



# SPRATTON HALL

## **Anti-Bullying Strategy**

September 2024

## SPRATTON HALL ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGY

Title: Anti-Bullying Strategy	Responsible: SJSC / CMW / CJB
Date implemented: March 2006	Last Review: September 2024
	Next Review: September 2025

### Policy Statement

This policy works alongside our 'Behaviour and Sanctions Policy', our 'Safeguarding Policy' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'. We refer to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, and Child on Child Abuse guidance. We also refer to the non-statutory advice 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017).

### Definition

Bullying can be defined as 'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

It is difficult for victims to defend themselves against bullying.

Bullying can be:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal: name calling, insulting, offensive remarks, threats
- Indirect: spreading rumours, exclusion, ostracising
- Cyberbullying: using technology - mobile phone, social networks, email, etc in order to deliberately to hurt or humiliate another (See Cyberbullying Policy)

It may be directed at an individual or it may arise out of the victim's ethnicity, nationality, colour, religious belief, sexual orientation, appearance, health condition, family circumstances, special educational needs or some form of disability and thus affect a wider group.

### Aims

At Spratton Hall our aim is that staff, children and parents work together to create a happy, caring learning environment in line with our school rule 'Be Kind'. Our aim is to make the schools ones in which bullying has no place and to have a whole school approach to ensuring safety, security, openness and confidence.

### Objectives

- To raise awareness of the school's expectations in terms of behaviour and to adhere to our Code of Conduct.

- To communicate effectively to all members of the school community the school's 'zero tolerance', stance on bullying.
- To engage members of the school community in reaching a shared understanding of what bullying is.
- To communicate effectively to all members of the school community the school's policy and procedures.
- To promote an open atmosphere in which victims and witnesses know that it is right "to tell" and feel safe to do so.
- To work with staff so that they can identify different sorts of bullying and know how to deal with cases sensitively, supportively and effectively.
- To work with children in a range of ways to equip them with social and emotional skills in order to reduce bullying and to be able to counter and deal with bullying.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all pupils and staff at Spratton irrespective of their age and whether or not a pupil is in the care of the School when/if bullying behaviour occurs.

**Bullying Behaviour** is always unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Spratton because:

- It is harmful to the person who is bullied, and to those who engage in bullying behaviour, and those who support them.
- It interferes with a pupil's right to be secure and happy in their environment and consequently their ability to perform to their potential in all areas of Spratton life.
- It is contrary to all our aims and values, our internal culture and the reputation of the School.
- It can lead to psychological damage and, in extreme cases, suicide.

### **Bullying Behaviour**

**A Definition of Bullying:** Bullying can hurt or cause distress by taking unfair advantage of another person in some way, making him or her feel uncomfortable or threatened. Bullying is behaviour which is repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer – it may occur directly or through cyber-technology (social websites, mobile phones, text messages and email). Examples are:

- Physical bullying such as hitting, kicking, pushing people around, spitting; or taking, damaging or hiding possessions.
- Verbal bullying – name-calling, taunting, teasing, insulting, racist, religious, cultural, homophobic, transphobic, gender reassignment, sexual/sexist remarks or demanding money.
- Exclusionary behaviour – intimidating, isolating or excluding a person from a group e.g. someone with a disability, or any of the protected characteristics
- Sexual harassment – talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way.
- General unkindness – spreading rumours or writing unkind notes.
- Online - social media, mobile phones, text messages, gaming, photographs, emails.

It may be directed at an individual or it may arise out of the victim's ethnicity, nationality, colour, religious belief, sexual orientation, appearance, health condition, family circumstances, special educational needs or some form of disability and thus affect a wider group.

**Intention:** Not all bullying is deliberate or intended to hurt. Some individuals may see their hurtful conduct as "teasing" or "a game" or "for the good of" the other person. These forms of bullying are equally unacceptable but may be non-malign and can often be corrected quickly with advice and without disciplinary sanctions. A bully who does not respond appropriately to advice or sanctions would ultimately have to leave Spratton.

**Responsibility:** It is everyone's responsibility to ensure, whatever the circumstances, that no pupil becomes a victim of bullying. A person may be vulnerable to bullying because of his/her age, physical appearance, nationality, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, religious beliefs, special educational needs or disability, or because he/she is new in the School, appears to be uncertain or has no friends. She/he may also become a target because of an irrational decision by a bully.

**Legal Aspects:** A person who makes a physical or sexual assault on another, or who steals or causes damage to the property of another, commits a criminal offence and also a civil wrong known as a "tort" for which there can be legal consequences outside the School.

### **Anti-Bullying Culture**

**Ethos:** Our expectation of all members of the School Community is that:

Everyone will uphold the values of Spratton which are displayed throughout the school and in every classroom.

- A pupil or a member of staff who witnesses or hears of an incident of bullying will report it.
- A complaint of bullying will always be taken seriously.
- No one in the Spratton community will tolerate unkind actions or remarks or stand by when someone else is being bullied.

