Forres Sandle Manor (Non-Academic) Policy

Policy Title	**Anti-Bullying**
Policy Lead (Appointment (& Initials))	**Deputy Head (LM)**
Date of Last Review	**Sept 2026**
Date of Next Review	**Sept 2027**

ANTI-BULLYING

Written with due regard to DfE *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (2017), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and SEND Code of Practice (2024) advice. The DCSF Publication *Safe to Learn, Don't Suffer in Silence* is also used as guidance. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding policy, Pupil Behaviour Management Policy, E-Safety Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy.

INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a serious matter and is treated as such at FSM. We wholeheartedly agree with and endeavour to achieve the following statement taken from the DCSF Safe to Learn guidance.

"Every child should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported."

It is our firm belief that 'Happy Children Succeed'' and providing pupils with a safe and calm environment free from disruption is crucial to this.

This policy aims:

- To ensure all board members, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.
- To ensure that all pupils and staff work in an environment free from humiliation, intimidation and abuse and to prevent bullying in all its forms.
- In accordance with The Equality Act 2010, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimization and any other conduct prohibited by the act. Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- To give pupils strategies for creating a supportive environment, and for dealing with bullying when it occurs.
- To give governors, staff and parents a coherent system and strategies for recognising and dealing with bullying when it occurs.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Under the Children Act (1989, 2004, 2017(social work) 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, FSM staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, FSM 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 engaging in bullying.

CRIMINAL LAW

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.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is an emotive term. The Government defines bullying as: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally." Children are apt to treat each other harshly from time to time and children are most commonly bullied because of a real or perceived 'difference'. However, the reasons can be far more obscure. Bullying is often identified as a pattern of antisocial and vindictive behaviour, but sometimes that pattern is difficult to identify. The fact is, though, that any act of harsh, unkind, or unpleasant behaviour between children could be the seed of what is commonly known as bullying and must therefore be treated seriously by all teachers and be seen for what it is by all children. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating. It must also be recognised that bullying can be child to child, teacher to pupil or pupil to teacher.

Bullying can be:

Verbal	Name calling, offensive comments about looks / colour / shape / nationality /family / gender/ skills / intelligence; teasing, sarcasm, spreading rumours, mocking, imitating.
Physical	Hitting, pushing, pinching, kicking, punching, any physical contact which causes discomfort or distress, gestures.
Indirect	Exclusion, subject to malicious rumours or gossip, hiding or taking belongings.
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, focusing on the issue of sexuality.
Gender, sexual orientation, homophobic or transphobic	Remarks, written or spoken, inferring personal criticism based on the above. e.g. "You big girl!" to a boy; "You're gay!" etc.

Cyber	Threats / unpleasant comments / questions via text messages, e-mail, chat rooms, websites (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, ask.com) Posting photos or video clips without permission (See Appendix 1).
Racial or religious	Gratuitous and offensive remarks about race, ethnicity, nationality or religion (even those not directed personally at an individual) but intended to hurt or discriminate.
References To Disability/SEN	References to those with disabilities intended to hurt, humiliate or exclude.
References to adoption/care	References to those that are adopted, in care or have caring responsibilities.

Staff must also be aware of those children who may be vulnerable pupils; those coming from troubled families, or those responding to emotional problems or mental health issues which may bring about a propensity to be unkind to others, or may make them more likely to fall victim to the behaviour of others.

The impact of bullying here can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the pupil.

Whilst it is important to define bullying and to understand the reasons for people's harsh treatment of each other, in the context of an anti-bullying policy the crucial perspective for the school community to adopt, is that of the victim. What the victim suffers will be the paramount concern of teachers, children and parents.

BULLYING WHICH OCCURS OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

The act of bullying is one that is not just found within the School. Bullying can be perpetuated outside of the School, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips (including cyber bullying). It can take place in group activities and between families in the local community all of which might then impact on School life.

School staff members have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. However, staff should note that they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING

The effects of bullying are severe and can often continue long into adulthood. Those working with children have a duty to prevent it, and to take incidents seriously if they occur. When left unaccounted for, bullying doesn't just have a negative impact on the target but everyone who is exposed to the environment in which it occurs.

