SHREWSBURY HOUSE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1865

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy owner:	Executive Head, Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head Pastoral
Approved:	Board of Governors
Date of last review:	September 2026
Next review:	September 2027

Introduction

We have a strong anti-bullying culture at Shrewsbury House School. Nevertheless, in any situation where people interact, bullying, or what can be construed to be bullying, can occur.

Bullying in any form is not acceptable in the School and it affects young people's confidence, self-esteem, attendance and attainment and can cause great psychological damage.

Shrewsbury House School regards bullying very seriously.

We recognise that we owe a duty of care to all of the boys who attend Shrewsbury House both as part of our responsibility for safeguarding and to enable boys to gain full benefit from their education.

Pupils will learn best in a safe and calm environment that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus. The provision of a safe and happy place to learn is essential to achieving school improvement, raising achievement and attendance, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the School community.

Shrewsbury House School takes an active approach to promoting good behaviour and respect for others, seeking to ensure that bullying in any form does not occur in the first place and we promote an anti-bullying culture. We aim to educate the pupils about people's differences and show them how we are all different and yet equal, as a way to help prevent bullying occurring, using such methods as both formal and informal discussions in tutor periods, assemblies, PSHE sessions, drama and other lessons. We also focus on values of respect for one another and considering how our actions affect others.

However, when bullying does occur, we respond promptly and firmly. We also seek to ensure that all school staff and pupils have the tools and confidence they need to prevent and tackle bullying whenever and wherever it occurs. If there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or

likely to suffer significant harm as a result of a bullying incident, this will be treated as a child protection matter.

Disciplinary sanctions are used in proportion to the seriousness of an incident with a view of providing education to all parties involved, including the potential exclusion of a pupil in cases of proven severe and persistent bullying. In such circumstances the advice or involvement of external agencies, e.g. the police/children's social care could be sought.

Staff training raises awareness of the principles of our Anti-Bullying Policy and helps staff understand our legal responsibilities, what action the School expects to resolve and prevent problems and outlines the sources of support which are available to staff. When required, the School consults with external experts and agencies to better understand the needs of a particular pupil. Expert advice from the Learning Enrichment Co-ordinator or Safeguarding Team could be sought for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, pupils exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity, including LGBTQ+ pupils.

The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is made available to prospective and current parents through its publication on the School Website. Prospective parents are made aware of where to find the School's Anti-Bullying Policy through the communications they received during the admissions process and current parents are reminded through the Executive Head's annual Provision of Information communication.

The Aims

We aim to stimulate an anti-bullying culture between pupils, between staff and pupils, and, equally important, between staff themselves as well as the wider School community including parents. Any incidence of bullying is reported immediately through the appropriate channels (see below) and will be addressed as a matter of urgency. We aim to create a culture where all feel assured that they are listened to and incidents are acted upon, making it easier for all to report bullying.

To assist us in doing our utmost to avoid the occurrence of bullying at Shrewsbury House School, we rely on the vigilance of staff, the good sense of boys and the support of parents. The Shrewsbury House Way provides a clear framework of expectations for the entire community to follow, which encompasses the School values. Although there must be a distinction between what can happen intentionally and what can happen unintentionally, neither is acceptable at Shrewsbury House School.

It is essential that both School and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they cooperate closely together. Acceptance of this Anti-Bullying Policy forms part of our standard Terms and Conditions, which are issued to parents as part of the admissions procedure. The school follows the guidelines set out in KCSIE to help keep all students safe.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally, in person or online. Bullying can take many forms (for

instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, email or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs, disability, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. Bullying involves an imbalance of power (be it physical, social, or psychological) that makes it difficult for the victim to defend themselves. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, deliberate exclusion, or complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and threatening. Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. The school understands the risk of child on child abuse (as detailed in KCSIE 2026) and has undertaken steps to increase support for pupils at times of highest risk during the day (eg: break times and end of the school day).

