



Sandwell Transition Education and Partnership Service

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the STEPS Management Committee annually.

The policy was agreed by the STEPS Management Committee on 26.11.25

Signature pp Adar

Date 27.11.25

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(Head Teacher)

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Date 27.11.25

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(Chair of Management Committee)



Legislation

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that every school and setting must have measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. The Act also gives Head teachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff. This can relate to bullying incidents occurring anywhere e.g. at local shops or cyber-bullying.

The Equality Act 2010 provides for a Public Sector Equality Duty which requires public bodies, including schools and settings, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relationships between people.

The measures taken by schools with regard to behaviour and bullying prevention **MUST** be communicated to all staff, parents and pupils. The STEPS Centre will adhere to the above mentioned legislation.

Employer's duties

Employers are responsible under the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 for the health and safety of non-employees, such as children, who are at the workplace. They are required to do all that is reasonably practicable to protect their health and safety.

- Employers also have a common law duty of care to children in settings. They are required to take reasonable care.
- The statutory and common law duties are discharged if reasonable precautions are taken to prevent bullying in settings and there are procedures in place to record any incidents that do take place and procedures to take appropriate action to stop further incidents.
- Employers should give employees who are responsible for implementing a setting's anti-bullying procedures whatever information and training is necessary.

Employee's duties

Employees must take care for the reasonable care for the health and safety of others at work.

- Employees must co-operate with the employer in health and safety matters.
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Aims of this Policy

The staff at the STEPS Centre are committed to providing and encouraging a caring and secure environment where all pupils can learn and develop in order to prepare them for adult life. In order to do this it is vital that pupils, parents, staff and Management Committee members are aware of what is considered unacceptable behaviour within our centre, what procedures and strategies are in place to deal with incidents of bullying and how the methods intended to keep our pupils safe are monitored.

Definition of Bullying

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 such as:

Physical Bullying – Is the most obvious form of bullying. It occurs when children use physical actions to gain power and control over their targets. Physical bullies tend to be bigger, stronger and more aggressive than the victim child. Examples of physical bullying include kicking, hitting, punching, slapping, shoving and other physical attacks.

Verbal Bullying - Perpetrators of verbal bullying use words, statements, and [name-calling](#) to gain power and control over a target. Typically, verbal bullies will use relentless insults to belittle, demean and hurt another person. They choose their targets based on the way they look, act or behave. It's also common for verbal bullies to target kids with [special needs](#). Verbal bullying is often very difficult to identify because attacks almost always occur when adults aren't around; it can leave deep emotional scars.

Relational Aggression - [Relational aggression](#) is a sneaky and insidious type of bullying that often goes unnoticed by parents and teachers. Sometimes referred to as emotional bullying, relational aggression is a type of social manipulation where children try to hurt another child or sabotage their social standing. Relational bullies often [ostracize](#) others from a group, spread rumours, manipulate situations and break confidences. The goal behind a [relationally aggressive bully](#) is to increase their own social standing by controlling or bullying another person.

Cyberbullying - When a child uses the Internet, a cell phone or other technology to harass, threaten, embarrass or target another person, this is called [cyber-bullying](#). If an adult is involved in the harassment this is called cyber-harassment or [cyberstalking](#). Examples of cyberbullying include posting hurtful images, making online threats, and sending hurtful emails or texts.

Sexual Bullying - [Sexual bullying](#) consists of repeated, harmful and humiliating actions that target a person sexually. Examples include sexual name-calling, crude comments, vulgar gestures, uninvited touching, sexual propositioning and pornographic materials. For instance, a bully might make a crude comment about a girl's appearance, attractiveness, sexual development or sexual activity. In extreme cases, sexual bullying opens the door to [sexual assault](#).

Sexting also can lead to sexual bullying. For instance, a girl may send a photo of herself to a boyfriend. When they break up, he shares that photo with the entire school. As a result, she then becomes the target of sexual bullying because people make fun of her body, call her crude names and make vulgar comments about her. Some boys may even see this as an open invitation to proposition her or assault her.

