



# **Anti-bullying Policy**

(updated January 2016)

## Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a safe and friendly environment where all of our students are able to learn and achieve and fulfil their potential free from bullying. Our expectation is that all students and staff will behave in an appropriate and socially acceptable way. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Stoke Park School. If bullying does occur all students should be able to inform a member of staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All members of staff have a duty of care and a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all students. There is a consistent approach to how bullying is dealt with. Parents are involved at the earliest opportunity and students are encouraged and taught to develop effective personal strategies to solve any issues.

### Ofsted statement:

“Students say that bullying is rare. The school’s records show that any incidents of bullying are tackled and dealt with efficiently. Assemblies, posters around the school and personal, social, health and citizenship lessons give a high profile to anti-bullying week, and teach students about the different forms of bullying and its consequences. This includes use of discriminatory and homophobic language.”

## The aims and objectives of this policy

- To make it possible for students to experience the school as a caring, supportive learning environment, free from bullying
- To create an atmosphere of tolerance, mutual respect, co-operation and consideration of others to enable students to feel safe from fear and threats
- To ensure that all students feel valued, ensuring progress in students’ attainment, students’ attitudes and their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development
- To accept that it is everyone’s responsibility to prevent all forms of bullying
- To involve all staff, students and parents in promoting and following the policy and in the referral of bullying incidents

## Other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following; Behaviour for Learning Policy, Equality Statement, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Equipment and Valuables Policy (use of mobile phones) and our e-Safety Policy

## Definition of Bullying

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Usually there is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves”

Bullying can take a range of forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, SEND, disability or whether the child is adopted, looked after or has caring responsibilities.

### Bullying can be:

- Social / Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding or attempting to exclude from friendship groups, tormenting, intimidation, making threatening gestures
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - focusing on the issue of sexuality or gender (transphobic)

- Verbal - humiliation, teasing, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, making insulting remarks
- Cyber - bullying by electronic media to include all areas of internet misuse such as emails, internet chatrooms, instant messaging, the posting of threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material to social media sites or personal websites, hi-jacking of email accounts for malicious use, the misuse of mobile telephones to make threats, send abusive texts or calls, the misuse of mobile phone cameras and associated technology to cause distress, fear or humiliation. Bringing a phone into school is a privilege. Repeated misuse of a mobile phone in school will result in the loss of this privilege. Such misuse includes using social media to insult, intimidate and spread rumours, all of which detract from our focus on learning

### Legal stance on cyber bullying

Cyber- bullying is generally criminal in character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites. Section 127 of the Communications Act of 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communication network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

We encourage parents to be aware of what their child is posting and uploading online and to monitor the use of social media. We advise all parents to contact the police if incidents of cyber-bullying occur outside of school hours. Advice for parents and students on how to tackle cyber-bullying is available from reception in our “Keeping yourself Safe” leaflet and via the link below:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/article-repository/Reporting-to-social-media-sites-/>

### Signs of bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Staff and parents should be aware of these possible signs and where they see repeated or multiple symptoms they should investigate further. Behaviour patterns that might indicate a cause for concern include when a child:

- Is frightened of walking to and from school
- Doesn't want to go to school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual route to school
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide
- Runs away from home
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the mornings
- Starts to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with torn clothes or damaged property
- Has possessions that are damaged or “go missing”
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay a bully)
- Has lunch money that goes missing (see above)
- Comes home hungry
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong

- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- Will not let parents see their cyber messages

## Roles and responsibilities

- All students must know that they will be listened to and believed and that the response of the school will be swift, effective and sensitive to their concerns. It is the responsibility of the students to report the incident in the first instance to either a member of staff or a Breakthrough bullying mentor.
- The Head teacher has ultimate responsibility for the well-being of all of the students at Stoke Park School and has responsibility for the safeguarding of all students.
- All staff, students, parents and governors must be aware of the policy and share responsibility for upholding its aims and objectives. All staff complete Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying training
- Form tutors should address minor incidents and friendship disagreements, ensuring that the situation is dealt with swiftly and efficiently.
- All bullying incidents or suspicions of bullying should be reported to the Head of Year and /or Pastoral Manager who will decide if the incident is bullying according to our definition and will ensure that the situation is thoroughly investigated to clarify the facts and to ensure that a conclusion can be reached. These incidents will be recorded
- All reported incidents will be recorded on Behaviour Manager by the member of staff investigating the incident and relevant sanctions will be put in place. Where a process of restorative justice is required, the Pastoral Manager will initially instigate this.
- Careful consideration of all circumstances will be made before sanctions or follow-up actions are decided. This will, in the vast majority of cases, involve the parents / carers of both the alleged bully and victim being informed at the earliest opportunity where this is deemed appropriate by the Head of Year.
- Serious or persistent cases of bullying will be referred to a member of Senior Leadership and could lead to a period of isolation or a fixed term exclusion.