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying can be defined as: 'the deliberate use of Information Communications Technology (ICT) - particularly mobile phones and the internet, including photographs, email and social networking sites to upset someone else.' Social Network sites, such as TikTok, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram etc. are now widely used and do provide increased opportunity for cyber bullying through misuse of photographs or methods such as 'account hijacking ' (logging in as somebody else and pretending to be them).

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen at any time, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. We are aware of the ease by which boys have access to ICT and also the potential for great harm (and great good) that such access allows, so we seek to educate pupils, staff and parents/carers to the possibilities and dangers of cyber-bullying and to show that it will be treated as seriously as any other form of bullying.

Staff, pupils and parents are made aware of both the good and injurious potential of available technologies and reminded of their roles in the protection of the pupils at school and at home. An internet safety training programme is in place for both pupils and parents, with external support platforms such as Tooled Up Education alongside our own ongoing PSHE education and post CE enrichment program. This includes guidance on sharing personal information online, age-appropriate information on grooming, warnings over the potential content of internet sites, and 'what to do' guide if you encounter a problem online, while also reinforcing the seriousness of using technologies to tease, threaten or bully others. For our senior pupils, an awareness of 'sexting' (sending sexually explicit messages primarily between mobile phones), and the dangers of it are a part of our awareness programme. In line with the KCSIE 2026 guidance, 'self generated intimate images and or videos created using AI (eg: Deepfakes) are also covered with senior pupils.

A suitable filter system operated by The London Grid for Learning, is in place on school-based internet facilities and clear rules are in place for the use of computer systems at school, including no usage without staff presence. We run I.T. and Computer Science classes for the boys where Internet Safety messages are reinforced, as well as AUPs signed by every boy during their early computing lessons. Securus monitoring system is installed on all Chrome Books and laptops in the school and any inappropriate words or searches are flagged and highlighted to the safeguarding team, who then

investigate immediately.

As part of our limitations on the provision of hardware, mobile phones may only be brought into school where a pupil may need to communicate with parents on their way home from school, and they must be handed into the mini-bus driver for the journey into school, or directly to the SDH / Office upon arrival at school, and then collected at the end of the day. Boys travelling home on mini-buses are required to hand in their phones to the mini-bus driver and the same rule is applied to boys travelling to and from matches directly from school. In compliance with KCSIE 2026, the school is a mobile free zone during the school day.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when 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 Staff should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may in turn refer this to the Local Authority Children's Social Care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, the School may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child committing the act of bullying.

Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it can cause great psychological damage, so 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, and the Public Order Act 1986. Where it is felt that such an offence may have been committed, the Executive Head would seek assistance from the Police.

Equality Act 2010

At Shrewsbury House School we seek to eradicate discrimination and to comply with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and The Equality Act 2010 by:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- This includes any intentional hurt, emotional or physical against particular groups e.g. on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, sexual orientation , special educational needs and disability or because a child is adopted or is a carer, directly or through cyber technology, including social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and email.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Signs of Bullying

Staff members take a proactive approach to the care and safeguarding of the pupils and it is their responsibility to raise any concerns that they have that a pupil may be being bullied, be it at school, outside school or online.

Possible signs of bullying may include, but is not exclusive to, the following:

- Unwillingness to return to school.
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others.
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged.
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary).
- Diminished levels of self-confidence.
- Frequent visits to the School Matron.Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class.
- Choosing the company of adults.
- Repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares.
- Talking of suicide or running away.

It must be emphasised that these are guidelines to possible symptoms, although there may be other causes for some of them, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents/carers and teachers. We would differentiate between what is intentional and unintentional. Other unintentional behaviour can hurt a victim, either physically or psychologically. This is not acceptable and requires guidance, but we would not include it in our definition of bullying which we would emphasise is something that is intentional. It is also noted that recent updates to statutory guidance emphasise that children with SEND or certain medical conditions are disproportionately impacted by bullying and *may not outwardly show signs*.

