

Title: Anti-Bullying Policy		Policy Lead: RWA	Page: [6]
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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The governors and staff at Stoke College are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all members of the school community, including those in the EYFS, so they can work and learn in a secure atmosphere. Whilst we recognise that members of the school community are generally kind and considerate and their dealings with each other, there is a need to be constantly vigilant to eliminate any instances of behaviour which is upsetting or otherwise stressful to the recipient. This policy has regard to DFE guidance on “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” 2011, updated September 2012 and October 2014.

Stoke College complies with the Equality Act 2010 which requires the school to seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Promote the 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 Equality Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, victimise or harass a student or potential student in relation to admissions, the provision of education, provision of access to any benefit, facility or service or by failure to include or subjecting them to any other form of detriment.

Statement of intent.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Stoke College. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. The school will take a pro-active and preventative stance towards bullying as well as dealing robustly with incidents of bullying that do occur.

Education around bullying issues will be included as part of the School’s PSHE programme and as part of the assemblies. Students are taught what constitutes bullying and how to report it. Staff are vigilant both within the classroom and at break time which is supervised by members of staff according to a published rota. Staff are made aware of places and times when bullying is more likely to take place are discovered and maintain their vigilance during any extra-curricular activities either on or off site.

Staff are made aware of their rights and the reporting procedures open to them should they feel that they have been subjected to bullying.

This policy is available to parents, carers and students, including boarders, on our website.

2.0 What is bullying?

Although the UK currently has no legal definition of bullying it can be seen as usually persistent unwelcome behaviour carried out by a group or an individual. A useful mnemonic is S.T.O.P. – “several times on purpose”. The behaviour can consist of using unwarranted or invalid criticism, nit-picking, fault-finding, also exclusion, isolation, being singled out and treated differently, being shouted at or humiliated. Bullying is the use of physical or emotional aggression with the intention of hurting another person.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This may involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways. It may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Threats via social media, text messaging and calls. Misuse of technology, e.g. camera and video facilities
- Focused on disability including SEN or unusually high ability: Children with SEN and disabilities may be adversely affected by negative attitudes to disability and perceptions of difference; as may highly gifted children, picked out or their differences.
- Religious or Cultural: because of different beliefs or backgrounds or family circumstances.
- Can take place on or off the school premises.

2.0 Who are the perpetrators and victims of bullying?

Bullying can be perpetrated by: Students, teachers, non-teaching staff and parents/carers.

Potential victims are: Students, teachers, non-teaching staff and parents/carers.

2.2 Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. A by-stander of a bullying incident is complicit if they do not tell anybody.

2.3 **If not dealt with** bullying will lead to one or more of the following:

1. Lack of self-confidence
2. Fear
3. Failure to concentrate on school work
4. Absence from school
5. Victim becoming a bully to those younger or weaker
6. Life-long psychological damage
7. Self-harm
8. Suicidal thoughts or vengeful behaviours

2.4 Bullying can be a safeguarding issue. To ensure the Safeguarding of 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 their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools 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. Where a bullying incident is judged to be a safeguarding issue the school's Safeguarding Policy must be followed.

2.5 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, including electronic 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. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. Contact with the police should normally be made by a member of the safeguarding team or leadership team.

2.6 Some bullying takes place outside school premises. Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Head should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. 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 pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

3.0 To prevent bullying:

3.1 **The Governing Body;** will support the Head in the development, approval and implementation of the Anti- Bullying Policy in line with the implementation of all school policies. They will receive the relevant training in order to allow them to fulfil this responsibility.

3.2 The Head will have overall responsibility for the behaviour of students and staff within the school. Together with the Senior Management Team the Head will ensure that the Behaviour Policy and the Anti-Bullying policy are established, published and understood by the school community and that such policies have the support of governors. Appropriate training will be provided for staff as part of INSET or as a result of Staff Appraisal / Disciplinary procedures. The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that such policies are reviewed on a regular basis and in line with any updates from the DfE or other approved organisations.

The Senior Leadership Team will establish systems to monitor and respond to all complaints of bullying and the outcomes of any investigations initiated as a result of complaints.

3.3 All staff must remain aware that in order to prevent bullying they must set excellent standards in their own behaviour not only to students but also to their colleagues. They should at all times avoid any behaviour that is contrary to the ethos of the school.