Prejudicial Bullying – Prejudicial bullying is based on prejudices children have toward people of different races, religions or sexual orientation. This type of bullying can encompass all the other types of bullying as well [including cyber-bullying](#), verbal bullying, relational bullying, physical bullying and sometimes even sexual bullying. At times, this type of bullying is severe and can open the door to hate crimes. Any time a child is bullied for his race, religion or sexual orientation, it should be reported.

Child-on-Child Bullying - Child-on-child bullying can take many forms, including physical aggression, verbal abuse, emotional manipulation, or online harassment, and may also involve sexual or prejudicial bullying. It can happen in or outside the Centre and often occurs when adults are not present. At STEPS, we recognise that children can be both victims and perpetrators, and we respond seriously to all reported incidents. We educate children about respectful behaviour, provide opportunities to talk openly, and ensure that all concerns are addressed through our safeguarding

procedures. Any child-on-child abuse is treated as a serious safeguarding matter, and appropriate action will be taken to protect and support all those involved.

Symptoms of bullying:

Early signs that a child is being bullied could be:

- The child becoming withdrawn
- A deterioration in the child's work
- Erratic attendance or spurious illness
- Persistently arriving late at school
- General unhappiness or anxiety
- The child wanting to remain with adults
- Sudden outbursts not in common with the child's normal behaviour

Physical symptoms could include headaches, stomach aches, fainting, fits, vomiting or hyperventilation. Victims can become depressed and this can continue into their adult lives. They can want to take their own lives.

STEPS Positive Behaviour Plan/Policy outlines:

- What is acceptable behaviour
- STEPS Charter of Rights for staff and children
- The range of disciplinary sanctions
- A system of rewards for positive behaviour

Preventative Strategies

The main ways to prevent bullying are to create an ethos of good behaviour where children treat each other, Centre staff and all visitors with respect, this is to be modelled by all STEPS Centre Staff. They will teach children about the importance of understanding and tolerating differences between people. This may be done on the playground, in the classroom and weekly assemblies. We also believe it necessary to regularly teach about the dangers of cyber-bullying.

The Staff and Children's Charter of Rights is displayed in every room and the Positive Behaviour Strategy is available on request. All children and carers will be made aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour; this may be done through the STEPS Home Centre Agreement.

All Centre staff will be given training on identifying bullying and how to deal with it. Centre staff will encourage children to report bullying and create a positive and safe environment where children's concerns can be expressed and problems solved without fear of victimisation.

Strategies to combat bullying

We aim to include the following at the STEPS Centre:

Befriending

- Befriending involves assigning selected children volunteers to be with and befriend children who are being bullied or having difficulties because they are new to the Centre or upset by an event outside the Centre, e.g. a family bereavement. The objective is to give the befriended child someone to talk to and to help them feel more positive about themselves.

Circle of Friends

- A small number of children volunteer to form a circle of friends for a vulnerable child to help improve the child's level of inclusion and acceptance and to increase insight into his or her feelings and behaviour.

Support Groups

- The support group for a bullied child includes those involved in the bullying. The aim is to get the bully to identify with the victim and then to help resolve the problem.

Mediation by adults

- Members of staff can help establish ground rules between children who are being bullied and the children who are doing the bullying to help them co-exist in the Centre.

Assertiveness training groups

- From time to time we will involve the Behaviour Support Team with Assertiveness Training for Groups. This can cover:
 - Making assertive statements
 - Resisting manipulation and threats
 - Dealing with name calling
 - Staying calm in difficult situations
 - Escaping safely from physical restraint
 - Getting help from onlookers
 - Boosting self esteem

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

Formal Action

In dealing with bullying incidents, we will observe five key points. We will:

- Not ignore bullying.
- Not make premature assumptions.
- Take note of all accounts of the incidents and be fair in our response.
- Make every effort to adopt a problem-solving approach which encourages children to find solutions rather than simply justify themselves.
- Follow up to check bullying has not resumed.

