow in implementing sanctions where a bullying incident has occurred, as described above, sanctions are applied in appropriate proportion to the event. In the event of all other avenues being exhausted, or in particularly serious cases that lead to exclusion, the School will examine the evidence that a wide range of strategies had been tried and failed to affect a positive change in the student displaying bullying behaviour.

6.3 Restorative and relational responses

Uffculme School is committed to relational, restorative and educative approaches when responding to incidents of bullying. These approaches aim to repair harm, rebuild trust, develop emotional understanding and support positive relationships, while prioritising the safety, dignity and wellbeing of all students involved.

Restorative responses may include, where appropriate:

- Supported restorative conversations or dialogues
- Reflective work focused on impact and repair
- Adult-mediated apologies or reparation
- Adjustments to routines, environments or peer groupings
- Individualised support to develop social understanding and emotional regulation

These approaches are used alongside Positive Behaviour Support and are carefully tailored to the needs, communication profiles and developmental levels of students.

Considerations and Limitations of Restorative Approaches for Students with ASC

The School recognises that restorative approaches are not universally appropriate and may have limitations for some students with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC). In particular:

Some students with ASC may experience significant difficulty understanding abstract concepts such as intent, perspective-taking, shared responsibility or emotional impact.

Direct restorative dialogue may increase anxiety, confusion or distress, particularly where students experience heightened emotional regulation difficulties, demand avoidance, sensory sensitivities or communication differences.

Students may experience restorative meetings as overwhelming or punitive, even when delivered with positive intent.

Difficulties with expressive or receptive communication may limit a student's ability to meaningfully engage in restorative conversations or articulate their experience of harm.

In some cases, behaviours may stem from unmet needs, distress, trauma responses or differences in social understanding rather than deliberate intent to harm, making traditional restorative processes inappropriate or ineffective.

Individualised Decision-Making

Decisions about the use of restorative approaches will always be:

- Individualised
- Needs-led
- Risk-assessed
- Informed by professional judgement

Consideration will be given to:

- The student's communication profile and cognitive processing
- Emotional regulation capacity at the time of the incident
- Previous experiences of restorative approaches
- Advice from the SENDCo, DSL and/or relevant professionals
- The views and wellbeing of the child who has experienced harm

Restorative approaches will never be imposed, and a student will not be required to participate in restorative dialogue if doing so would compromise their emotional safety or wellbeing.

Alternative and Adapted Approaches

Where restorative dialogue is not appropriate, the School may employ alternative or adapted relational approaches, including:

- Adult-led reflection rather than peer-to-peer dialogue
- Visual, concrete or structured methods to explore cause and effect
- Environmental or timetable adjustments to reduce risk
- Increased adult support or supervision
- Individual intervention focused on emotional regulation, communication or social understanding
- Clear, consistent boundaries and protective measures to ensure safety

The primary focus in all cases remains:

- The safety and wellbeing of the student who has been harmed

- The support, understanding and skill development of the student displaying the behaviour
- The maintenance of a calm, predictable and inclusive school environment

Safeguarding and Welfare Priority

The School acknowledges that restorative approaches do not replace safeguarding responsibilities. Where behaviour causes significant distress, fear or harm, or where there are safeguarding concerns, appropriate protective actions will be taken irrespective of restorative considerations.

6.4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- a) This policy will be reviewed annually to assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the School.
- b) The School will review the effectiveness of the policy annually and views given to the Headteacher.
- c) A record of all incidents will be kept both centrally and on student files.
- d) The numbers of incidents will be presented to the Governing Body as requested.
- e) Regular Quality Assurance of recording, decision making and actions will be undertaken on a dip sample basis
- f) Bullying data will be analysed to reflect and re-design further strategies to improve procedures.

6.5. Useful websites

www.bullying.co.uk

www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.each.education

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.youngstonewall.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.stoptextbully.co.uk

www.beyondbullying.com

www.childnet-int.org

www.thinkyouknow.co.uk

www.cyberbullying.org.uk

www.eachaction.org.uk

www.stonewall.org.uk