Children who are bullied are more likely to:

- Have low self-esteem.
- Develop depression or anxiety.
- Become socially withdrawn, isolated or lonely.
- Have lower academic achievements due to avoiding or becoming disengaged with school.
- Be unable to form trusting, healthy relationships with friends or partners in future.
- They may keep their concerns to themselves more.

Children who bully are more likely to:

- Drop out or be expelled from school.
- Engage in criminal behaviour.
- Develop depression or anxiety.
- Be abusive to their partners, spouses or children as adults.
- Continue if action is not taken.

Children who witness bullying are more likely to feel:

- Powerless.
- Upset.
- Live in fear and guilt.

In dealing with cases of suspected or proven bullying the future welfare of the victim and the education of the bully must be our first priority.

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

FSM's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. Our anti-bullying policy, if it is to be effective, will involve the whole school community and be everyone's responsibility. With that in mind, and with reference to *Don't Suffer in Silence*, *Safe to Learn* and *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (2017) time is regularly devoted in Assemblies, Tutor Time, Lifeskills, and at meetings of the School and Boarding Councils to raising the issue of bullying within the school, and creating an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Our House system is used to promote positive behaviour and peer/staff support. The *FSM core* values, specifically, Respect, Responsibility and Kindness are key tenets in our daily undertakings.

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole FSM environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

Duty staff are employed around the school to reduce the risk of bullying occurring at specific times and places. Regular surveying of the children also informs our policy with regards locations of note, times of the day etc.

All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. Pupils are made familiar with our Anti-Bullying Code (see Appendices) and understand that it is everyone's responsibility to prevent bullying. Pupils are encouraged to speak out and while the main channel of communication on any pastoral issue is through the pupil's Form Tutor; all children are encouraged to approach any member of staff for advice or support.

Pupils are given opportunities to discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference, as well as different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. Pupils are also taught that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable.

Parents are made aware of FSM's policy and procedures to follow if they believe their child is being bullied.

FSM also participates in external initiatives and events such as Anti-Bullying week as a means of further raising awareness.

We aim to publish Children's emergency help line telephone numbers in every room of the school and Boarders' rooms and communal areas.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Within that context, our strategy will encompass the following:

VIGILANCE

Staff are naturally vigilant in the course of their duties within and outside the classroom, gathering information about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This is particularly important within the boarding house, where we pride ourselves in ensuring that there are no 'initiation ceremonies' intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation. It is our policy, as Class teachers, Form Teachers/Tutors, to consider all children within the context of our anti-bullying policy before each staff meeting and to raise any concerns, however minor, with the staff as a whole and the Head teacher, SLT, Key stage coordinators and Head of Pre-Prep in particular. All children within the context of our anti-bullying policy are also discussed at our weekly pupils of concern meeting.

Problems of bullying may manifest themselves in pupils by changes in behaviour such as:

- School phobia or unwillingness to attend school.
- Personality change: 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.
- Equipment, bags and other belongings being damaged or going missing.

- A change in established habits or withdrawal from favourite activities.
- Diminished levels of self-confidence.
- Frequent visits to the matrons with minor ailments.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Frequent absence or lateness.
- Choosing the company of adults.
- Anxiety, anger or other extremes of emotion.
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares.
- Harsh self-criticism or self-bullying.
- Unhappy but refusing to disclose what is wrong.
- Talking of or acting on self-harming, suicide or running away.

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible indications of bullying should be investigated by staff and parents as a matter of urgency.

Time is devoted at Pre-Prep, Prep School and Senior staff meetings to discuss any such concerns. If serious matters arise staff are bound to report these to Senior Leadership immediately. Any significant antisocial behaviour is likely to be addressed jointly, as soon as possible after the event with parent, child and the appropriate member of staff.

Open lines of communication are maintained through email, CPOMS, SchoolBase, formal and informal meetings and everyday contact.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff by the victim(s), other pupils, their or others' parent(s) or other interested people.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

Students

- Any student who witnesses or is involved in an act of bullying or violence is encouraged to tell a staff member at school, and should tell an adult at home.
- Reporting bullying should be an easy process and staff should ensure that pupils feel listened to and their concerns valued.
- Guarantee of confidentiality if you are a witness who is reporting, unless to do so endangers the safety of the individual/s.
- Students can refer to posters that outline the steps to take to report incidents of violence and bullying.
- Incidents of cyber bullying must be reported and a print of the communication should be given to a member of staff.

