



THE STONEHENGE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 2026

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Contents

1. Statement of intent
2. Legal framework
3. Statutory implications
4. Definitions
5. Types of bullying
6. Signs of bullying
7. Roles and responsibilities
8. Prevention
9. Child-on-child abuse
10. Cyberbullying
11. Procedures
12. Sanctions
13. Support
14. Follow-up support
15. Bullying outside of school
16. Record keeping
17. Monitoring and review

1. Statement of intent

At The Stonehenge School we are committed to creating a positive learning environment and to fostering respectful relationships where staff and students are able to work and study in a supportive, caring and safe place, in which they can flourish and achieve their potential without fear and free from intimidation, aggression and victimisation. We therefore believe that preventing and tackling bullying should have a high priority within the school, with a clear commitment by the whole school community including families, governors, staff and pupils.

All staff have a responsibility for keeping students safe from bullying and discrimination, and supporting them in developing positive relationships with adults and their peers. In all teaching situations, the staff and pupils should strive to create a harmonious atmosphere in which effective teaching and learning can take place.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Policy. The Stonehenge School will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment. All incidents will be taken seriously and could provide grounds for disciplinary action and may lead to suspension or exclusion from the school. Furthermore, individuals who bully or harass may be subject to criminal and/or civil prosecution.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Secondary Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy

3. Statutory implications

The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of pupils to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, and hate crimes. [The NPCC Guidance will be taken into account where relevant.](#)

4. Definitions

There is no legal definition of bullying, however the Stonehenge School use the following statement as promoted by the Anti-Bullying Alliance:

"Repetitive intentional hurting of one person or a 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."

Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of

time.

Intent: The perpetrator **means** to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.

Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.

Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Isolated or one-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a one-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of conduct.

Bullying is not:

- A one-off comment said in anger in which there is no evident power imbalance between the students involved.
- An argument between two students where both have been guilty of similarly offensive or threatening remarks.
- A physical altercation between two students in which both have been willing participants

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

Pupils with certain characteristics may also be more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ
- Pupils from an ethnic minority background
- Pupils with SEND

Students are made aware that the above (and others) are protected characteristics as embedded in the Equality Act (2010) as part of their PSHE curriculum.

5. Types of bullying

Different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be perpetrated in different ways. Bullying is acted out through the following media:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Hitting, kicking, spitting or other physical assault.
- Verbal threats, name-calling or spreading rumours. This may be directed towards

gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, personality or sexuality.

- Writing, drawing or circulating offensive material, or posting it on a social media site.
- Sending intimidating or threatening text messages on mobile phones, email, Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram or other electronic means.
- Deliberate isolation or exclusion from a group.
- Hiding, spoiling or destroying personal property.
- Taxing, stealing or extortion.
- Being bullied into truancy, misconduct in school, anti-social or illegal behaviour.

6. Signs of bullying

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Coercing/ forcing others to buy food using dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming

more easily aggravated.

- They have been the victim of abuse.
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress.

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's formtutor or Progress Leader, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents to improve procedures.
- Keeping a log of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow proper analysis of data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

Pastoral Leaders are responsible for:

- Responding to and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur
- Investigating and coordinating any sanctions for the perpetrator as well as support for the victim

Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Pastoral Managers are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the pupil's Progress Leader of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances to Pastoral Leaders

Parents are responsible for:

- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.
- Informing their child's Progress Leader or tutor if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in anyway.
- Monitoring their child's phone and social media usage to ensure this is age appropriate and that messages neither cause harm to self or others.
- Working together with school in line with school policies so their child can feel safe and supported at all times

Pupils are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying as soon as possible.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations, where possible/
- Avoiding involving other pupils and/or escalating incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyberbullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyberbullying.

8. Prevention

The school will clearly communicate a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying and have a clear set of values and standards which will be regularly promoted across the whole school.

As part of our mission statement we place great emphasis on ***"creating good citizens who thrive and flourish in the 21st Century ready to contribute to a global community."***

This intention is embedded throughout our curriculum and staff will encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Diversity, difference and respect for others will be promoted and celebrated in every lesson with respect being a cornerstone of our pupil code of conduct. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events, e.g. drama productions, sporting activities, house

challenges, and student parliament.

Beyond the wider curriculum, the Stonehenge school has an extensive PSHE programme with weekly dedicated curriculum time set aside in order to fully explore themes that are important to the character development of students.

All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the RSE and health education curriculum, in line with the Secondary Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy.

This curriculum will explore and discuss issues at age-appropriate stages such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships.
- Boundaries and consent.
- Stereotyping, prejudice, and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- How to recognise abusive relationships and coercive control.
- Harmful sexual behaviour, the concepts involved and why they are always unacceptable, and the laws relating to it.

Each year group is supported by an extensive pastoral team who are available at breaks and lunchtimes should a student want to raise concerns. Tutors also see pupils twice a day via registration and tutorial sessions, and offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

Furthermore, we have a number of students in older year groups in leadership positions (ambassadors and prefects) who are on hand for younger students who would rather talk to peers when experiencing issues. We also have a team of fully trained mental health champions. This team is comprised of both staff and students. This enables us to be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced.

At the Stonehenge School we recognise that anti bullying is a whole school commitment. As such, all members of the school will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it

9. Child-on-child abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons, in line with the Prevention section of this policy.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.
- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being

reported does not mean it is not happening.

- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- Never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising such behavior.
- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing or initiation-type violence.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such as inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting.
- Deliberately brushing against someone.
- Displaying images or video of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence).
- Online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled; this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to MASH and potentially directly to the police, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances. [The NPCC Guidance will be taken into account where relevant.](#)

All staff will be aware and sensitive towards the fact that pupils may not be ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused. Pupils being abused may feel embarrassed, humiliated, scared, or threatened.

More information on the school’s approach to preventing and managing instances of child-on-child abuse can be found within this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

10. Cyberbullying and Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life. It can take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and the wider community. Mobile phones are banned at the Stonehenge School, partly for this reason.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim’s phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging

- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networkingsites, e.g. Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in section 12 of this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'Signs of bullying' section of this policy; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer
- Being caught on their phone routinely during the school day.
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer
- Becoming excessively upset or angry when their mobile phone is taken away
- Parents will also be directed to information online via the school website to support education on the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying, and will be advised to report to the headteacher if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- **Possible extensive scale and scope** – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- **The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying** – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- **The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is** – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- **The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying** – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising
- **The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened** – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

The school encourages parents to monitor their child's mobile phone usage, and enforce age restrictions to social media sites, in order to minimise the risks detailed previously.

The Stonehenge School is a mobile phone free site in order to allow students the opportunity to learn without the potential risk of cyberbullying in school. Students found on their mobile phones will have these confiscated for parental collection only in line with our behavior policy.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to insist that files are deleted from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. Parents may be called to school to do this should the need arise. In these cases, the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy will be followed at all times.

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

The Stonehenge School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

The Stonehenge School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our behaviour policy.

11. Procedures

Incidents should be reported to a trusted member of staff; this could be the victim's form tutor, pastoral manager, teaching assistant, progress leader or class teacher. Staff will take you seriously, will investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator, and inform the progress leader of the incident and outcome.

When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses are all interviewed separately.
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed, including electronic communication
- If a pupil is injured, members of staff take the pupil immediately to First Aid for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries.
- Witnesses will be interviewed for serious incidents.
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses are asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture.
- In cases of cyberbullying we will gather evidence of a cyberbullying incident; this may involve text messages, emails, photos, etc. provided by the victim.
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgmental.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not assigning blame until the investigation is complete.
- All pupils involved are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils.

Due to the potential for some specific forms of bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

12. Sanctions

If the Pastoral Leaders are satisfied that bullying did take place, the perpetrator will be helped to

understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents. The headteacher will direct staff to use a graduated response inform of sanctions to be used, e.g. verbal reprimand, detentions, or service-based activities. Depending on the severity and/or continuation of the bullying sanctions may be escalated to a suspension.

If possible, staff will attempt reconciliation and will obtain an apology from the perpetrator and work towards mediation. This will either be in writing to the victim, and/or witnesses if appropriate, or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion will be used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.

All staff involved in managing instances of bullying will be aware that taking disciplinary action and providing support are not mutually exclusive actions and should be conducted simultaneously to encourage more positive behaviour in future. The school's focus when handling perpetrators will be supporting them to develop more positive behaviours and to refrain from abusive and bullying behaviours in the future.

The school will remain cognisant of the fact that continued access to school can be important for rehabilitation of harmful behaviour, and will not suspend pupils unless as a last resort – where there have been serious or consistent incidents of bullying, the school will act in line with the Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

13. Support

In the event of bullying, victims will be offered the following support:

- Emotional support and reassurance from the year group pastoral manager.
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken.
- Liaison with their parents to ensure a continuous dialogue of support.
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent or a member of staff.
- Advice on aspects of online safety, in the event of cyberbullying, to prevent re-occurrence, including, where appropriate, discussion with their parents to evaluate their online habits and age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online
- Discussion with their parent on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation or abuse where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents). **The [NPCC Guidance](#) will be taken into account where relevant.**
- Any other support deemed appropriate.

Senior leaders, in collaboration with staff, will carefully consider in each instance of bullying that is handled whether it is appropriate to split up the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), e.g. preventing them sharing classes or spaces where possible, and will split up other harmful group dynamics to prevent further occurrences where necessary. Victims will be encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school clubs or activities.

Staff, particularly the DSL/DDSL/ Pastoral Leads, will work with the victim to build resilience, e.g. by offering emotional support.

The school will acknowledge that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental health issues.

Perpetrators will also have support to review reasons for behaviour and emotional support will be offered to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

14. Follow-up support

The progress of both the perpetrator and the victim will be monitored by their form tutors. One-on-one sessions to discuss how the victim and perpetrator are progressing may be appropriate. If appropriate, follow-up correspondence will be arranged by an appropriate member of staff, e.g. Progress Leader/ pastoral manager, reset manager, SENDCO.

Pupils who have been bullied will be offered continuous support. The victim will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

Pupils who have bullied others will be supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from parents

Pupils who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CAMHS.

15. Bullying outside of school

Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, e.g. on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.

The Headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the Police of the action taken by a pupil/s. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat

to a member of the public, the Police will be informed. [The NPCC Guidance will be taken into account where relevant.](#)

16. Record keeping

All reported incidents will be recorded on our behavior management site "Class Charts". Alongside the actual incident, staff will record what decisions have been made and follow up actions e.g. sanctions, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The headteacher will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:

- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on the handling of cases to ensure learnings inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.

17. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher and Governing Body have a statutory responsibility for school behaviour and discipline. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. The policy along with other school policies will be available on the school website. The Governing Body will review the policy and assess its implementation and effectiveness