



SPAGHETTI BRIDGE

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Owner	Head of Quality & Outcomes
Applies to	This policy applies to all services
Associated Documents	Other related policies:- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Relational Support Policy Complaints Policy IT Acceptable Use Social Media Policy
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1. Introduction

We are committed through our relational approach to provide a caring, safe and welcoming environment for all of our students so that they are able to learn in a relaxed atmosphere. Within Spaghetti Bridge we have an ethos of being respectful and safe. The safety and wellbeing of all of our students and staff is a key priority. This policy is informed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, DfE guidance on preventing and tackling Bullying 2023 and the Equality Act 2010.

Purpose/Aim

If incidents do occur students should be able to tell a member of staff and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and swiftly. We will work with everyone involved in the bullying incidents and support our students to take part in a restorative conversation.

As part of our curriculum we will actively promote the values of equality, equity and respect. We work with all of our students to ensure that difference and diversity are celebrated across the Spaghetti Bridge community. These values reflect those that will be expected of our students by society when they leave school and enter the world of work or further study.

Definitions

All forms of bullying are taken seriously and will be treated as safeguarding concerns where they place a student at risk of harm.

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviours, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour has the following four features:

- It is repetitive and persistent – though sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time, for it can be experienced as part of a continuous pattern and can be extremely threatening and intimidating. This is particularly the case with racist bullying.
- It is intentionally harmful – though occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all those who are responsible.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it.
- It can cause feelings of distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence in those who are at the receiving end.

Bullying can take many forms such as:

- Physical may be hitting, kicking or destruction of a student's property
- Verbal may be insults, name-calling, teasing or threats
- Covert may be creating rumours or anonymously sharing personal information
- Cyberbullying may be online treats
- Alienation may be treating a student as an outcast or exclusion
- Discriminatory is motivated by hostility to protected characteristics such as race, religion, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation

Reasons for Bullying

In line with our Relational Support Policy we need to understand the reasons that bullying occurs. A person may engage in bullying as a learned behaviour due to past experiences.

Successful intervention needs to consider bullying within the context of both a perpetrator and victim and involve all in the process to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all.

Bullying of Children and Additional Needs

At Spaghetti Bridge we aim to differentiate between children and young people behaviours that result from or are associated with their additional needs and those that can be described as bullying. We will work with all of our students so that they are able to apply the 3 Rs of bullying prevention:

Recognise what constitutes as bullying

Report any bullying they experience or witness

Refuse in our school community to accept bullying as appropriate behaviour.

2. Scope

The scope of this policy includes all staff and students at our school

3. Policy Statement

Cyberbullying

This can be defined as online, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else'. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity, and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target. Research indicates that cyber bullying is now a feature of many young people's lives. It can also affect members of school staff and other adults.

Cyber bullying can take different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyberstalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images and manipulation.

The school recognises the increasing role of artificial intelligence (AI) in online communication. Bullying that involves AI tools—such as the creation or sharing of false or misleading content, edited images, voice clones, or misinformation intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate a student—will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Homophobic bullying

This occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT+) people.

Who experiences homophobic bullying?

Young people who are LGBT+

Young people who are thought to be LGBT+

Young people who are different in some way — they may not act like the other boys or girls.

Young people who have gay friends or family, or their parents/carers are gay.

Teachers, who may or may not be LGBT+

Sexist or sexual bullying

Sexist and sexual bullying affects both genders. Boys may be victims as well as girls, and both sexes may be victims of their own sex. Sexual bullying may be characterised by name calling, comments and overt “looks” about appearance, attractiveness and emerging puberty. In addition, uninvited touching, innuendos and propositions, pornographic imagery or graffiti may be used.

Students identifying as transgender or experiencing gender dysphoria (feeling that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the gender role prescribed to them) can also be targeted by bullies.

Racist bullying

The school uses the working definitions of *racism* and *racist incidents* that were proposed in the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, 1999. The report defined racism as:

“Conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin”.