## Investigating and Reporting bullying incidents

- The member of staff responsible for investigating the incident should collect all relevant evidence to support the investigation. This evidence will include separate statements from the victim and alleged perpetrator and any witness statements. The evidence may also include staff or parent/carer statement, CCTV footage, electronic evidence and evidence from previous related incidents.
- The investigating member of staff will ensure distinction between incidents of bullying and other types of incident such as a falling out with friends
- All information will be used in the swift resolution of an incident and will be passed to the appropriate staff to deal with.

- Where victims and perpetrators have been identified parents / carers will be informed
- Where there exists “reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm” the information will be shared with the Senior designated Child Protection Office in accordance with the Safeguarding Children’s Board
- Where incidents are of a racist nature the incident will be recorded on the appropriate Coventry City Council documentation
- Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on in conjunction with the parents /carers. The parents should consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police in their local authority of the incident and this may lead to involvement of the school in relaying prior actions taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.
- In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying the teacher can only discipline the student on school premises.

### Sanctions for bullying

If necessary the full range of sanctions detailed in the Behaviour for Learning Policy can be used. In dealing with incidents of bullying special consideration should be made in cases regarding special needs or family difficulties and taking into account the needs of vulnerable students.

Each incident will be treated according to its severity using all available evidence and with regard to evidence from previous incidents relating to the investigation. The Head of Year will log the incident on Behaviour Manager and decide if the incident is a case of bullying. Sanctions will be consistently applied based on the type, frequency and severity of the bullying incident.

Where bullying persists, the level of sanction will increase.

Sanctions may include:

- Parental /carer engagement
- Removal from a class / group for a period of time
- Report cards with form tutor / Head of Year / Senior Leadership Team
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Parental responsibility for lunchtime supervision
- Detention
- Withholding participation in school events and activities that are not an essential part of the curriculum
- The use of restorative justice with pastoral managers or local police officers
- Isolation
- Fixed term exclusions
- Police involvement
- Alternative provision for individual support and learning

Work with victims of bullying may include:

- Assurance that the student was right to report the incident and reassurance that the bullying was not their fault
- Encouragement to talk about the effects of the incident and how the student feels
- Discussion on the strategies the student can employ to keep themselves safe
- Advising the student on strategies for dealing with any further incidents
- Affirmation that bullying can be stopped and that the school will persist with intervention

- The offer of choices about how the matter may be resolved
- A support programme with their pastoral manager to re-assure and support the student emotionally during a set period which may be extended depending on need
- Restorative justice meetings where appropriate
- Referral to counselling with outside agencies or involvement in anger management or self-esteem group work

### Education of those bullying others may include:

- Actively challenging the behaviour and discussing the motivation behind the incident to identify whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.
- The teacher or pastoral manager will openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality.
- Where deemed necessary the School will use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems.
- Restorative justice meetings between the victim and perpetrator
- Involvement in anti-bullying activities and workshops within the curriculum

### Proactive measures to prevent bullying

At Stoke Park School we are in agreement that prevention is better than cure and therefore we strive to create an inclusive, safe environment where students can openly discuss bullying and create a whole school ethos to reduce / eliminate incidents of bullying.

- By proactively seeking to celebrate success to create a positive school culture
- By providing a comprehensive PSHE programme that includes; opportunities to explore bullying as a topic, that encourages open discussion on issues related to prejudice and discrimination and examines the topic of social media and its misuse.
- By the promotion of e-safety across the school through ICT, PSHE, tutorials and assemblies and actively engaging parents in strategies to keep their child safe online
- Whole school teaching methods encourage all students to work co-operatively in lessons and extra-curricular activities
- By raising awareness of the issues of bullying, to restate expectations of behaviour and to promote Anti-bullying week annually in November
- By encouraging positive behaviour at all times, through the implementation of student non-negotiables and rewarding positive attitudes and behaviours
- The use Sixth Form students as Breakthrough Bullying mentors on duty at lunchtimes and Sixth Form students working as year 7 Tutor Buddies and classroom support assistants to support students
- Where appropriate Form Tutors provide opportunities for discussion on issues related to relationships and consideration of strategies for dealing with difficulties
- Student Council discussions on the topic of bullying
- Every opportunity is taken to reinforce the policy and state the School's opposition to bullying within assemblies

### Monitoring and review of the policy and practice

The School will regularly monitor current practice through a range of systems to ensure that the policy and the school procedures are clear and effective in preventing and dealing with bullying incidents. The School will regularly evaluate and update the policy and practice to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers. Monitoring will include student and parental surveys, analysis of behaviour, isolation and exclusion data on a weekly basis by the Senior Leadership Team, feedback from student council meetings and staff meetings.