



The Stables Independent School

Trauma Informed Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy incorporates legislation and guidance regarding bullying issued in

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

The Equality Act 2010

The Education and Inspections Act 2006, 2011

The Children Act 1989, 2004

Race Relations Act 1976,

Sex Discrimination Act 1975,

Protection from Harassment Act 1997,

Malicious Communications Act 1998,

Public Order Act 1986,

Human Rights Act 1998,

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018,

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

This policy links directly to the listed Stables Policies

Equality and Diversity Policy
Promoting Positive Behaviour &
Relationships Policy
Online Safety Policy
Complaints Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Whistleblowing Policy

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Proprietors in the Spring term 2024.

It will be reviewed annually and approved by the Proprietors.



Aims

Everyone has the right to come to school
and
to be respected for the person that they are.

At The Stables Independent School, we place the safety and wellbeing of all our pupils at the heart of everything we do. As a trauma and attachment aware school we recognise, value, and promote the fact that all children and adults have the right to go about their daily lives without fear of being threatened, assaulted, or harassed, to have an education, to be protected from violence, abuse and neglect and not be discriminated against on any grounds.

As a school we do not underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, academic and social development right through into adulthood. Therefore, we believe pupils should have the confidence that they will be listened to and that any bullying that is reported will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

The children and young people at The Stables have a wide range of complex needs. As a school community we understand that bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and raise issues that are in themselves complicated to resolve. Not all learners at The Stables will recognise bullying behaviour if they experience it or may be unable to express their aversion to it, and to respond appropriately to instances of bullying behaviours. Equally not all students would recognise that certain behaviours directed towards others may be undesirable or that they might be construed as bullying.

It is important to note, that while the complex needs, and reasons for negative behaviours such as bullying are considered, The Stables School will maintain an ethos and culture where bullying is not acceptable.

Bullying and Trauma

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), states: Children or teens who have been exposed to trauma and violence may be more likely to:

- Bully others
- Be more distressed by bullying or appear desensitized to bullying
- Be the targets of bullying themselves

Children who have experienced trauma are more likely to be bullied and to engage in bullying behaviour. In some cases, children who experience trauma may develop social or interpersonal difficulties, making them more likely to become targets of bullying. Studies of Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, have found that children who report more ACEs are also more likely to exhibit bullying behaviour (Sacks, et al., 2014).



Bullying and Labels

As a school that is trauma and attachment aware, we recognise that the power of language can have unintended consequences. The National Child Trauma Stress Clinic recommends, instead of referring to “bullies” and “victims,” more appropriate language includes “the child who bullied another student” (rather than “the bully”) or “the student who was bullied” (rather than “the victim”). Simply labelling a student as a “bully” or “victim” can perpetuate:

- A lack of hope or belief that there can be a change in behaviour for someone who bullies or a change in the social-emotional impact that results from being bullied.
- labels that serve to define a young person’s role in the school community and society.
- A focus only on the individual without considering the external context in which the bullying occurred, such as in a school with a negative school climate or a home with domestic violence that can influence, perpetuate, and even shape behaviours between peers, students, and the adults.

It is therefore vital that we view all bullying through a trauma informed lens.

Aims

- All members of staff are to know what the school policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying arises.
- To view bullying through a trauma informed lens and use the appropriate language.
- To provide a happy and secure school environment for all students and staff.
- To ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied.
- To promote consistency of approach and create an environment in which all types of bullying are considered unacceptable.
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate, and consistent way.
- To provide support for all involved in the incidents of bullying. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

What do we mean by bullying?

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 online’.

ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE

Definition of bullying



There are four key elements to this definition:

- hurtful
- repetition
- power imbalance
- intentional

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Physical – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling, Racist or other discriminating remarks.
- Emotional – isolating others, tormenting, hiding books, threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation, and coercion.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate films etc.
- Online /cyber – posting on social media, sharing photos, sending nasty text messages, social exclusion.

The Stables accepts that despite its best efforts there will be situations in which children and young people will be bullied by others. In these situations, whether the incident is witnessed or reported, prompt protective action will be taken to keep the student who was bullied safe and the behaviour of the child that who bullied another student will be challenged and addressed. Where the problems of bullying are persistent, either for the student who was bullied or the child who bullied another student, these will be addressed through a meeting with key school staff and keyworkers/carers/social workers and therapy staff. This will be triggered by the completion of a CPOMs report highlighting bullying.