Historically, the term *racism* has been used principally in situations where colour and physical appearance are considered to be significant markers of difference. There has virtually always, however, been a cultural element as well – ‘the other’ has been recognised not only by their physical appearance but also in relation to their culture, language and religion. This crucial point was reflected in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition quoted above and is reflected also in race relations legislation, since case law has established that Sikhs, Jews and Travellers of Irish heritage are for legal purposes to be treated as distinct racial groups. Other forms of racism where differences of culture and religion are at least as significant as differences in physical appearance include Islamophobia and hostility to refugees and people seeking asylum.

Other types of bullying

Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN/D) and disabilities.

Bullying related to appearance or health conditions

Bullying of young carers or looked-after children, or otherwise linked to home circumstances

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage both physically and the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with

respect. Students who are bullied need to learn different ways of positively communicating and connecting.

To ensure this policy is effective it is essential that:

- The curriculum promotes tolerance of difference and promotes diversity in society in ways in which students can feel safe.
- When relationships are damaged, wherever possible, there are opportunities for them to be restored and even grow
- Staff are vigilant and trained to spot possible signs of bullying and feel confident in the actions they need to take when it is brought to their attention.
- A culture of openness and zero tolerance is encouraged in the school that enables and assists students to confide in staff if they feel threatened or bullied.
- Safeguarding, anti-bullying and relational practices are viewed and worked with as aspects of the same aim i.e. enabling everyone at the school to feel welcome, secure, comfortable and free from threat or harm:

Standards

It is important that we address bullying in two ways:

We need to be proactive in developing anti-bullying aspects of the curriculum and in the information we send out to students, parents/carers and partner organisations.

We need to ensure that we react promptly, fairly and effectively so that where bullying exists, those who allege bullying and those who witness bullying will feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems to end it. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying, to increase understanding for both victims and bullies and to help build a tolerant and inclusive ethos within the group.

The following standards set out clearly the responsibilities of managers and staff for creating an anti-bullying culture in the school and for responding promptly and effectively to any concerns about bullying that may arise.

Anti-bullying strategies

The aims of Our School's anti-bullying strategies and intervention systems are:

- To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To safeguard the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the student.
- To work with everyone involved in the bullying incidents and help our students to take part in a restorative conversation.

Strategic Preventative Procedures

Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos.

Use of curriculum opportunities (in particular, PSHE and Citizenship curriculum can be used to discuss issues around diversity and draw out anti-bullying messages).

Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying (e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year; and whole-school community activities).

Engaging students in the process of developing the school anti-bullying policy and promoting open and honest reporting.

Improving the school environment, looking in particular at staff supervision patterns; the physical design of the building(s); and joint work with partners such as transport service providers. The DfE recommends that schools target their attention on key times and locations where bullying is more prevalent; and that they work with students to establish when and where those times and locations are.

We do not believe in punitive sanctions or punishments. Research shows that they do not change behaviours and can reinforce the feelings that a child is not good enough, is not worthy and should feel shame. These feelings and emotions are not helpful in promoting meaningful learning over time and do not support the development of skills.

There are times where it is appropriate however where a child / young person is helped to understand the natural consequences to them in terms of the effect a particular behaviour has on themselves or others. As a team we will take steps to ensure to:

- impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable;
- deter him/her from repeating that behaviour; and
- signal to other students that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

The ethos and working philosophy of our schools means that all staff actively encourage students to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Kind and polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and modelled. Students are involved in the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate which may include:

- writing a set of school or base group expectations
- writing essays, poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that all incidents are dealt with quickly

Parental involvement

Our School is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents /carers and believe that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs. We recognise the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as a victim or a perpetrator.

Parents/carers who believe their children are the victim of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Where parents have concerns with regard to bullying they should contact the Head teacher.

Parents are supported to understand our non-punitive relational approach.

Incident management

Our School will react promptly, fairly to deal with any incident of bullying which is witnessed by or reported to any member of staff. When a member of staff receives information, either directly or indirectly, that a student may have been the victim of a bullying incident, this will be logged on Bridge Link. This report will be taken seriously and investigated. The School will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to children who are the victims of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular child's individual needs and may include:

- immediate action to stop the incident and secure the student's safety
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the victim is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents
- sympathy and empathy
- assertiveness training
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents/cares
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the victim
- arrangements to review progress
- Restorative conversations
- If needed support to understand why we avoid using punitive measures that students may have previously seen

Our School ensures all reported incidents are responded to promptly and effectively by the following procedures:

The Headteacher must be informed of all reported incidents of bullying within one working day.

