

STANNINGTON INFANT SCHOOL

Policy for Bullying & Peer on Peer abuse

Reviewed annually

Next review date September 2025





Stannington Infant School Policy for Bullying & Peer on Peer abuse

Stannington Infant School Vision:

- ☉ To encourage a caring and positive attitude amongst the children towards all others and their environment.
- ☉ To provide a challenging, creative and rich curriculum which will develop curiosity, confidence and independence.
- ☉ To provide an inclusive, safe, secure, healthy and happy environment.

Our school is

a warm and friendly community to which everybody feels a sense of belonging. Each child has a valuable contribution to make to the life of the school and all children are encouraged, through discussion, praise and example, to develop a caring attitude for others and their environment. Our aim is to create a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere in which children can grow in confidence and self-motivation, develop self-discipline and enjoy a sense of achievement.

Positive behaviour stems from positive relationships, explicit and taught expectations and effective communication. All stakeholders work together to achieve the highest possible standards of behaviour in the best interests of all pupils.

Aims

1. To foster a caring and friendly atmosphere in which teaching and learning can take place in a safe and happy environment.
2. Effective inclusion based upon collegial and peer support which acknowledges the individual needs of children.
3. To create a culture of mutual respect amongst pupils, irrespective of protected characteristics; to teach pupils about behaviour that is acceptable and unacceptable.
4. Pupils, parents' staff and governors working in partnership to nurture a supportive school community with high expectations of everyone.

What is bullying?

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

We recognise that bullying can occur in all walks of life including the school environment. Bullying can take many forms, including peer on peer abuse;

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft),
- Verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, spreading rumours)
- Emotional or discriminatory (e.g. tormenting, threatening, ridicule, humiliation)
- Racist (e.g. racist taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual Violence or harassment (e.g. unwanted physical contact, abusive, homophobic and sexist comments) see appendix 1
- On line abuse (e.g. texting, mobile phone, e-mail)

[source: Governmental Guidance on Working Together to Safeguard Children].

Bullying is always unacceptable. Young children can be unkind to one another and have upsets but this would not be deemed as bullying and would be dealt with using the behaviour systems. Bullying is not the same as conflict between two equals. It is not random aggressive or unkind acts.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

The school prioritises cultivating a safe and respectful environment amongst pupils, and ensures that all pupils are aware that the school adopts a **zero-tolerance stance** on peer-on-peer abuse of any kind. The school promotes respectful interactions amongst pupils, and all staff model appropriate and respectful behaviour.

Bullying is:

- Ongoing
- Deliberate
- Unequal – it involves a power imbalance (resulting from size, number, higher status...)
- Bullying can be by pupils on other pupils, by adults on pupils and by adults on adults.

Responsibilities

We are all responsible for making sure that bullying is not tolerated in our school. Our children, parents and carers, staff and governors are all responsible for promoting a common anti-bullying approach. We will act as positive role models, follow our Golden Values and agreed procedures and we report concerns and incidents of bullying.

Our Governing Body will:

- regularly monitor and review the policy and support the Headteacher and the staff in implementing it.
- be fully informed on matters concerning anti-bullying.
- regularly monitor incident reports and actions taken to be aware of the effectiveness of this policy

Our Headteacher will:

- set the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.
- implement the Anti-Bullying Policy under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for: “determining measures on the behaviour and discipline that form the school’s behaviour policy”, “encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils”
- have evidence that our anti-bullying policy and practice is effective including the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff
- record and analyse bullying incidents
- ensure that all staff receive training that addresses bullying behaviour

Our Staff will:

- be good role models in their personal conduct and relationships.
- use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all.
- emphasise and behave in a respectful and caring manner to pupils and colleagues.
- establish and maintain a healthy, positive learning atmosphere.
- challenge abusive and prejudice-driven language and opinions.
- be aware and take action when there are concerns about bullying.

- be aware that pupils with additional education needs; learning difficulties or disabilities are more vulnerable to bullying and from becoming involved in bullying themselves.
- report and record all allegations of bullying following the school's procedures.
- ensure that pupils, and where appropriate parents and carers, are given regular feedback on the action being taken.

Our Parents and Carers will:

- support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.
- be informed about and fully involved in any aspect of their child's behaviour.
- contact the school immediately they know or suspect that their child is being bullied, even if their child has asked for "secrecy"
- work in partnership with the school to bring an end to the bullying.
- contact the school if they know or suspect that their child is bullying another pupil.
- share with the school any suspicions they have that bullying is taking place even when it does not directly involve their child.
- When a parent / carer have concerns relating to bullying they should report them to their child's class teacher, teaching assistant or the Headteacher.

Our Pupils will:

- follow our "Golden Values" and Behaviour Rules.
- be kind and inclusive
- not bully anyone else, or encourage and support bullying by others
- tell an adult if they are being bullied, usually either a member of staff or parent
- act to prevent and stop bullying, usually this is through telling an adult if they know or suspect that someone else is being bullied
- recognise that being a "bystander" is not acceptable as it supports the bullying and makes the "bystander" in part responsible for what happens to the victim of bullying
- use the class Anti-bullying Charter to help them remember what to do in difficult situations

How We Prevent Bullying:

School Ethos

The school maintains the position that education surrounding respectful and healthy attitudes and behaviour towards others is the best way to combat bullying and peer-on-peer abuse in the school. All staff, not just teaching staff, are responsible for passing this knowledge on to pupils.