MEASURES TO PREVENT BULLYING

The most effective preventative measure that can be employed is for all adults to establish clearly that bullying in school, during transport or on excursions will not be tolerated, and indeed will be dealt with firmly.

This will also require adults to plan opportunities for talking to young people about issues of difference, for example in lessons, through dedicated events or projects (Anti-bullying Week) or through joined up working with parents/carers. Staff themselves will be able to determine what will work best for young people depending on the particular issues they need to address.

However, there are a number of features of adult behaviour which if adopted are likely to significantly reduce incidents of bullying. Adults should ensure they know all young people's baseline behaviour in order to be aware of changes which may indicate they



are being bullied and:

- ensure punctuality
- play an active role in the supervision of young people during unstructured time
- check potentially high risk areas on a regular basis
- use the established systems of communication to detail incidents of bullying
- consider seating arrangements during transport to decrease the likelihood of incidents of bullying occurring
- regularly refer to the school's Code of Conduct to reinforce positive behaviour
- intervene before low-key verbal abuse or physical intimidation escalates
- confront the student who bullied or is suspected of, in a manner that allows them not to regard it as a negative experience, but one where they clearly understand why they are being spoken to and what aspects of their behaviour need to improve
- confront the students who were bullied to examine why the incident occurred, confirm the appropriateness of informing adults, and establish ways to avoid a repetition

Any young person can be at risk from bullying. Adults have an important role in warning them and advising them how to cope. Young people vulnerable to being bullied should be advised to:

- always tell an adult about alleged bullying, including cyberbullying and incidents occurring outside of the establishment
- be aware of not putting yourself into vulnerable or isolated situations
- be aware of where you could get immediate help
- try not to show any temper reaction that may entertain the child who bullied
- do not boast about possessions or money as this may make them vulnerable to being targeted
- give a clear reason not to lend someone an expensive item
- consider whether their behaviour provokes reactions in others

Some children, both those who bullied and students who were bullied may require more intense and regular sessions working proactively to develop appropriate strategies to minimise the bullying. This may form part of an intensive therapeutic intervention programme.

Adults need to examine carefully their own responses to bullying incidents or the suspicion of such. The lack of support to those who were bullied is often considered as permission for further attacks. If young people are to be protected from bullying, adults need to ensure that they:

- respond quickly and unambiguously to it
- are continually and persistently observant
- do not subconsciously transfer feeling of irritation to groups
- actually seek to bring bullying into the open with knowledge that it thrives on secrecy and often fades when discovered and discussed
- make use of class or individual THRIVE sessions and other appropriate times to discuss personal relationship problems



- make use of appropriate training opportunities, resource material etc. to improve their knowledge and skills in respect of helping both the student who was bullied and the child who bullied another student
- refer serious incidents to senior staff

When staff find out that someone is being bullied, this is what will happen:

- Staff will record the incident on CPOMS
- During the process, staff will talk with the child who was bullied and find out how that makes them feel
- Staff will then help the young person to look at strategies that may help them to deal with the bullying
- Staff will work with the child who bullied another student through link working and direct work in order to help them recognise how their behaviour is impacting on the other young people and help them learn better ways to interact with others
- If the bullying persists then staff will call a meeting with key staff, e.g. key workers, carers, social workers and therapy staff. The outcome of this meeting will be an action plan which may include a restorative meeting with both the child who bullied another student and the student who was bullied where both parties are asked to explain how they were feeling at the time of the incident and why they think it occurred and how it could be stopped from happening again. If persistent bullying becomes a safeguarding issue, it may be necessary to separate the two parties for a period of time until some resolution to the behaviour can be found
- The Headteacher is then to follow up this meeting with the young people to see if they feel that they have been listened to and dealt with fairly.
- If the bullying continues then the Proprietors and Police may have to be involved.
- The Stables recognises that bullying is not an issue that can be resolved immediately; rather it requires on-going work with the young people to develop positive relationships with others and address their feelings that are driving these behaviours. This is supported by our system of therapeutic interventions in which staff are trained.

Access to advice for students, parents and carers can be found below:

[Advice and support \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)