

Stepgates Community School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission Statement

At Stepgates Community School everyone has the opportunity to learn and grow together, as independent, enthusiastic and confident learners in an inclusive, creative, safe, healthy environment.

This policy is based on our Mission Statement and Aims for our school.

Aims of this Policy

A positive approach to inclusion by celebrating diversity, promoting resilience and well-being, and ensuring equality for all.

In Surrey we believe that bullying is not acceptable in any form or in any context.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all children learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

Stepgates Community School has an ethos of good behaviour where children treat each other and the school staff with respect because they know this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour that affects everyone. It is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Stepgates. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will children be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available in school.

Every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying. This policy aims to bring school procedures to prevent bullying among children to the attention of staff, parents and children.

Links with other documents & policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equalities Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Self Evaluation Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy
- DfE 'Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies' - July 2017
- DfE 'Behaviour and discipline in schools Advice for headteachers and school staff' - January 2016
- DfE 'Keeping Children safe in Education' - September 2018

At Stepgates (in line with 'Every Child Matters') we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We would expect pupils to feel safe in school, including an understanding of the issues relating to safety, such as bullying. We also want them to feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe or concerned

Every child should be able to learn in a school environment free from bullying of any kind and in which they feel safe and supported. There is no place for bullying in our schools and communities and each of us involved in education has a role in creating a culture in schools where bullying is not tolerated (Safe to Learn 2007)

Principles that underpin the policy

For pupils who experience bullying that:

- They are heard
- They know how to report bullying and get help
- They are confident in the school's ability to deal with bullying, and feel happy and comfortable with any plans that are put in place
- Steps are taken to help them feel safe again
- They are helped to rebuild confidence and resilience
- They know how they can get support from others.

For pupils who engage in bullying behaviour that:

- Learning programmes and strategies hold them to account for their behaviour and help them to face up to the harm they have caused
- They will learn to behave in ways which do not cause harm in future, because they have developed their emotional skills and knowledge
- They will learn how they can take steps to repair the harm they have caused.
- They will have any safeguarding issues, around their circumstances, addressed
- Schools are aware of other circumstances and situations that may be influencing the child's behaviour

For school:

- The whole school community is clear about the anti-bullying stance the school takes
- Pupils, as well as staff and other members of the school, are fully engaged in developing and reviewing anti-bullying work in the school
- Occurrences are recorded and audited, anti-bullying work is monitored, and every chance is taken to celebrate success
- All pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of bystanders
- The school promotes a climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish
- Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying
- Peer support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying
- The school has addressed site issues and promotes safe play areas
- All staff are aware, and model positive relationships
- The school works in partnership with parents, other schools, and with Children's Service and community partners to promote safe communities.

- That inclusive values are promoted and underpin behaviours and school ethos

For parents / Carers

- They are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying
- They know how to report and get help if they are concerned that their child is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, and are clear about the complaints procedure
- They have confidence that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate/resolve as necessary and that the school systems will deal with the bullying in a way which protects their child
- They are clear about ways in which they can complement the school on the anti-bullying policy or procedures.

Policy Development

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from:

- Members of staff, governors, parents/carers, children and young people, and other partners
- How were they involved - through questionnaires/surveys, meetings, visiting external providers in school and external providers off site
- Pupils contribute to the development of the policy through the school council, playground buddies, surveys/questionnaires, circle time discussions, PSHE lessons, etc.
- Parents/Carers will be encouraged to contribute by: online surveys, parent meetings

How policy sits in line with the school Behaviour Policy

Scope of this policy	: bullying of students within school
	: bullying of and/or students outside of the school, where the School is aware of it
	: bullying of staff by students or bullying of students by staff, within or outside of school
	: bullying of staff by staff within or outside of school

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher - Has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies and appointing an Anti-bullying Lead who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy. The Anti-bullying Lead will work alongside the PSHE Lead also.

The Anti-bullying Lead in our school is: Tara Ford

Their responsibilities are:

- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies
- Co-ordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review
- Managing bullying incidents
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour

It is 'good practice' to have a nominated Governor with the responsibility for Anti-bullying, this falls within the Safeguarding role Name of Governor: Lisa Jeffries

Their responsibilities are to ensure policy and procedures are in line with "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2015) and "Keeping Children Safe in School" (2016)

What is Bullying?

