

**STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL**  
**WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY – ANTI BULLYING**

Approved by Governors 17 October 2023

### **AIMS**

Stockport Grammar School is recognisable by the quality of its community within which principles of tolerance and understanding are fostered, both within the curriculum and through the relationships which exist between pupils, parents, teachers, support staff, governors and the wider community. It strives to be a welcoming place, offering the support necessary for individuals to develop and achieve their full potential. An active and effective anti-bullying policy is a key element in underpinning that ethos.

At Stockport Grammar School, bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is essential that pupils and their parents can be confident that bullying will be dealt with seriously, promptly and effectively. The School also recognises that it must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate such bullying.

In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and with regard to the Department for Education's non-statutory guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)* the School has drawn up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils in both the Senior School and the Junior School.

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

The Department for Education's non-statutory guidance *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017)* defines bullying as follows: 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, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could 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. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Bullying includes:

- Name-calling
- Taunting
- Mocking
- Making gestures

- Excluding
- Making offensive or humiliating comments
- Gossiping
- Spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- Taking or deliberately damaging a person's belongings
- Physical violence
- Deliberately invading someone's "personal space"
- Cyberbullying – e.g. inappropriate text messaging, emailing and use of social network sites or sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via email or the internet (see appendix 1)
- Producing offensive graffiti or writing unkind notes about someone
- Language or comments that are racist, or about sexual orientation, gender identity, special educational needs or disability
- Sexual harassment

Some pupils are more likely to be the target of bullying because of the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. For example those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are adopted, those who are suffering from a health problem or those with caring responsibilities may be more likely to experience bullying because of difference. Children in care that are frequently on the move may also be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. These young people are often the same young people who might need greater support to deal with the impact of bullying. In addition children with special educational needs or disabilities can often lack the social or communication skills to report such incidents so it is important that staff are alert to the potential bullying this group faces and that their mechanisms for reporting are accessible to all.

If bullying gives rise to a safeguarding concern the School's safeguarding procedures will be followed. The School's Safeguarding Policy is available on the School's website.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

### **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING**

The whole school community, whether teachers, pupils, parents or support staff, has a role to play in ensuring that bullying is prevented throughout the School.

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour:

- becoming shy and nervous
- pretending to be ill
- taking unusual absences or complaining of feeling ill in the morning
- seeking attention from adults
- changes in work patterns – begins to do poorly at school
- a lack of concentration
- truancy
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- stops eating/"binge" eating
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- attempting/committing suicide in the most extreme cases

### **BULLYING WHICH OCCURS OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS**

Bullying outside school hours may include cyberbullying and 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 hours is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on as outlined in this policy.

### **STAFF WHO ENGAGE IN BULLYING**

It is expected that all staff employed by Stockport Grammar School will recognise and avoid any behaviour which is bullying. Bullying of pupils or colleagues will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

### **PUPILS WHO ENGAGE IN BULLYING OF STAFF**

Staff should inform the Head if they are subject to behaviour from pupils that they regard as bullying and the matter will be dealt with appropriately, in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **PARENTS WHO ENGAGE IN BULLYING OF STAFF**

All parents of Stockport Grammar School pupils will be expected to recognise and avoid any behaviour towards staff, or any other members of the school community, that is bullying. Staff will inform the Head if they are subject to behaviour from parents that they regard as bullying and the matter will be dealt with appropriately, in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **GOVERNORS' ANTI-BULLYING REPRESENTATIVE**

The Governors' Representative with responsibility for anti-bullying is Mr Tim Firth.

### **REPORTING BULLYING**

Anyone who feels that they are being bullied, or anyone who suspects bullying is taking place, should refer the matter immediately to any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable speaking to, including the School nurse and support staff. Pupils can instead email a member of staff or, in the Senior School, use the anonymous Whisper reporting system.

In the Senior School, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and in the Junior School the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Logistics) will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems, ensuring that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies. Parents are encouraged to report any concerns promptly to a member of staff to enable the School to act swiftly to investigate and address any bullying behaviour. The School encourages pupils to 'Speak Out' as bullying thrives in a climate of silence.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **Junior School**

In the first instance, the matter will be dealt with by the Form Teacher, who will liaise with the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Logistics). The Deputy Head (Pastoral and Logistics) will involve the Head.

#### **Senior School**

The relevant member(s) of the pastoral team, Head of Year and/or Head of Section and/or Deputy Head (Pastoral), will investigate the matter and communicate with the Head if appropriate.

## Whole School

The events reported by all parties will be recorded by the Head of Year/Section or Deputy Head (Pastoral) in the Senior School, or Deputy Head (Pastoral and Logistics) in the Junior School. Those involved in the incident will routinely be asked to record the details in writing, if they are capable. Events should be recorded in the child's own words as far as possible, if they are recorded by an adult.

After discussion and when it is clear that bullying has taken place, the appropriate measures, in line with the School Disciplinary Procedures, will be actioned. Action will be taken at the appropriate level, depending on the nature of the incident.

Sanctions, which may include temporary or permanent exclusion, will be imposed as appropriate and within the disciplinary guidelines laid down in the School's Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy (available on the School's website). The School will, of course, cooperate with external agencies such as the police if appropriate.

Sanctions will be fair, proportionate, consistent, reasonable and take account of special needs. They have three main purposes:

- To impress upon the perpetrator that what they have done is unacceptable
- To deter them from repeating that behaviour
- To signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it

Pupils who are guilty of bullying will be given opportunities to:

- Face up to the harm they have done
- Learn to behave in ways which will not cause harm in future
- Develop their understanding of how others think and feel
- Learn how to take steps to repair the harm they have caused

Investigations into bullying allegations can be complex and take time to carry out. Staff should try to investigate as fully as possible within a reasonable timescale. Parents will be informed by the Head of Year/Section, Senior School Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Junior School Deputy Head (Pastoral and Logistics) at each stage of the process.

