



Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by: Pupil Wellbeing Committee

Signed: Mrs K Gillespie

Date: 14th November 2023

Review Date: November 2024

This policy extends past school to Post16 and will be reviewed in line with the changing curriculum and current needs of the pupils.

Where in the policy it says 'Stone Hill School, we are referring to Stone Hill School and Post16.

This policy outlines what our school will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying. It is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023". Our school is also a member of the AntiBullying Alliance and use their resources to support our thinking and practice. The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school/college community.

Links to legislation There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for school/colleges in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Independent School Standards (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986

Purpose

As a school, we take bullying seriously and we were awarded Doncaster's Anti-Bullying Gold Charter Mark. Pupils, parents and carers should understand that reporting bullying is essential and be assured that the school will support them fully whenever bullying is reported. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to implement the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Bullying makes people feel unsafe. Stone Hill School aims to ensure that all members of the school community feel welcome, safe and happy and so are able to learn and make progress. Bullying of any kind prevents this happening.

Stone Hill School pupils are entitled:

- to feel safe and not to be made unhappy by others
- not to be frightened by others
- not to be touched inappropriately
- not to be teased about race, religion, disability, social class, gender, personal differences, performance at school or any other matter
- not to be made unhappy by unpleasant notes, letters, posts on social media, text messages, e-mails, phone calls, any form of gossip, or by any other means.

Objectives

- To build an anti-bullying ethos in the school
- To challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour
- To increase understanding for pupils
- To ensure all staff, pupils and parents and carers have a clear understanding of what bullying behaviour is
- To ensure all governors and staff know and understand the school policy on bullying and follow it when bullying is suspected or reported
- To ensure that all pupils, parents and carers know the school policy on bullying and feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems.

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour. It can be a one-off incident, but more commonly it is repeated over a period of time. It can be carried out by individuals, or by groups. It can be emotional, physical, racist, sexual, verbal, and homophobic or a combination of these in nature. It can take the form of name-calling, threatened violence, actual violence, intimidation, isolation, ridicule, or other action such as spreading unpleasant stories and gossip, sending text messages, e-mailing and telephoning. All bullying is designed to make the victim feel threatened, humiliated and unsafe.

Not all negative interactions between pupils can be characterised as bullying and the school works hard to ensure that pupils understand the differences between bullying and 'falling out' or arguing.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance promotes the following definition: -

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another(s), where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace.

- Bullying behaviour deliberately causes hurt (either physically or emotionally)
- Bullying behaviour is repetitive (though one off incidents such as the posting of an image, or the sending of a text that is then forwarded to a group, can quickly become repetitive and spiral into bullying behaviour)
- Bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power (the person on the receiving end feels like they can't defend themselves).

Bullying is not: -

- Teasing and banter between friends without intention to cause hurt-
- Falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement-
- Behaviour that all parties have consented to and enjoy (though watch this one as coercion can be very subtle).

Signs of bullying might be:

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, appetite irregularities, feigning illness, refusing to attend school or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in personal habits, lacking concentration or high levels of distractible behaviour. A pupil may become super-vigilant. Individual behaviour patterns are well known to staff and when there are changes in these patterns the possibility of bullying must always be considered. There may also be physical indicators such as bruises, scratches, cuts, damaged clothes.

Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying. Advocates for the pupils/learners must report possible bullying on behalf of their charges and where possible communication strategies must be put in place to allow pupils/learners to express their feelings. Pupils/learners' communications must be listened to. Staff must be alert to the signs of bullying (in all its many forms) and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school/college policy.

Pro-Active strategies to prevent bullying

Types of bullying, how to recognise bullying and what you can do to help if you think you or someone you know is being bullied, are all topics which are part of our Health and Wellbeing (PSHE and RSE) curriculum.

Staff are trained to use strategies to prevent bullying and to respond to bullying incidents.

These include:

- Role-play and other drama techniques to help pupils understand and appreciate the feelings of others in a non-threatening impersonal way.
- Circle time approaches to help pupils share information and to provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour.
- School council meetings can be used as a forum to discuss bullying incidents.
- Anti-bullying focus days
- Pupil questionnaires completed at the end of each academic year.
- 1:1 discussions with ASC pupils to ensure their understanding.
- Participation in Health & Wellbeing lessons in which topics including 'Caring Friendships' and 'Online Relationships' are taught to pupils of all ages and abilities.

At Stone Hill School everyone is vigilant for signs of bullying and we always take reports of bullying incidents seriously. We use the curriculum to reinforce the ethos of the school and to help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying behaviour.

We make sure that pupils understand that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult and that, when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied, or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff. There is guidance in the pupil planner about the action a pupil should take if they have been bullied, or if they are aware of other pupils being bullied.

Reporting Bullying

Pupils who are bullied, who witness bullying or who have even participated in bullying should feel confident to report it to any member of the school staff whom they trust enough to tell. Each incident will be dealt with on its merits, but all reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated.

Incidents will be recorded. The report will be given to the Head-teacher. If the bullying has a racist element, then it will also be treated as a racial incident and recorded online through SIMS to the LA as laid down in the 2017 Equality Act.

Responding to Bullying

When an incident of bullying is discovered, staff will discuss issues relating to the incident with the pupils involved, in a way suitable to their age and level of understanding. We try to make use of the problem-solving approach. Each pupil will be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion will remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and preventing any recurrence of the bullying. Pupils who have been bullied will receive appropriate support, including help from external agencies, where needed. Pupils who have bullied will be offered help or counselling, and may be placed on a behaviour contract.

If bullying persists, one or a combination of the following actions will be taken:

- An official report will be made and filed in the pupil's personal record
- Existing disciplinary sanctions will be used
- Parents or carers will be contacted to discuss the issues. They will be given feedback on progress in dealing with the incident. Additional external help may be sought for example from educational psychologists or relevant outside agencies
- Suspension from the school – this is dependent on the severity and/or persistence of the bullying and will be a final resort.

Involvement of parents and carers

The parents or carers of pupils who bully and those who have been bullied will be informed of the incident and will be asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem.

Pupils who bully will be helped to understand the pain this causes to others and reminded of the possible consequences of bullying. The sanctions for repeated incidents will be explained clearly to them. Support will be agreed to ensure they do not repeat bullying behaviours and their behaviour may be monitored. This monitoring process will usually incorporate a reward for acceptable behaviour.

Parents and carers will be involved in ensuring that the monitoring process runs smoothly, and in all other decisions designed to reduce bullying behaviour.

Parents and carers are reminded regularly, through letters and newsletters, that their children must tell someone if they experience bullying. If pupils keep information from the school, or from their parents or carers, the problem is unlikely to be solved and the period of suffering will be prolonged. We believe that even one case of bullying is a case too many, and we know it is essential to keep this policy under continual review and to reflect current legislation.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with Behaviour, Drugs Prevention and Equality policy.