Child on Child abuse

At Shrewsbury House we recognise that child on child abuse can occur both inside and outside of school (including online) and that all staff are trained to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse; know how to identify and report appropriately on it through the safeguarding team.

All staff at Shrewsbury House understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. 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 behaviour, which will not be tolerated at Shrewsbury House. We aim to provide a safe and secure environment for children encouraging an open culture of reporting and communication.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Pupils are Advised by their Tutors and Staff members

If you think you are being bullied:

- Try to stay calm and appear to be as confident as possible
- Not blame yourself for what is happening
- Address the bullies and tell them firmly and clearly that you would like them to stop
- Move away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Report the incident to a teacher as soon as possible
- Tell parents and trusted friends.

If you think You Know Someone is Being Bullied:

Take action! Watching and doing nothing may look as if you are on the side of the bully. We all have a responsibility to report a situation where we see others suffering; do not be a by-stander who does nothing to help. It is important that you do nothing to promote the behaviour of the bully.

Report all problems to a member of staff. In upholding the school values of integrity, respect and compassion, reporting incidents that are of concern is the right thing to do and will not be considered as snitching, merely living by the Shrewsbury House Way.

Dealing with Bullying

We always treat any concerns raised regarding bullying (including child on child abuse) very seriously. Bullying conflicts sharply with the School's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

Any alleged or perceived bullying is investigated as a matter of priority and dealt with appropriately. Proven bullying is regarded as a very serious matter. The distress that can be caused to victims through the act or acts of bullying can be very significant and any proven instances of bullying will be dealt with due regard to the importance of fully implementing the School's Anti-Bullying policy and the seriousness with which the School takes this matter.

School staff are best placed to decide how best to respond to the particular issues that affect their pupils.

- When an alleged incident of bullying is drawn to a member of staff's attention, they must act as a matter of urgency. Advice may be sought from a member of the Senior Leadership Team. In all situations, the Executive Head, the Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head Pastoral, DSL, the Head of Year and the Tutor must be copied in and informed.

- The person investigating will take an account from the victim and seek to ascertain whether or not bullying has taken place. The member of staff will then advise as to whether in his/her opinion bullying has taken place. If it does seem to be bullying the member of staff will investigate by talking to the victim, the alleged bully, and any other relevant parties in consultation with SLT.

- The problem will be explained to those involved individually so that the distress of the victim is understood.

- The alleged bully and/or group will be made to understand that they are responsible for putting things right and are asked to suggest ways in which this can be done by them. He/they will be offered guidance on modifying his/their behaviour and reminded that this behaviour must not be continued or repeated.

- He/they will be talked through any sanctions and disciplinary measures which will be applied to show clearly that this behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities along with specific context that the pupils may have, as well as taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

- The victim is told that the matter has been dealt with and there should be no re-occurrence. He must report to the relevant member of staff if the bullying continues. It will be made clear to him that revenge is inappropriate. He will be offered support through reintegration strategies as required.

- Following a sanction reintegration will also take place to ensure boys can move on and learn

from their mistakes. This process will be further supported by specific staff closest to the pupil initially and the wider staff will be informed so ongoing monitoring of the situation will take place.

- All of this must be recorded, and reported to the Executive Head, the Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head Pastoral and where relevant the DSL, who will inform the rest of the staff.

Parents of the victim and/or alleged bully will be involved if it is deemed necessary to help solve a problem or to provide more information. Otherwise, parents of the victim and bully will be informed, when appropriate, of what is alleged and they will be kept informed of what has happened with the investigation and what action has been taken (although no parent of another boy may be told what a punishment of a boy who is not their son is and staff must be careful not to mention to a parent, names of other boys involved or who are witnesses).

It is hoped that there will not be the need to consider suspension or permanent exclusion but where bullying has been proven and an incident is sufficiently serious, either of these courses may be considered by the Executive Head. Please refer to the 'Behaviour Management Policy' for further details.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Where bullying or a concern about potential bullying outside school is reported to school staff (including online), it should be investigated and acted on. The Executive Head should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the Police should always be informed.