Parents

- Communicate with the teacher (email, phone).
- The teacher will communicate with the Key Stage Coordinator and/or the Deputy Heads if the incident needs to be reported.
- The teacher will take necessary actions and will report back to the parents.
- Parents may always communicate with the School Office if they wish to do so at any time.

In the case of cyber-bullying, parents, victims or witnesses should always print a copy of the communication to report an incident.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Once a concern has been highlighted, a staff member must respond to the situation. Discussion between staff and/or children will take place to establish facts where possible. The aim at this stage is to decide the appropriate action to take.

PLANNING/IMPLEMENTATION

It may be that, following discussion, no further action is deemed necessary. This being the case, the plan will be to monitor and report back to future meetings until staff are agreed that the matter is completely resolved.

When a concern is proved to have substance, a plan is agreed to correct the situation and to lay positive foundations for the future**.** The trust and agreement of the victim must be secured before the bully is approached. Whilst it is ideal to keep the victim anonymous in investigations, this may not always be possible as examples may need to be discussed. Depending on the seriousness of the case the staff involved might be the Tutor/Form Teacher, Key Stage Coordinator, Deputy Heads (Heads of Prep/Senior), Head of Pre-Prep or the Head.

If a problem persists, the parents of victim and bully are likely to be informed and their support enlisted as part of an integrated plan once this has been agreed by the staff. The integrated approach must, above all, be presented to all concerned as a positive exercise with a defined aim. Any punishment deemed appropriate will be the responsibility of the school and will be implemented promptly by the Senior Leadership Team at the time of discovery.

MONITORING

Monitoring of victims and bullies, once identified, will, ideally, happen on a daily and informal basis and certainly via weekly staff meetings more formally. Parents will be contacted as necessary. All staff must further document any moderate to severe act of violence or any act of bullying. Repeated minor incidents should also be recorded in order to plan further intervention for identified students. These should be recorded on CPOMS.

REPORTING/RECORDING

An ongoing record of Bullying incidents is maintained by the Deputy Head and this is reviewed at least termly, in conjunction with the Head. Letters, file notes, welfare concern reports and minutes of staff meetings will be the record of concerns raised. Any individual plans of action will be kept in the files of the children concerned.

FURTHER INCIDENTS

Should it become clear that initial discussions and, where they have been applied, punishments have failed to resolve the situation and that bullying continues, then the following procedures will be adopted:

- The bully or bullies will be spoken to by the Head to make it clear that the issue is now more serious and that sterner sanctions will now take effect. A second member of staff should be present and the bully may have a friend with him/her.
- At the same time, parents of the bully/ies are to be informed that their children have had the position explained to them. This can be done in person, by telephone or, if necessary, by email.
- A meeting between parents, Head/Head of Pre Prep/SLT and bully/ies can be called at this stage. A second member of staff should be present. Any relevant documentation should be available to all at the meeting. The meeting should be minuted and copies made available to all present.

It is essential, at this stage that both parents and bullies are made aware of the consequences of a further incident of bullying.

Another incident is likely to result in a suspension from school, following which further bullying is likely to result in permanent exclusion from school.

SUPPORT

Supervisory or support measures for any student who is a victim of bullying, for a witness and for a perpetrator.

Victim

In all cases FSM has a responsibility to support children who are bullied and make appropriate provision for a child's needs. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher that knows the pupil well, asking the pastoral team to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents, referring to local authority children's services, or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

- An adult will determine the severity and frequency of the incident (s) through a discussion with the student. The adult may be the classroom teacher, Tutor, Key Stage Coordinator, Deputy Heads or another adult with whom the student is comfortable talking.
- The Deputy Head (whole school) is advised of each and every complaint and incident by either the alleged victim or adult who saw or was told of the incident in question.