Whole school assemblies that focus on respecting each other, showing kindness, and informing children of the need to tell someone if they feel bullied or harassed. All staff and volunteers to act as positive role models. Engagement in positive social interaction projects, including Jigsaw, Circle time, Class and School Council. Implementing a clear and consistent behaviour approach.

PHSE Curriculum

Our PSHE teaching underpins our Anti-Bullying work and provides key messages to promote respectful relationships and positive behaviour. During PSHE lessons, our children learn that everyone has a right to learn in a safe school. We teach that bullying is always wrong. Through our anti bullying work, our children practise the personal, social and emotional skills that help protect them from bullying.

Say No To Bullying

Every November, we take part in the national Anti-Bullying week involving all members of our school community. We use resources from the Anti Bullying Alliance. Our children create Anti Bullying charters which are displayed in their classrooms.

Safer Internet Day

In February we hold a whole school safer internet day to raise awareness of cyber bullying and give children strategies to stay safe on line.

Assertiveness

Teaching children to be assertive e.g. by saying “stop that I don’t like it”. We teach them to seek adult intervention is this approach is not effective. Adults will support children to verbalise their wishes and expectations of each other.

Self Regulation

We teach self-regulation of emotions using the Zones of Regulation approach. This enables children to verbalise emotions in a common and understood language.

Worry Boxes

Children can record a worry through words or picture which the staff in school will then follow up on.

School Council

Our School Council and class meetings give our children real opportunities to voice their opinions and to effect change in school.

Online Safety

Our ICT curriculum addresses online safety through age/ development specific resources e.g. Hector’s World. This helps children to protect themselves from online bullying.

High Quality Playtime Supervision

Teaching staff, Lunchtime Supervisors and Year Two Playground Leaders work together to ensure that all children enjoy a happy and safe lunchtime and playtime.

Professional Development

Staff will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction, and annual refresher training. This training will include guidance on how to recognise indicators of bullying and peer-on-peer abuse of all kinds, and how to distinguish between behaviour, particularly sexual behaviour, that is developmentally appropriate and that which is harmful.

When identifying pupils at risk of potential harm or who have been harmed by their peers, staff members will look out for a number of indicators including, but not limited to, the following:

- Injuries in unusual places that are also inconsistent with their age
- Lack of concentration and acting withdrawn
- Knowledge ahead of their age, e.g. sexual knowledge
- Use of explicit language
- Fear of abandonment
- Depression and low self-esteem

Where a pupil is displaying signs of being impacted by bullying or peer-on-peer abuse, or perpetrating peer-on-peer abuse, staff will report this to the DSL as soon as is reasonably practical.

Our Methods of Dealing with Incidents of Bullying

We take all bullying / peer on peer abuse problems seriously but will endeavour to keep all matters in proportion.

We investigate all incidents thoroughly by: -

1. Interviewing the alleged bully and victim separately.
2. Obtaining witness information where possible.
3. Keeping a record of the incident, investigation, and outcome on CPOMS. If there is not a positive outcome, subsequent behaviour will be monitored, dated, and recorded for future reference
4. Informing appropriate staff about the incident(s).
5. Ensuring that action is taken to prevent further incidents:-
 - Seek to obtain an apology
 - Provide support for the victim e.g. a playtime buddy
 - Support the bully to identify why s/he has bullied, help them to recognise their behaviour is unacceptable and support them to modify their behaviour
 - Seek support from other agencies if appropriate
6. Log incident using the SIMS system as per Sheffield LA guidelines.

All staff will be trained to handle disclosures. Effective safeguarding practice includes:

- Never promising confidentiality at the initial stage.
- Only sharing the report with those necessary for its progression.
- Explaining to the victim what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to.
- Recognising that the person the pupil chose to disclose the information to is in a position of trust.
- Being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed.
- Not asking leading questions and only prompting the pupil with open questions.
- Waiting until the end of the disclosure to immediately write a thorough summary. If notes must be taken during the disclosure, it is important to still remain engaged and not appear distracted.
- Only recording the facts as the pupil presents them – not the opinions of the note taker.
- Where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching, screening and confiscation advice.
- Wherever possible, managing disclosures with two staff members present (preferably with the DSL or a deputy).
- Informing the DSL or deputy as soon as possible after the disclosure if they could not be involved in the disclosure.

The DSL will be informed of any allegations of abuse against pupils with SEND. They will record the incident in writing and, working with the SENCO, decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the pupil in mind at all times. considered on a case-by-case basis.

The DSL or a deputy will make an immediate risk and needs assessment any time there is a report of sexual violence. For reports of sexual harassment, a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Risk assessments are not intended to replace the detailed assessments of experts, and for incidents of sexual violence it is likely that a professional risk assessment by a social worker or sexual violence specialist will be required.