The Headteacher must ensure that the student who has reported the bullying is safe.

An action plan for responding to the allegation of bullying must be agreed within two working days. Issues to consider include:

- Is the allegation a matter for the police
- Need to inform parents/carers
- Need to inform the Local Authority
- Clarifying whether the alleged incident is racist, sexist, homophobic or involves a disabled student or use of ICT
- The plan needs to be in writing and agreed with the student who has been bullied, and parents/carers.
- Once agreed, the action plan must be monitored and actions taken to ensure that the likelihood of repetition is minimised
- Where incidents have occurred 'off-site' the above procedure must be followed
- Regular follow up to ensure that bullying has not resumed
- Promoting anti-bullying messages through the curriculum

Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education (PSHE)

PSHE, which includes RSE, provides school staff with a clear opportunity to address bullying and discrimination within the curriculum. These are complex issues and need a whole school approach in which the PSHE curriculum plays a vital part. Through PSHE/ RSE lessons our students will learn about the different types of bullying, including online. We will discuss the impact of bullying and the responsibility of everyone to report and where to get help.

For the Perpetrator

Our School takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to behave in a more acceptable way. Steps will be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any help that they may need. We will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. These sanctions may include: a period of time away from the group, reflection session or fixed-term exclusion.

The school will always seek resolution for the victim and this may involve the bully undertaking restorative work.

Resources and Useful Websites that staff can access for further information are:

www.bullying.com / www.childline.co.uk / www.antibullying.net

4. Roles & Responsibilities

The Headteacher ensures that the school has a culture that promotes anti-bullying by:

- Ensuring that all staff know how to listen to students alleging bullying and know what to look for (including forms of bullying such as cyber bullying, homophobic bullying and racist/sexist bullying as well as 'teasing' and threats etc).
- Ensuring that all staff know what to do if or when a bullying incident is reported and that agreed procedures are adhered to in all cases.
- Ensuring that, as part of a wider discussion around 'safeguarding' and relational approach, bullying forms a standing item on teacher's meetings; where incidents are monitored and actions are minuted.
- Ensuring that training about bullying as an aspect of safeguarding and relational approach is given to all staff annually and that all new staff receive training as part of their induction on the Relational Approach within their first term after taking up their post.
- Ensuring all incidents of bullying and the actions taken are monitored and reviewed on a termly basis and that the review forms part of the Relational Support meetings and Senior Leadership Team Meeting.
- Ensuring that students are informed through the curriculum about bullying and what can be done to prevent it and what they can do if it happens (ideas and material for this are set out in the 'guidance and information informing this policy and standards').
- Ensuring that parents are kept informed about the school's anti-bullying policies and practices.
- Creating a school ethos, reviewed and renewed each year, which encourages students to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying including a formal process for gaining the views of students on a termly basis.
- Ensure that the 5 key principles set out in 'Bullying around racism, religion and culture' (*i.e. acknowledging that racism exists and can lead to bullying, letting students know where the school stands, ensuring students are listened to, ensuring students are involved in solutions, and ensuring the school has a range of strategies for both prevention and intervention*) are in place.

All staff should ensure:

- They are aware of the school's policy and standards for safeguarding and bullying and what they must do if an incident is reported to them.
- They are aware of the signs of possible bullying (as set out in training).
- That, in all their dealings with students, they give a clear message about being available to listen to concerns about bullying and to act appropriately if concerns are voiced.
- That their teaching includes clear messages about the unacceptable nature of bullying.
- The DSL has a particular responsibility to ensure that Looked After Children are kept safe from bullying.

- They are aware of the signs of possible bullying (as set out in training).
- They know what to do if a student alleges bullying.
- That, in all their dealings with students, they give a clear message about being available to listen to concerns about bullying and to act appropriately if concerns are voiced.
- They create through curriculum planning and delivery, safe and caring environments that promote the British Values and SMSC inclusion and thereby enable all students to grow in self-awareness, in managing their feelings, motivation, empathy and social skills.

5. Support, Advice and Communication

Initially please refer to our school's Senior Leadership Team for advice, guidance or help. If more help is then required please refer to the Regional Safeguarding and Relational Lead or the Head of Safeguarding.



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