- Hold follow-up meetings with the student and the assigned staff member (in order to ensure the bullying has stopped and to provide support to the victim). Documentation of the follow-up is necessary.
- Those in contact with the alleged victim are made aware of the incident to ensure that the student is safe.
- It is important to recognise that unlike day pupils, boarding pupils will find it difficult to get a natural escape/space from a bully (if they are in the boarding house). Care should be taken to give the victim the space that they need. This may include changing sleeping arrangements and communal areas.
- Parents are informed immediately following the incident and regularly updated until the situation is resolved.
- Referral for counselling or further assistance is requested when appropriate.

FSM will do all they can to ensure any bullied child continues to attend school. In addition to the examples of support listed above, this could include using separate on-site provision that provides respite for bullied pupils, whilst maintaining their educational progression. It is important that this support goes hand-in-hand with measures to tackle the bullying so that bullied children feel safe at FSM, and on their way to and from FSM.

Should alternative provision be in a child's best interests we will work in line with the DfE advice as set out in Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017).

Bystander

- Following an incident, a discussion is held with any bystanders to evaluate the incident/situation and their role in it.
- Depending on the severity of the incident, bystanders are met, in a group or individually, to debrief the event, discuss their role and to determine more appropriate actions in the future.
- Consequences are applied, if appropriate for students that are actively involved in encouraging the incident.
- Parents will be contacted by the Deputy Head when appropriate.

Perpetrator

- Managed by the staff who intervened and the incident is reported to the Deputy Head.
- The adult who intervenes or who is told of an incident makes a report to the Deputy Head that includes a request for a follow-up investigation.
- Once an investigation has been completed and the incident is confirmed to be bullying, the Deputy Head or appointed delegate meets with the alleged perpetrator. The perpetrator is told of the report, discusses the incident and is given a consequence.
- The perpetrator's parents are contacted and informed of the incident and the consequences. The parents may be asked to come to school for a follow-up meeting.

- In the event of an incident involving the bullying of a student by an adult, the incident must be reported immediately to the Head who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- In the event of an incident involving the bullying of a student by the Head, the incident must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Board who will contact the LADO, without the Head being informed.

See also: Pupil *Behaviour Management Policy*

STAFF TRAINING

In order for the principles and purpose of FSM's policy to be best followed the school will provide effective and regular training. This may take place through In Service training or through out of school courses.

ANNUAL REVIEW

As a school, we review this policy at least annually.

FSM monitors and evaluates its Anti-Bullying Policy through the following activities:

- Detailed incidents on CPOMS to keep a running record of incidents and actions.
- Bullying Log and Termly review
- Directors visiting to the school
- Informal discussion sessions with children and staff.
- Pupil questionnaires
- Pupil consultation
- External advisors.

FURTHER LINKS, RESOURCES & POLICIES

Further information can be found in the following policies and publications which support and safeguard children's welfare and FSM's legal responsibilities:

- *DfE: Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance.*
- *Mental health and behaviour in schools advice for school staff*
- *Counselling in schools a blueprint for the future: advice for school leaders and counsellors*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*
- *Working together to safeguard children*
- *Education Act (2002)*
- *Education and Inspections Act (2006).*
- *Every Child Matters*
- *National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools*
- *The Anti-Bullying Alliance* organisation.
- *The Equality Act (2010).*

- *Kidscape*
- *NSPCC*
- Young Minds charity
- FSM Lifeskills and RSE Policy
- FSM E-safety Policy
- FSM Safeguarding and Welfare Policy
- FSM Child Protection Policy
- FSM Staff Code of Conduct
- FSM Complaints Log

APPENDIX 1
Appropriate sanctions to punish bullying:

Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and 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.

Students who adopt behaviours of intimidation or violence are liable to the following disciplinary actions, after assessing the situation (duration, frequency, intensity, gravity)

- Discussion between the victim and the adult who witnesses or is told of the incident. Adult decides no further follow-up is required.
- Detention of the perpetrator: during this time there is a discussion between the perpetrator and the supervising staff member about the incident and how to better deal with similar situations should they occur.
- “Time out.” Sitting quietly, in isolation, to reflect on what went wrong (How could I have avoided getting into this situation? How could I have handled this situation better? Did I mean to hurt him/her? How can I make him/her feel better?)
- Supervision of the perpetrator during free time; i.e. must be shadowed by a supervisor during break time.
- Withdrawal from favoured activities, to include some attention to the questions asked above).
- Loss of break-times for an agreed period (as above).
- A period of internal suspension (for one or more days, as deemed necessary).
- Suspension from boarding (if appropriate).
- A formal suspension from school.
- Expulsion.
- Involvement of the Police.