Risk assessments will consider:

- The victim.
- The alleged perpetrator.
- Other pupils at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

Confidentiality

Our children need to know that they can speak to a trusted adult if they feel worried, unhappy or unsafe. If necessary, they should be helped to access the support of external agencies e.g. Childline. Staff cannot give unconditional confidentiality to children where there is a concern over their safety or that of another child. In these cases, staff must follow Child Protection procedures.

Appendix 1.

Sexual abuse

A form of abuse involving sexual activity between children – sexual abuse, for the purposes of this policy, is divided into two categories: sexual violence and sexual harassment.

“Sexual violence” encompasses the definitions provided in the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, i.e. non-consensual sexual touching, and causing another child to engage in sexual activity without consent, e.g. forcing someone to touch themselves sexually.

“Sexual harassment” refers to any sexual behaviour that could violate another child’s dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment, including:

- Sexualised jokes, taunting or comments.
- Physical behaviour, e.g. deliberately brushing against someone.
- Online sexual harassment, including
 - Upskirting
 - Sexualised online bullying
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
 - Sexual threats or coercion.

The “sharing of sexualised imagery” can also constitute sexual harassment – this refers to the consensual and non-consensual sharing between pupils of sexually explicit content, including that which depicts:

- Another child posing nude or semi-nude
- Another child touching themselves in a sexual way
- Any sexual activity involving another child
- Someone hurting another child sexually

Staff will be aware that children creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of other children is a criminal offence, even where the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed with the permission of the child depicted, or by the child themselves. Incidents of sharing sexualised imagery will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Appendix 2

Taking action following a disclosure of sexual abuse

The DSL or a deputy will decide the school’s initial response, taking into consideration:

- The victim’s wishes.
- The nature of the incident.
- The ages and developmental stages of the pupils involved.
- Any power imbalance between the pupils.
- Whether the incident is a one-off or part of a pattern.
- Any ongoing risks.

- Any related issues and the wider context, such as whether there are wider environmental factors in a pupil's life that threaten their safety and/or welfare.
- The best interests of the pupil.
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment are always unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Immediate consideration will be given as to how to support the victim, alleged perpetrator and any other pupils involved.

For reports of rape and assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any classes shared with the victim whilst the school establishes the facts. The school will consider how to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator apart on school premises. These actions will not be seen as a judgement of guilt on the alleged perpetrator.

For reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and the suitability of shared classes and premises will be considered immediately. In all cases, the initial report will be carefully evaluated and the wishes of the victim, nature of the allegations and requirement to protect all children will be taken into consideration.

Where a pupil is found to have been involved in harmful sexual behaviour, e.g. non-consensually sharing indecent imagery of another pupil, the school will help the pupil to move forward from the incident by supporting them in adopting more positive behaviour patterns and attitudes.

Managing the report

The decision of when to inform the alleged perpetrator of a report will be made on a case-by-case basis. If a report is being referred to children's social care or the police, the school will speak to the relevant agency to discuss informing the alleged perpetrator.

There are four likely outcomes when managing reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- Managing internally.
- Providing early help.
- Referring to children's social care.
- Reporting to the police.

Whatever outcome is chosen, it will be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons behind decisions will be recorded either on paper or electronically.

The following situations are statutorily clear and do not allow for contrary decisions:

- The age of consent is 16.
- A child under the age of 16 can **never** consent to sexual activity.
- Sexual intercourse without consent is **always** rape.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are defined in law.
- Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of children under 18 is illegal – including children making and sending images and videos of themselves.

Managing internally

In some cases, e.g. one-off incidents, the school may decide to handle the incident internally through behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.

Providing early help

The school may decide that statutory interventions are not required, but that pupils may benefit from early help – providing support as soon as a problem emerges. This approach can be particularly useful in addressing non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent the escalation of sexual violence.

Referral to children’s social care

If a pupil has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral to children’s social care. Parents will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to do so (if referral will place the victim at risk). This decision will be made in consultation with children’s social care.

The school will not wait for the outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other children.

The DSL will work closely with children’s social care to ensure that the school’s actions do not jeopardise any investigation. Any related risk assessment will be used to inform all decisions. If children’s social care decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the school will consider referring the incident again if they believe the pupil to be in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If the school agrees with the decision made by children’s social care, they will consider the use of other support mechanisms such as early help, pastoral support and specialist support.

Reporting to the police

Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault will be passed on to the police – even if the alleged perpetrator is under 10 years of age. Generally, this will be in parallel with referral to children’s social care. The DSL and deputies will follow the local process for referral.

Parents will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to do so. Where parents are not informed, it is essential for the school to support the pupil with any decision they take, in unison with children’s social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

The DSL and governing board will agree what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

In some cases, it may become clear that the police will not take further action, for whatever reason. In these circumstances, the school will continue to engage with specialist support for the victim as required.

See also policy on Behaviour and Positive Handling Policy.

Reviewed by staff & Governors ANNUALLY
Review date Sept 2025