What to do if there has been a bullying incident - Record the incident

If children do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, we will take formal action to stop bullying behaviour; these sanctions are in line with the Centre's Positive Behaviour Plan.

The Incident should be recorded on the CPOMS and the appropriate response taken (i.e. a positive behaviour plan). The Centre will keep records of all incidents and the Centre's response on the child's file.

In the case of provable, persistent and violent bullying the Headteacher may seek to permanently 'exclude' the bully.

Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably; taking into account the needs of vulnerable children (please refer to the Positive Behaviour Plan Stages of response). It is important to consider the motivations behind the bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator.

The consequences of bullying behaviour must reflect the seriousness of the incident so that the children see that bullying is unacceptable and punishable.

Sanctions

These sanctions will depend on a variety of factors but must be applied consistently and fairly. In all cases the sanctions will include an apology to the victim.

They may also include :

- Being kept in at playtime/lunchtime for a fixed period
- Being prevented from taking part in a treat
- Going 'on report' to the teacher, Centre Manager or Head Teacher
- Involvement of parents/carers

Advice to bullied children

We will tell our children not to suffer in silence. This will be reinforced through general day-to-sessions.

During a bullying incident, children will be advised to:

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as they can
- Be firm and clear and look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as they can
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away

After they have been bullied, children should:

- Tell an adult at the Centre and/or
- Tell their family
- Take a friend with them if they are scared to tell an adult by themselves
- Not blame themselves for what has happened
- What has happened to them
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Where it happened
- Who saw what happened
- What they have done about it already

The role of parents

Bullying is everyone's problem. All staff, children and parents should be aware that bullying exists and share a commitment to combat it and to make the Centre a happier place for everyone. Bullying will be included in the parents' sessions to raise their awareness of this issue and what to do when their child may be bullied or the bully.

Parents of a bullied child should:

- Talk to the child calmly about it and reassure the child that telling them about it was the right thing to do
- Make a note of what the child says
- Explain that the child should report any further incidents to a their teacher or member of the STEPS team straight away
- Arrange to see the child's teacher as soon as possible
- We also ask parents to contact the teacher if they suspect their child is being bullied.

After discussion, we confirm a child has been bullying we will contact the parents to discuss the issues.

We will ask parents to:

- Talk to the child and explain that bullying is wrong and makes others unhappy

- Show the child how to join in with others without bullying
- Arrange to see the child's teacher as soon as possible, and explain the problem and discuss how the Centre and the parents together can stop the bullying
- Talk to the child regularly about how things are going at the Centre
- Give the child lots of praise and encouragement when they are being kind and considerate to others.

From this sanctions and outline plans will be agreed. We will follow up the bullying child's behaviour and further bullying may result in exclusion (please refer to the (Positive behaviour Plan)).

Parental Actions and Restorative Interventions

When bullying behaviour is confirmed, the following steps will be taken to involve parents of the perpetrator and support positive change:

- Parents/carers will be contacted and invited to meet with staff to discuss the incident and its impact.
- A behaviour support plan will be agreed, outlining expectations, strategies, and monitoring arrangements.
- Parents will be asked to reinforce positive behaviour at home and maintain regular communication with the Centre.
- Restorative interventions may be used, where appropriate, to help the perpetrator understand the harm caused and take responsibility.
- These may include:
 - Facilitated conversations between the perpetrator and victim (with consent).
 - Reflective activities to promote empathy and accountability.
 - Joint agreements on future behaviour and mutual respect.
- Staff will assess the suitability of restorative approaches based on the needs and safety of all involved.
- The perpetrator will be supported to change their behaviour through:
 - One-to-one mentoring or counselling sessions.
 - Social skills and emotional regulation programmes.
 - Inclusion in peer support or friendship groups.
 - Opportunities to take on positive roles and responsibilities within the Centre.
 - Regular check-ins with a trusted adult to monitor progress and wellbeing.
- Parents will be encouraged to praise and reinforce kind, respectful behaviour at home.
- Continued bullying may result in further sanctions, including exclusion, in line with the Positive Behaviour Plan.