### **Equal Opportunities:**

- Discrimination against pupils because of their protected characteristics is not acceptable in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Discriminatory words and behaviour are treated as unacceptable.
- Positive attitudes are fostered towards both sexes through the curriculum and tutor periods.

**Staff:** Through their training and experience, members of the staff are expected to promote an anti-bullying culture by:

- Celebrating achievement
- Anticipating problems and providing support

- Disciplining sensibly and fairly
- Making opportunities to listen to pupils
- Acting as advocates of pupils

**Pupils:** Through our pastoral care systems, pupils are informed and taught that bullying will not be tolerated in the School. They are encouraged:

- to celebrate the effort and achievement of others
- to hold and promote positive attitudes.
- to feel able to share problems with staff
- to turn to anyone they trust if they have a problem
- not to feel guilty about airing complaints
- to treat meals and break times as pleasant social occasions

### **Anti-Bullying Systems**

**Approach:** Our systems for detecting and dealing with bullying work very closely with the Safeguarding Policy and our Behaviour and Sanctions Policy. They are designed to operate:

- *Vertically*, through the House system and school assemblies.
- *Horizontally*, within year groups and in the classroom and other activities.

**Complaints:** A pupil who feels that they are being bullied should complain without delay and can do so in several ways. She/he can:

- Tell his/her parents, his/her Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care, Matron, the Chaplain, Mental Health Lead or a member of staff or a responsible older pupil; alternatively -
- Contact the School Chaplain who acts as an independent listener to the school.
- Toot Toot – our anonymous online platform for reporting pastoral worries or concerns
- Contact Childline (0800 1111).
- Contact the NSPCC 24 Hour Helpline on 0808 800 5000
- Contact the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership on 0300 126 7000 / (out of hours) 01604 626938 / email CFSS@NCTrust.co.uk

**Meetings:** Bullying and our Anti-Bullying Strategies is regularly discussed in meetings between:

- The three tutors in each year group, the Heads of Year, the Head of Pastoral Care and the Deputy Head Master
- Members of the Senior Management Team
- Tutors and pupils in their tutor group
- School staff in any of the 8.20am Staff Briefings
- The result of these meetings is to feed back information about friendship patterns, particular incidents, any pupil who seems to be isolated, any growing 'power base'.

**Record Keeping:** Form Tutor, Heads of Year, the Head of Pastoral Care and Deputy Head Master maintain records of the welfare and development of individual pupils. Any bullying incidents, sanctions given, meetings with pupils and/or parents are recorded.

**Education:** The curriculum (specifically in PSHCE) includes a course on bullying including cyber-bullying. Bullying is directly dealt with in the *Celebrating Difference* part of the Jigsaw programme in the second half of the Autumn Term and indirectly in the *Healthy Me and Relationships* Sections. The course covers:

- Who is the “bully”? Who is the “victim”?
- Why are some people “bullies” and others “victims”?
- What should a pupil do if she/he is bullied?
- What constitutes bullying? Where are the boundaries?
- What should be done if bullying is confirmed?
- What are the different types of bullying – including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory bullying?

There are also frequent year group and whole school assemblies and discussions in Form Tutorials on bullying. Computing lessons also cover cyber-bullying and staying safe online.

**Girls on Board** is an approach which helps girls, their parents and their teachers to understand the complexities and dynamics of girl friendships. It is instrumental in helping girls understand the reasons why bullying might occur and empowers girls to build and maintain healthy relationships to avoid bullying occurring and how to deal with it. At Spratton Hall we have regular **Girls on Board** sessions with year groups.

**Staff Training:** Appropriate training in all aspects of care is arranged to ensure that staff have the necessary professional skills, especially:

- Awareness of the risk and indications of child abuse and bullying, and how to deal with cases, with particular emphasis on the needs and support for pupils with protected characteristics such as SEND/LGBT.
- Staff receive in-house training on how to deal with bullying behaviour from the Head of Pastoral Care (DSL) as part of our annual safeguarding updates, and in safeguarding updates through the year
- The training is based on the principles of the Anti-Bullying Strategy and the recording and the reporting lines to be used, together with legal responsibilities in accordance with KCSIE 2024.

**Pupils’ Responsibilities:** We encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences, and to make a commitment to take action to end the bullying and support the bullied pupil. We emphasise with senior pupils the role which is expected of them in setting a good example and being helpful to younger pupils and each other.

All senior pupils have the opportunity for House duties they also have the opportunity to take on pastoral responsibilities if they wish to do so.

Younger children are ‘buddied-up’ with older pupils in houses.

The responsibilities of senior pupils are appropriately limited.

Heads of School meet each week with the Head Master.

House Captains support and encourage younger pupils sensitively.

**Monitoring:** Every complaint or report of bullying must be recorded on **Engage** (the school’s electronic administrative system) and reported to the Deputy Head Master and Head of Pastoral Care.

