



SENSES Learning Hub

Anti Bullying Policy

Created: 11.09.26

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Dawn Oughtibridge (Director)

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John Fox (Director)

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We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated at Senses Learning Hub. If bullying does occur, all students are encouraged to report incidents to a trusted adult and it will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

This policy is informed by the Department for Education's current guidance on preventing and tackling bullying, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, the Equality Act 2010, the Children Act 1989, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 where applicable, and relevant safeguarding and online safety guidance. As an alternative provision, SENSES Learning Hub is committed to applying these principles proportionately to our setting and to ensuring that bullying is considered within our wider safeguarding, behaviour and child protection arrangements. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 is statutory guidance currently in force from 1 September 2026 and reinforces that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that children may be at risk of harm both inside and outside education and online.

What is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying. The Department for Education describes bullying as behaviour that is usually repeated, intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally and is often directed towards particular groups or characteristics. Bullying can take place in person or online and can have a significant impact on a young person's wellbeing, attendance, engagement and sense of safety.

Bullying can be, but not exclusive to:

- Emotional: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, for example hiding books or belongings, threatening gestures or deliberately isolating someone
- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: Racial taunts, racist language, graffiti, gestures or other behaviour relating to race or ethnicity
- Sexual: Unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, sexualised name calling, sexual harassment, sharing sexualised images or taking or sharing intimate images without consent, including upskirting
- Homophobic: Unfriendly, hurtful or excluding behaviour due to someone's sexuality or perceived sexuality
- Biphobic or transphobic: Hurtful, threatening, excluding or abusive behaviour relating to someone's sexual orientation, gender identity or perceived gender identity
- Verbal: Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, threats or deliberately humiliating someone
- Discriminatory: Bullying or harassment relating to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Cyber: Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, messaging services, online platforms or gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved. Online bullying can include abusive messages, exclusion from online groups, sharing photographs or videos

without consent, impersonation, threats, harassment, spreading rumours and encouraging others to target an individual.

- Social and relational bullying: Deliberately excluding, isolating or humiliating another young person, manipulating friendships, encouraging others not to associate with someone or deliberately damaging someone's reputation
- Bullying involving staff: Bullying, harassment, intimidation or abusive behaviour towards staff by students, parents, carers or others is not acceptable. SENSES Learning Hub recognises the importance of protecting staff from bullying and harassment both in person and online. The Department for Education published specific guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of education staff in July 2026.

Signs of bullying

A student may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- Doesn't want to be driven or is unwilling to come to Senses Learning Hub
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Attempts or threatens forms of self harm
- Sudden emotional outbursts
- Feels ill in the morning
- Regresses academically
- Comes in with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Increased time on social media/devices
- Becomes particularly anxious about using or checking their phone or other devices
- Appears distressed following messages, social media activity or online gaming
- Becomes secretive about online activity
- Appears worried about photographs, videos or other content being shared online
- Withdraws from social interaction or particular activities
- Shows changes in attendance, engagement, mood or behaviour which may indicate that they feel unsafe

These signs and behaviours are not always exclusive to bullying but it is important to consider bullying as a possibility. They may also indicate other safeguarding or wellbeing concerns. Staff should therefore avoid making assumptions and should listen to the young person, consider the wider context and follow SENSES Learning Hub safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff immediately
2. Incidents of bullying will be recorded by staff

3. All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated sensitively. Staff will listen to the young person and establish, as far as possible, what has happened, who is involved, whether the behaviour is ongoing and whether there are any wider safeguarding concerns.
4. In some cases parents/carers will be informed and possibly asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
5. Where appropriate, information may also be shared with the student's placing school, local authority or other relevant professional in accordance with safeguarding, information sharing and data protection requirements.
6. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken to ensure that the behaviour stops
7. Where behaviour involves violence, threats, harassment, hate crime, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, exploitation or another potentially criminal matter, SENSES Learning Hub will consider whether a referral to the police or relevant safeguarding agency is necessary.
8. If necessary and parents/carers of the child who has fallen victim to bullying may deem it appropriate to contact the police
9. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
10. Where a student has been involved in bullying behaviour, the aim will be to understand the underlying reasons for the behaviour, provide appropriate support and help the student develop safer and more respectful ways of interacting with others.
11. Where an allegation or concern relates to a member of staff, the matter will be managed in accordance with SENSES Learning Hub safeguarding procedures, staff code of conduct and relevant procedures for allegations against staff.

Where bullying involves sexual harassment or sexual violence, SENSES Learning Hub will respond in accordance with its safeguarding and child protection procedures and the expectations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Sexual harassment and sexual violence will never be dismissed as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or normal behaviour.

Outcomes

1. The bully (bullies) will be asked to apologise in a restorative conversation where this is considered appropriate and safe for all involved. A restorative approach will not be used where it could place the victim at further risk or cause additional distress
2. Parent/carer meetings
3. In serious cases, Senses Learning Hub has the right to consider suspension, a reduction or alteration of provision or removal from the provision in accordance with the student's placement arrangements and SENSES Learning Hub policies
4. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place again
5. Senses Learning Hub has the right to offer an alternative day a child may access the provision if bullying occurs where this is considered appropriate to maintain the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff
6. Additional support, supervision, individual targets or other appropriate interventions may be put in place for the student who has experienced bullying and the student responsible for the bullying behaviour

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7. Where bullying has involved online content, SENSES Learning Hub may support the young person and their family to report content to the relevant platform and consider appropriate safeguarding or external referrals.

Prevention

1. Talk the issue through with the young person
2. Creating targets for the young person
3. Signing a behaviour contract
4. Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
5. Reading stories about bullying or having them read to the class
6. Making up role-plays
7. Having discussions about bullying and why it matters
8. Promoting kindness, respect, inclusion, empathy and positive relationships between students
9. Helping students understand the impact of their behaviour on others and developing appropriate strategies for managing conflict and strong emotions
10. Providing age appropriate opportunities to discuss online safety, cyberbullying, social media, digital footprints, consent and respectful online communication
11. Ensuring that students understand that sharing photographs, videos or other personal information about another person without their consent can cause harm and may have safeguarding or legal consequences
12. Creating an environment where students feel able to speak to trusted adults about bullying, harassment or anything that makes them feel unsafe
13. Considering the individual needs of students with SEND when responding to or preventing bullying. Staff will recognise that communication difficulties, social communication differences, anxiety or other additional needs may affect how a young person experiences, communicates or responds to bullying. This will be considered alongside the need to maintain clear and safe boundaries around behaviour.

SENSES Learning Hub recognises that children and young people with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to bullying, social exclusion and exploitation. Staff will consider individual communication needs and provide appropriate opportunities for students to report concerns in a way that is accessible and comfortable for them. Any safeguarding concern will be dealt with in accordance with the SENSES Learning Hub safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Anti Bullying Organisations and helplines for children and parents/carers

Young Minds - <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/bullying/>

Kidscape - <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-young-people>

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

Bullying UK (Family Lives) - <https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/bullying>

Review Log

Review date	Completed by who
20.08.25	John Fox and Dawn Oughtibridge
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