Staff should:

- Act consistently and fairly at all times.
- Implement the training that they are given to prevent and deal with bullying, including strategies that victims can employ to protect themselves.
- Report all incidents of bullying that they observe or are brought to their attention by others including staff, students, parents / carers or members of the public.
- Be punctual and fulfil duty rota requirements. Bullying is more likely to occur when students are unsupervised.
- Discourage name calling and respond to any unpleasant remarks.
- Be observant for students who appear unhappy or are exhibiting any behaviour that is out of character.
- Be inclusive in groupings within and outside the classroom.
- Foster an atmosphere where students feel confident to report difficulties.
- Listen attentively and respond empathetically according to procedure.
- Uphold the school's Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and E-Safety Policy.
- Contribute to the school's anti bullying education in PHSE, tutor time and assemblies.

3.4 All students must:

- Adhere to the school Behaviour Policy.
- Understand that the way their behaviour is received is not always the way in which it is intended to be received.
- Abide by the Acceptable use Policy and the E Safety Policy.
- Report any behaviour which is contrary to the ethos of the school.
- Co-operate with staff undertaking any investigations initiated under the Anti Bullying Policy including any request to view any form of electronic message or image related to the investigation.

3.5 Parents' and Carers' responsibilities are to support the school in the implementation of the Behaviour Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Acceptable Use Policy and the E-Safety Policy.

4.0 Dealing with bullying.

4.1 Pupils finding themselves victims of bullying ought to:

1. Try any strategies known by them to protect themselves including informing the nearest member of staff.
2. Tell someone they trust either verbally or in written form. This could be the form tutor, friend, member of the senior year or a parent.
3. Pupils may call CHILDLINE on 0800 11 11 or www.childline.org.uk

4.1 Who assists the victim?

Initially the person of the victim's choice.

4.2 Who deals with the bully?

When an incident is reported to a member of staff they pass the information on to the form tutor of the bully including recording the incident of the school's management information system (Wellbeing Manager). The form tutor will then deal with the incident, follow up and complete the report. They will also inform the relevant Assistant Head of the incident for consideration of further action. The Assistant Head will record all confirmed bullying incidents in the anti-bullying log. Initially the form tutor may, if this level of response is felt to be appropriate, hold a conversation with the student who is accused of bullying.

Incidents which occur in boarding will be handled in a similar way, with the Head of Boarding informed by staff of any bullying concerns. The Head of Boarding fulfils the same duties as the Assistant Heads. The students' tutors will be informed of concerns by the Head of Boarding.

The college would normally adopt a "No Blame" approach as the first strategy in dealing with any bullying concerns. The emphasis is placed upon resolution of issues and conflicts. However, in the most serious incidents or with persistent negative behaviour, the discipline system will be invoked. (See below 4.6)

4.3 Who monitors incidents?

The Bullying Incident Log will be regularly monitored by the Assistant Heads with pastoral responsibility with the Head, to see if patterns are emerging. These patterns may include;

- Recurring complaints of bullying against a particular student or group of students.
- Evidence that a particular child is becoming a target, for some reason, of bullies.
- Particular times of the day/week when bullying is tending to occur.
- Particular situations where bullying may be occurring.
- Particular individuals or groups of individuals who are perpetrating the bullying.

4.4 What happens if the form tutor cannot resolve the situation?

When the form tutor is unable to resolve the issue then a member of the SLT will need to be involved. This will normally be the Assistant Head Teacher with pastoral responsibility for the given year group of the children involved, in the first instance. Support will always be given to the victim and to the bully, who will be helped to modify their behaviour to an acceptable level.

4.5 Parents who learn of a bullying problem in the evening and feel that they need to inform the school immediately can email the relevant Assistant Head ask the Form Teacher to contact the parent at their earliest convenience the following day.

4.6 When bullying issues are not able to be resolved via normal process then the school's behaviour and discipline policy will be invoked, including the use of sanctions. Sanctions may include detentions, short and longer internal exclusions (time spent in school but excluded from the main body of the school, supervised by a senior teacher) and temporary external exclusions. Permanent exclusion may be necessary in cases of severe and persistent bullying (See Exclusion Policy).