The Department of Education's definition of bullying from 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (October 2014)

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences."

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) defines **bullying** as "the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. **Bullying** can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace." (ABA 2014)

An incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent - if it fulfils the descriptions of bullying.

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent (isolated cyberbullying incidents may be seen as one-off incidents but if sent to a range of pupils would be seen as bullying)
- Friendship fall outs are seen as accidental, occasional, no power imbalance or hierarchy, those involved show remorse and want to resolve the situation - this is different to isolating or excluding children from groups

Why are some children and young people or adults, more vulnerable to being bullied?

Specific types of bullying include

- bullying related to race, religion or culture

- bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities
- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying relating to sexual orientation e.g. homophobic language
- bullying related to gender orientation e.g. transgender/questioning/pan
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying

Bullying can be:

- Physical, e.g. kicking, hitting, taking and damaging belongings
- Verbal, e.g. name calling, taunting, threats, offensive remarks
- Relational, e.g. spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups
- Cyber, e.g. texts, e-mails, picture/video clip bullying, Instant Messaging (IM), social media or gaming.

Bullying can take place between: young people; young people and staff; between staff; individuals or groups

Certain groups of pupils/adults are known to be particularly vulnerable to bullying by others: these may include pupils with special educational needs such as learning or physical disabilities; young carers, Looked After children, those from ethnic and racial minority groups and those young people who are/perceived as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning their gender role.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can include:

- cyber bullying - inappropriate text messaging and e mailing; sending or demanding offensive or degrading imagery by mobile technologies or via the internet (Youth Produced Sexual Imagery); offensive or prejudice comments/posts on social media
- name calling
- taunting
- mocking
- making offensive comments
- physical assault
- taking or damaging belongings
- producing offensive graffiti
- gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- excluding people from groups.
- Prejudice-related behaviour
- Controlling behaviour
- intimidation

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

Within the curriculum the school will raise children's awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, Jigsaw Circle Times, Anti-Bullying Weeks, assemblies and curriculum subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate bullying in the school.

Children are taught to understand the difference between 'friendship fallouts' and 'bullying behaviour'. Restorative practices are used to develop children's abilities to resolve conflict.

The school will proactively gather information about issues between children which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring.

Why are some children, young people and adults, more vulnerable to becoming bullies?

- Family background
- Social deprivation
- Trauma/loss in the family
- Domestic violence/abuse/bullying in the home
- feeling powerless
- low self-esteem
- trying to get admiration and attention from friends
- fear of being left out if they don't join in
- not understanding how someone else is feeling
- taking out their angry feelings
- a culture of aggression and bullying
- being bullied themselves
- Cultural Causes of Bullying
- Institutional Causes
- Social Issues
- Family Issues
- Gender
- The Bully's Personal History
- Having Power
- The bully has been bullied before
- The bully is lonely
- The bully is jealous
- The bully is part of a pack
- The bully sees you as being different

Developing and promoting Resilience and Emotional Well being

This is what we do at Stepgates

- Solution focused approach - involving and including all parties
- Ensuring a Pupil voice - pupil friendly literature and information
- PSHE Curriculum (Jigsaw)
- Pastoral systems
- Healthy Schools
- TAMHS
- Mindworks
- Nurture provision
- Restorative Approaches
- Index for inclusion
- Safer survey
- Chill Club and Buddies
- ELSA support

- Social Skills groups
- Peer buddies
- Community Links
- Parent support groups and training e.g. Parenting Puzzle, Parent forums

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

As part of our ongoing commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we at Stepgates have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour.