### Reporting Incidents

**Victim:** There are many reasons why a pupil who has suffered bullying may be reluctant to report it. She/he may become demoralised and may say, for example:

- It is telling tales. They won’t believe me because the person I am complaining about is intelligent and popular and I am not, and I will become even more unpopular.
- The things they are saying and doing are too embarrassing to discuss with an adult.
- It is all my fault for being overweight/too studious etc
- There are too many of them; there is nothing the staff can do.
- It will get back to my parents and they will think less of me.
- I will just try and toughen up and grow a thicker skin.
- I will lie low and not audition for a part in the school play.

**Witnesses:** There are also reasons why a pupil who has witnessed or learned of bullying behaviour may not want to make a report. She/he may say:

- It is “grassing” and I will become unpopular.
- It is not my concern anyway.
- I don’t rate the victim and I would find it embarrassing to be associated with him/her.

**Culture:** Any of these responses would be contrary to our culture at Spratton. We encourage every pupil to understand that:

- Every complaint of bullying will be taken seriously.
- Members of staff will deal with a complaint correctly and effectively in accordance with their experience and the training they have received.
- There is a solution to nearly every problem of bullying.
- A pupil who complains will receive support and advice and in many cases the problem can be dealt with on a no-names basis.
- The primary aim will be for the bullying to cease, not the punishment of the bully unless necessary.

### Procedures

**Guidelines:** The following procedures are a guideline except where expressed in the terms “should” or “must”. The best guide is the experience and training of the staff.

**Initial Complaint:** A person in authority who learns of alleged bullying behaviour should:

- Firstly, offer advice, support and reassurance to the alleged victim.
- Report the allegation to the Form Tutor and/or Head of Year of the victim and the alleged bully as soon as possible.
- Inform the Deputy Head Master and Head of Pastoral Care to agree on a strategy, and on who will take the lead.

**Assessment:** The victim’s Form Tutor and/or Head of Year will normally see the victim and (unless the case is very serious) any witnesses without delay and form an initial view of the allegation, viz:

- The nature of the incident/s – physical? Verbal? Exclusionary? Etc.
- Is it a “one-off” incident involving an individual or group?
- It is part of a pattern of behaviour by an individual or a group?
- Has physical injury been caused? Who should be informed – The Deputy Head Master? Parents? The School’s child protection officer?/Head of Pastoral Care
- Can the alleged bully be seen on a no-names basis?
- Be aware of reverse bullying (retaliation after goading)
- What is the likely outcome if the complaint proves to be correct?

At this stage, the possible outcomes for an incident which is not too serious include:

- There has been a misunderstanding which can be explained sympathetically to the alleged victim with advice to the alleged bully.
- The complaint is justified in whole or in part, and further action will be needed (see Range of Action, below).

**Serious Incident:** If the Form Tutor/Head of Year believes that serious bullying behaviour:

has occurred involving a pupil in his/her form/year; or has recurred after warnings have been given to the “bully” the Head Master / Deputy Head / Head of Pastoral Care should be informed.

The Head Master / Deputy Head / Head of Pastoral Care will then:-

- Interview the alleged victim, bully and any witnesses separately, in order to establish the facts of the case. She/he may decide to ask the Form Tutor/Head of Year to be present.
- Record a summary of his/her findings.

AND

The Head Master / Deputy Head / Head of Pastoral Care will interview the alleged victim and bully separately:



- To confirm the facts of the case, if considered necessary
- To decide on the action to be taken in accordance with the Range of Action set out below.

The Head Master will notify the parents of the victim and bully giving them details of the case and the action being taken.

**Range of Action** When a complaint is upheld the range of responses will include one or more of the following:

- Advice and support for the victim and, where appropriate, establishing a course of action to help the victim.
- Advice and support to the bully in trying to change his/her behaviour. This may include clear instructions and a warning or final warning.
- A supervised meeting between the bully and the victim to discuss their differences and the ways in which they may be able to avoid future conflict.
- A disciplinary sanction against the bully such as Head's Detention, Suspension. In a very serious case or a case of persistent bullying a pupil may, after a fair hearing, be required to leave Spratton permanently.
- Should we deem bullying incidents to be sufficiently severe that physical or emotional harm has taken place, then we will contact the police or our local authority's social care team.
- Notifying the parents of one or both pupils about the case and the action which has been taken.
- Such other action as may appear to the Head Master to be appropriate.
- Noting the outcome on **Engage**.

**Monitoring:** The position should be monitored for as long as necessary thereafter. Action may include:

- Sharing information with some or all colleagues so that they may be alert to the need to monitor certain pupils closely
- Ongoing counselling and support
- Vigilance
- Mentioning the incident at meetings of staff
- Reviewing vulnerable individuals and areas of the School

**Formal Complaint:** If the victim or his/her parents are not satisfied with the action taken, they should be advised to make a formal complaint, according to the procedure outlined in the School's Complaints Procedures, the Staff Handbook and the joining instructions.