APPENDIX 2

ANTI-BULLYING CODE FOR PUPILS

Everybody at FSM has the right to enjoy each day free from intimidation, unkind actions or remarks in school.

Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time and in circumstances where the relationships involve an imbalance of power." Anti-Bullying Alliance.

It is everyone's responsibility to prevent bullying! We must all help each other to be happy by reporting ALL bullying.

Do you know someone who is being bullied?

What should you do?

1) TELL SOMEBODY – ANY member of staff
   A parent or someone you can trust
   A friend
   Anyone on the list of contacts displayed around the school
2) Show bullies that you don't like what they are doing.
3) Try to help and support children you see being bullied.
4) Don't become a bully. Even teasing remarks can hurt.

Are you being bullied? What should you do?

1) TELL SOMEBODY –
   ANY member of staff
   A parent or someone you can trust
   A friend
   Anyone on the list of contacts displayed around the school
   Call the National Bullying Helpline – 0300 323 0169
2) Try to ignore the bully.
3) Walk away quickly and confidently (even if you are afraid inside).
4) Stay with your friends and say NO to the bully.
5) Try not to be alone where you could be bullied.
6) If you are different in any way, be PROUD of it. It is good to be an individual. There is nothing wrong with you!

REMEMBER! IT IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PREVENT BULLYING.

APPENDIX 3

ANTI-BULLYING ADVICE FOR STAFF

Everybody at FSM has the right to enjoy each day free from intimidation, unkind actions or remarks in school.

We must help all children to be happy by listening to ALL reports of bullying.

What should you do?

1) Be familiar with the school's *Anti-Bullying Policy* and the procedures/strategies to be followed.

2) Watch for early signs of distress in pupils – deterioration of work, a pattern of illness, isolation, depression, desire to stay with an adult, reluctance to go out a break times, etc. Write any concerns on CPOMS and inform the Form Tutor and/or the Key Stage coordinator/ Deputy Heads.

3) Listen carefully and record all incidents of unkindness and bullying on CPOMS (Sanctions will need to be logged on school base).

4) Offer the victim immediate support and help by putting the school's procedures into operation.

5) Ensure you are vigilant as you move around the school, especially when on duty, and ensure your class is attended at all times, particularly at the beginning of each lesson.

6) Use pupils as a resource to help counter bullying e.g. ensure mentors help new pupils.

7) When a problem has been resolved, check with the victim (and bully) at intervals to ensure the incident has not reoccurred.

REMEMBER

IT IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PREVENT BULLYING

APPENDIX 4

Things you can do if your child is being bullied

1. **Listen** – Try to listen to the whole story without interrupting. Be empathic, calm and validate what is being said. Ask what your child would like to happen, before you make suggestions.

2. **Talk** – Have a conversation about what happened. Try not to make the conversation intense or you might deter your child from talking to you. Remind your child it's normal to feel hurt, it's never OK be bullied, and it's NOT their fault.

3. **Find out what is happening** – Note what, when and where the bullying occurred, who was involved, how often and if anybody else witnessed it. Don't offer to confront the person yourself.

4. **Contact the school** - Check your schools bullying policy. Find out if the school is aware of the bullying and whether anything has been done to address the situation. Make an appointment to speak to your child's form teacher or tutor. Try to make a follow-up appointment to ensure the situation is being addressed.

5. **Give sensible advice** – Encourage your child not to fight back, but coach them to use neutral or, if appropriate, joking language in response. Help them explore other possible responses.
    - Tell them that the behaviour was intentional and it won't just go away.
    - Explain it's safer to avoid people, places or situations that could expose them to further bullying.
    - If your child asks to stay home from school, explain that it won't help – and may make things worse.
    - If possible, help to make opportunities for them to join other groups of young people – e.g. clubs at school or other groups outside of school time.