Preventative Measures and Raising Awareness of Bullying

We take the following preventative measures and raise awareness of bullying in the following ways:

- Staff awareness of areas and times of risk. Bullying is likely to take place at times when an adult is not immediately present or close enough. Staff members are particularly aware that potentially the most likely occasions and places at Shrewsbury House School are: between lessons; when there is queuing; the lavatories; on minibuses; the all-weather surface; other play areas; the changing rooms; the dining hall and sports hall.

- We use Assemblies to regularly raise the subject of bullying and its supreme undesirability.

- Our PSHE and Tutor Programme are designed to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. The Programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other, including examples set by staff and older pupils and the celebration of success. Pupils' understanding of the seriousness with which the School deals with proven cases of bullying through the sanctions that could be applied by the School's Behaviour Management Policy is also developed through the PSHE and Tutor Programme.

- We support the national annual 'Anti-Bullying Week' and run activities in Tutor Groups specifically linked to this.

- Other lessons or activities, particularly Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies, Drama and PSHE, highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.

- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place.

- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated as a matter of urgency by an appropriate member of staff. Even if the incident is not dealt with personally by the Executive Head, the Senior Deputy Head and Deputy Head Pastoral, they are made aware of all alleged incidents of bullying. The Senior Deputy Head retains a record of these to enable the School to be aware of any emerging patterns to develop pro-active strategies to avoid bullying. We always monitor reported incidents. The Board of Governors review these records through safeguarding reports to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying culture.

- The Pastoral Team reviews and recommends any new initiatives to strengthen the School's Anti- Bullying Policy.

- The Tutors and Heads of Year who support the Senior Leadership Team are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority and are alert to possible signs of bullying.

- Our Pastoral Team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.

- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the School site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour. We raise staff awareness of any proven bullying incidents through our weekly staff meetings and pastoral meetings.

- Our Library/Sick Bay displays advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Childline.

- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, including on- line, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils.

- Staff training in implementing the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and understanding our legal responsibility is undertaken through the weekly full teaching staff meetings, participation in assemblies, house meetings and tutor groups. In addition, support and feedback meetings can be undertaken with individual staff members seeking guidance or advice. Internal Anti-bullying training is undertaken with all teaching staff members and other relevant members of staff and regular INSETS are held.

- Regular pastoral meetings are held where individual pupils and issues can be raised.

Any feedback received from staff members, parents or guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures are reviewed by the Executive Head, the Senior Deputy Head and Deputy Head Pastoral and responded to accordingly.

Record Keeping, Record Retention and Information Sharing

Records of any investigations into alleged incidents of bullying are retained on the School Database, in line with the School's Data Protection Policy, the SHS Data Retention Policy and the Pupil Privacy Notices. The SDH also retains records of all investigations into alleged incidents of bullying and as a school are obliged to share accurate records with senior schools through their transition documentation. Please do refer to the Pupil Privacy Notices in the Key Information Section of the School Website, under Policies and Privacy Notices:

https://www.shrewsburyhouse.net/policies

- Shrewsbury House School ensures that all records relating to any matters concerning alleged incidents of bullying are securely stored.
- These records are routinely kept for a minimum of 7 years after the pupil (s) they relate to has/have left the School.
- Subject to the circumstances around the investigations, it is possible for the records to be retained for longer, e.g. for 25 years from the date of birth of any pupils involved.
- If there are any safeguarding considerations in relation to any investigations around pupil conduct, it is possible that these records will be retained for longer in accordance with the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- In line with the School's Pupil Privacy Notice, details of any investigations into potential incidents of bullying are shared with the Independent Schools Inspectorate, when they inspect the School and may also be shared with any future schools, if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the welfare of the pupil(s) concerned.
- In certain very serious circumstances, information may be shared with the police or other third parties such as the School's insurance company.