Bullying Outside the Centre

Bullying outside STEPS Centre will be investigated and acted upon. In these cases the parents of the victim and perpetrator will be involved as may members of the local community eg Social Services and the Community Support Officer.

Recording and Reporting Bullying Incidents

The Head Teacher and Centre Manager have a duty to record and report incidents of racism to the Local Authority. They will also monitor STEPS Incident Report Forms to detect any patterns of bullying towards or by a particular child. They may decide to report an incident of bullying to the Police or other authorities depending on the seriousness of the incident and other circumstances.

Guidelines for dealing with bullying behaviour within school



1. Remain calm. Take the incident or report seriously.
2. Take action immediately. The class teacher should be informed if the report has gone to another member of STEPS staff.
3. Provide support for the victim.
 - a. Ensure the victim has access to a bully free environment.
 - b. Use reliable peers, teacher and others as supporters.
 - c. Spend time with the victim. This can only be a short-term measure, as most victims of bullying want to be with their peer group.
4. Change the behaviour of the bully:
 - a. Use small groups or individual intervention programmes.
 - b. Use the 'No Blame' approach to gain support of the peer group.
 - c. Use the method of shared concern to target the bully as an individual in the group to accept responsibility.
 - d. Isolate the bully from the environment to reflect on the reasons for isolation and ask older pupils to write a letter explaining why he/she has been isolated (you can use the 4W form if you wish).
 - e. Involve the LA behaviour support teachers through the SENCO.
5. In the first instance the class teacher should deal with the incident. If it is serious the incident may be referred to the Centre Manager or Head Teacher or and parents will be informed. (Refer to the Positive Behaviour Plan – Stages of response pages 7 and 8).
6. **All incidents should be logged on the STEPS Incident Report Form**
7. Parents should be informed of the action to be taken (Refer to the Positive Behaviour Plan – Stages of response pages 7 and 8). This could take the form of the STEPS Home Centre Agreement for the bully and a strategy for helping the victim to cope with his situation.
8. The child who is bullying is acting in this way for a particular reason, and may need help and support. Bullies can be helped to become caring children too.

Statement on the Prevention of Homophobic Bullying

Section 28 of the Local Government Act states that:

'A local authority shall not... promote the teaching of any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship.'

The government guidelines that accompanied this Section of the Act (Department of the Environment, Circular 12/88) stated that:

'Section 28 does not affect the activities of school governors nor of teachers. It will not prevent the objective discussion of homosexuality in the classroom, not the counselling of children concerned about their sexuality.'

The Local Government Act 2000, Section 104

This amended section 28 by adding:

'nothing... shall be taken to prevent the Headteacher or governing body of a maintained school, or a teacher employed by a maintained school, from taking steps to prevent any form of bullying.'

The Sex and Relationship guidance (DfEE, July 2000), states that:

'Schools need to be able to deal with homophobic bullying. Guidance issued by the department (Social Inclusion: Children Support Circular 10/99), dealt with the unacceptability of and emotional distress and harm caused by bullying in whatever form – be it racial, as a result of a children's appearance, related to sexual orientation or for any other reason.'
(Section 1, Paragraph 32)

'Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatism of children based on their home circumstances.'
(Introduction, Paragraph 4)

'Enable them to understand the difference and respect themselves and others and for the purpose also of preventing and removing prejudice.'
(Section 1, Paragraph 5)

Related Policies

This document must be read, used, and applied alongside the school policies and procedures referred to below:

- Attendance Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy
- Equality Policy and Objectives
- ICT and Social Media Policy
- Physical Restraint Policy
- Prevent Duty Policy
- Behaviour Regulation and Relationship Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