The parents of the alleged victim and the alleged bully will be advised of the findings of the investigation, their implications regarding the Anti-Bullying Policy and the measures the School intends to pursue in accordance with the Policy to prevent any repetition. The Head of Year/Section or Senior School Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Junior School Deputy Head (Pastoral and Logistics) will inform the appropriate members of staff of the findings and of the School's proposed response. They will also be required to monitor the effectiveness of the School's remedial action.

From the outset pupils who have alleged bullying will be offered the reassurance, advice and support as necessary in order to restore their self-esteem and confidence. Examples of support can include:

- Ensure pupils know which staff they can go to for support and how to find them.
- Review of the other pupils in the form, classes and co-curricular activities. Notify relevant staff if in lessons pupils need to be seated separately, not put in working groups together or relationships monitored.
- Discussion about break and lunchtimes and transport arrangements to and from school.
- Notify relevant duty staff regarding break, lunch and buses and ask them to be vigilant and monitor relationships.
- Pastoral staff visible in key places at break and lunch as a supportive presence.
- In the Senior School, discussion about time out cards or early lunch pass if appropriate.
- Offer Beacon counselling as a talking therapy if appropriate.

- Include friends in support if the pupil chooses.
- Regular check-ins by relevant pastoral staff that continue for as long as needed.

Consideration will also be given to the provision of pastoral support to the alleged perpetrator/perpetrator and can include:

- Regular check-ins by relevant pastoral staff that continue for as long as needed.
- Mentoring.
- Offer Beacon counselling as a talking therapy if appropriate.

Consideration will also be given to:

- Restorative conversations between victims and perpetrators or alleged victims and perpetrators if appropriate and all parties agree
- Follow up anti-bullying assemblies with relevant year groups if appropriate

Staff are aware that pupils and parents can worry that pupils who are spoken to as part of an investigation into bullying might then cause difficulties for the alleged victim or other pupil(s) who initially reported the bullying. The school will take steps to try to ensure that this does not happen; for example, pupils who are spoken to as part of an investigation can be given appropriate warnings about their conduct. If any pupils do cause difficulties, the school will take this seriously and pupils can be given appropriate sanctions as necessary.

Keeping Children Safe In Education (September 2023) states that child-on-child abuse can include bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) and it is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature.

Incidences of bullying where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or is in need of additional support from Children's Social Care, will be treated as a safeguarding concern. Consideration will also be given to whether the perpetrator may be in need of early help or in need of additional support from Children's Social Care.

### **CRIMINAL LAW**

Some types of harassing or threatening behaviour could be a criminal offence. If staff feel that a criminal offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

### **RECORDING**

Records of bullying allegations and investigations will be held on the School's CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring and Safeguarding) system.

The Junior School Deputy Head (Pastoral and Logistics) and Senior School Deputy Head (Pastoral) will also keep reports on bullying allegations and investigations in a bullying folder and make a termly report to the Head. The Senior Management Team will regularly review and analyse the operational effectiveness of this policy, taking full account of the views of pupils through the Anti-Bullying Council in the Senior School and through the School Council in the Junior School, in order to maintain the momentum in action against bullying.

The Governors will receive an annual report and review the operational effectiveness of the policy and its implementation through the Education Committee.

### **RAISING STAFF AWARENESS**

Staff will receive INSET training. The training will ensure that staff are fully aware of our procedures in the event of an allegation of, and investigation into, bullying.

### **RAISING PUPIL AWARENESS**

Pupils cover topics on bullying through the Pastoral Curriculum. They are made aware that if they are being bullied, or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied, they can speak to any member of staff.

### **CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE BULLYING DOES NOT THRIVE**

The School will use a range of methods to help prevent bullying, and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all, such as:

- Where possible, the School takes part in national initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week to promote tolerance and mutual respect.
- Pupils cover topics on bullying in the Pastoral Curriculum.
- Guidance is offered to pupils via the Pastoral Curriculum and ICT lessons to avoid the risk of cyber-bullying.
- Victims of bullying are encouraged to report any problems immediately to a member of staff.
- Pupils are actively encouraged to report incidences of potential bullying that they witness happening to another pupil.
- Staff should at all times, but particularly outside the classroom, watch out for pupils who are potential or known victims of bullying and try to ensure that they are protected from further distress.
- When an allegation of bullying is made pupils should be assured that a member of the Pastoral Team will undertake a full and fair investigation into the allegations. It should be made clear that whilst it might be necessary to pass on the information that is disclosed to another member of staff, the child's wishes will be respected as far as good practice will allow, and according to School policies and procedures on confidentiality and safeguarding.
- Friends of the victims of bullying will be encouraged, as appropriate, to offer support and to ensure that the victim is included in group activities.

### **ANTI-BULLYING EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM**

The pastoral programme in the Senior School and PSHE lessons/form time/assemblies in the Junior School endeavour to ensure that pupils are fully aware of the suffering engendered by bullying and the importance of eradicating it. Pupils are informed of the procedures they should follow if they find themselves the victims of bullying. These programmes are reviewed at regular intervals by the Pastoral Team.

The School endeavours to minimise the occurrence of incidents of cyberbullying through awareness-raising and promoting understanding of its characteristics and how it differs from other forms of bullying. The activities include discussion of the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy for Pupils and addressing cyberbullying within curriculum delivery (especially in Life Studies/PSHE lessons and ICT lessons).


### **SOURCES OF SUPPORT/INFORMATION**

**Childline:** 0800 1111

**The Anti-Bullying Alliance:** [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

**Kidscape:** [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Appendix 1: Cyberbullying

<b>Authorised by</b> Chair of Governors	
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