

George Stephenson High School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

General Statement

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires maintained schools to have an Anti Bullying Policy.

The Governing Body values the good relationships fostered by the school, and expects that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. Each individual has a right to feel safe and cared for in their learning environment and bullying of any form will be dealt with appropriately.

All staff, students and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the school in general, and should work towards ensuring that students can work in an environment without fear.

Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated. The school also recognises that because of the verdicts in bullying cases it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school that spills over into the school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, whether physical or psychological, repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

According to 'Kidscape':

- it involves aggression (deliberate) and an unequal power relationship; and
- it results in pain and distress, and is persistent.

AIMS

- to demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated;
- to take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and on off-site activities;
- to support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied;
- to demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of students is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying;
- to promote positive attitudes in students enabling victims to feel they are empowered to highlight any incidents of bullying.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing Body

The Governing Body will discuss the Head's annual report on the working of this policy.

The Head

The Head has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils.

The Head will:

- ensure that all staff have the opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them;
- determine the strategies and procedures;
- discuss development of the strategies with the Leadership Team;
- ensure appropriate training is available;
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students; and
- report annually to the Governing Body.

The Deputy Head, with the Guidance Managers, will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies;
- keep the Head informed of incidents;
- arrange relevant staff training;
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems; and
- make reports to the Head.

All members of staff will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice;
- know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported;
- be responsible for liaising with Guidance Managers over all incidents involving students in their year group;
- be observant and ask students what is happening to them;
- deal with incidents according to the policy;
- introduce anti-bullying material in their programmes of study as appropriate;
- never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity; and
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution.

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The school will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through the tutorial programme, school assemblies, the School Committee, use of tutorial time and in the national curriculum programmes of study as appropriate.

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will play a major part in the strategies used by the school.

How is bullying shown?

It can be:

- physical
- verbal
- social or psychological
- cyber bullying
- often an inter-relationship between classes/groups

Signs of Bullying

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy.

All staff should be aware of these possibilities and to report promptly any suspicions of bullying to the appropriate tutor or Guidance Manager.

Students will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying.

Form Tutors will promote anti-bullying as part of their day to day routines.

Dealing with Incidents

- if bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be investigated and dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher approached;
- if a racial element to the bullying is suspected the Head must be informed immediately;
- the teacher will record the details of the incident on a referral form and inform the Guidance Manager;
- the Guidance Manager will interview all the parties and make a record;
- staff teaching the bullied student and the form tutor will be informed when appropriate;
- the Guidance Manager will determine, in consultation with the Leadership Team link, the appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying;
- parents will be kept informed by the Guidance Manager; and
- any sanctions against the bullies will be determined by the Guidance Manager in consultation with the Leadership Team link.

Bullied Students

- Staff dealing with students who have been bullied must always offer reassurance.
- Students who have been bullied will be given support by the Guidance Manager / Form Tutor in consultation with the student and parent.

Bullies

Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

Sanctions

Any of the school's formal punishments can be used against bullies as appropriate. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression a pupil could be permanently excluded.

Involvement of Parents

Parents, as well as all staff and students, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive approach to educating students to combat it.

Parents of students who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in discussions of the solution to the problem with the relevant Guidance Manager in consultation with the Leadership Team link.

Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures and the possibility of permanent exclusion following gross acts of bullying.

Involvement of Students

Students will be involved in the positive strategies through both the School Committee and tutor groups.

A major part of the programme will consist of educating students in how to cope with bullying.

Strategies for Dealing with Bullying

Staff in school should follow the school's code of conduct as a basis for actions and refer students to the appropriate Curriculum Leader / Guidance Manager / Leadership Team when appropriate.

Criteria for Success

The Governing Body will use data on attitudes and values of students collected throughout each year via questionnaires and interviews, referrals and SIMs reports completed by staff and students.

Key indicators will include:

- How safe and cared for students feel;
- How safe and cared for parents / carers feel their children are;
- How confident students / carers are in the systems;
- The number of reported incidents of bullying

These will be monitored as part of the Headteachers' report to the Governors.

Counselling

The school is prepared in appropriate cases to arrange counselling for both bullies and the bullied.

Kidscape gives advice on child safety policy, runs a Helpline for parents and children (Tel: 020 7823 5430) and organises free one-day sessions for bullied children.

Reporting and Recording

All incidents must be reported and recorded using the school's referral form.

Monitoring and Review

The Deputy Head will keep and consider reports on serious incidents, and make reports, with statistics, to the Head. The Head will consider the reports with the Leadership Group to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled with a view to improving the school's strategies.

The Head will make an annual report to the Governing Body.