- Anti-bullying partnership
- Restorative Approaches
- Involvement in Healthy Schools
- National Anti-Bullying week annually (usually in November)
- Feeling Good Week
- PSHE
- Circle Time
- Assemblies - school led and outside agency/charity led
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and internet safety
- Pupil voice
- Peer mentoring schemes / Behaviour ambassadors
- Playground Buddying
- Friendship bench/bus stop
- Lunchtime clubs - Chill Club, Lunchtime ELSA
- ELSA, ELSA Zumba, ELSA Forest Schools, ELSA Swimming
- Parent information events/information
- Regular Staff training and development for all staff (internal and external)
- Counselling
- School schemes to celebrate success: National Healthy schools, Rights Respecting etc

Reporting and Responding to Bullying

Our school has clear and well publicised systems to report bullying for the whole school community (including staff, parents/carers, children and young people) this includes those who are the victims of bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour (bystanders)

Procedures

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be recorded immediately on an Incident Form by the member of staff who has been approached.
- If a parent reports a suspected incident of bullying, it will be recorded and handed to the Headteacher or Deputy Head teacher for investigation.
- A Senior Leader will adopt a 'No blame Approach' to follow up the incident following the ten steps below.
- Class teachers will be kept informed by the Senior Leader.
- Parents will be kept informed by the class teacher and/or Senior Leader.

- Restorative Practices will be used to support the 'No Blame Approach' and encourage children to recognise the effect of certain behaviours on others.

A Senior Leader will

- Step 1 Talk with the victim to understand what happened from their perspective, encourage them to say how they feel and offer reassurance and support. Recognise that their **feelings** and **self-esteem** are important.
- Step 2 Gain their consent to follow up the incident and convene a meeting. Ask them to suggest children involved in the bullying together with some of their own friends.
- Step 3 Convene a 'Fix-it Circle' with all those involved and some of their own friends, Following restorative practice procedures, explain the problem by stating how the victim feels.
- Step 4 At no time should incidents be discussed or blame be allocated to individuals or the group. Share the responsibility for making the victim feel better. State that the group has been called together to help solve the problem and make the victim feel happier.
- Step 5 Ask the group to make suggestions about ways in which they might help to make the victim feel happier. Each member must come up with something positive they can do.
- Step 6 Thank the group, if appropriate, arrange a time to meet with them in a weeks time and leave it up to them.
- Step 7 Convey throughout this process your belief that the children involved are not "bad" or "unkind".
- Step 8 During the week meet informally with the victim and each member of the group to discuss how things are going. This may continue over the next few weeks and may involve restorative approaches.
- Step 9 Feedback to the class teacher who will keep parents informed of the actions & consequences for the bully and the victim.
- Step 10 All incidents must be recorded and passed to the Headteacher.

At Stepgates we have developed a consistent approach to recording and monitoring bullying incidents in their school, and evaluating whether these approaches are effective. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated involving all parties.

In summary, Stepgates will:

- Interview all parties and record information
- Inform parents
- Use a range of responses appropriate to the situation: - solution focused, restorative approach, circle of friends, individual work with victim, perpetrator, referral to outside agencies if appropriate
- Referral to Behaviour policy and school sanctions and how these may be applied including what actions may be taken if bullying persists.
- Responses and support can vary dependant on the type of bullying
- Follow up of an incident (to be recorded and reviewed at regular intervals) especially keeping in touch with the person who reported the situation, parents/carers

- Support for the **ALL** involved in the bullying incident (give details of resources, strategies that could be used)
- Contacting outside agencies for support (e.g Surrey STIP teams/ EP team)
- Contacting the Police (see Department of Education Guidance on Criminal Law re: Hate Crime) or DSL
- Should a complaint arise at any point regarding how the bullying is being tackled, then the school will refer to the Complaints Procedure

Monitoring and Evaluation

Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident and this will be notified to and held by the Anti-bullying Lead.

The Headteacher will

- monitor incidents of bullying throughout the term and report concerns to staff and governors each term;
- review the impact of this policy and procedures against the number of incidents.

The Leadership Team will review and assess this policy's implementation and effectiveness annually. The information we hold will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up. It will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy by the Senior Leadership Team.

This information will be presented to the governors in an anonymous format as part of the termly and annual reports.

The governor with responsibility for Child Protection will visit the school and meet with the Headteacher at least annually to monitor the implementation of this policy and will report back to governors on an annual basis.

Review due: Summer 2028