STONYHURST
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
PENANG

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

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Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Stonyhurst International School Penang is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all pupils. Bullying and harassment have no place in our school community. This policy aims to prevent and address incidents of bullying and harassment, and to promote a positive and respectful school culture. All members of the school community, including pupils, staff, parents, and visitors, are expected to comply with this policy.

Definitions

a) **Harmful behaviour** refers to actions by a young person that cause physical, emotional, or psychological harm to another, whether intentional or unintentional. Unlike bullying, which is typically repetitive and involves a power imbalance, harmful behaviour may occur as a single incident.

b) **Peer conflict:** Peer conflict refers to disagreements or fallouts where pupils are mutually involved, may both be upset, and there is no clear power imbalance or ongoing pattern of harm. Conflict is a normal part of development and is addressed through pastoral support, guidance, and restorative approaches rather than being treated as bullying.

c) **Accidental harm:** Accidental harm occurs when an injury or upset is caused unintentionally through misjudgment, over-excitement, or silly behaviour (for example, bumping into someone, an accidental push in a game). This is not bullying, but staff will still address the behaviour, safety, and any resulting upset.

d) **Bullying:** Bullying refers to intentional, harmful behaviour that is **repeated** or likely to be repeated, and involves a **real or perceived power imbalance**. It results in physical, emotional, or psychological distress. It may include physical, verbal, or relational aggression, cyberbullying, or any form of intimidating or exclusionary behaviour.

e) **Harassment:** Harassment refers to any unwanted conduct that is related to an individual's protected characteristic, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or nationality. It includes offensive, threatening, or discriminatory behaviour that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. It takes into account the child's age and what is deemed as appropriate or inappropriate for that stage of development.

The category under which the behaviour falls will be determined by the School, using its internal monitoring and categorisation procedures to ensure a proportionate and consistent response.

Prevention Strategies

a) **Education and Awareness:** Stonyhurst School Penang will implement regular programs to educate pupils, staff, and parents about bullying and harassment, their impact, and ways to prevent them. This may include workshops, awareness campaigns, schemes of work, and guest speakers.

b) **School Culture:** We will foster a positive and inclusive school culture that promotes respect, empathy, and kindness. We will celebrate diversity and discourage prejudice and discrimination.

c) **Reporting Mechanisms**: The school will establish multiple reporting mechanisms to ensure that incidents of bullying and harassment can be reported easily and confidentially.

Reporting and Investigation Procedure

a) **Reporting:** pupils who experience or witness bullying or harassment should promptly report the incident to a trusted staff member, teacher, or the designated reporting channels. Staff members who receive reports must take them seriously and ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the reporter. In most cases, the first point of contact will be the pupil's Tutor (Junior) or Playroom Leader / Head of Year (Secondary), who will assess the concern, provide an initial response, and, where necessary, escalate to the Assistant Head Pastoral and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for further action.

b) **Investigation:** Upon receiving a report, the school will promptly investigate the incident, ensuring a fair and unbiased process. Investigations will be carried out by a member of staff, who will interview involved parties, gather evidence, and document their findings. To ensure interviews are conducted in accordance with Pupil Conduct policy, interviews can be conducted without the presence of a parent. For younger pupils, interviews may be conducted by a familiar and trusted member of staff to provide reassurance and maintain the child's comfort throughout the process.

c) **Support:** The school will provide appropriate support to the victim(s) and, when necessary, the alleged perpetrator(s) during and after the investigation. This may include counselling, mediation, disciplinary actions, and restorative practices, depending on the severity and circumstances of the incident.

Disciplinary Measures

a) **Consequences:** Any pupil found guilty of bullying or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the school's code of conduct and behaviour policy. These consequences may include but are not limited to verbal warnings, written apologies, counselling, parental involvement, suspension, or expulsion, depending on the severity and frequency of the behaviour.

b) **Legal Actions**: In cases of severe bullying or harassment, the school may involve law enforcement authorities if deemed necessary.

Support and Intervention

a) **Victim Support:** Victims of bullying or harassment will receive immediate support from the school. This may include counselling services, referral to external support agencies, and ongoing monitoring of their well-being. The school will take appropriate steps to ensure that victims are protected from further harm and that their educational experience is not adversely affected.

b) **Support for Perpetrators:** The school recognises that pupils who engage in bullying or harassment may require support to address their behaviour. In addition to disciplinary measures, appropriate interventions will be implemented to help perpetrators understand the impact of their actions, develop empathy, and learn alternative ways to resolve conflicts.

c) **Mediation and Restorative Practices:** Where appropriate, the school may facilitate mediation or restorative practices to resolve conflicts between individuals involved in bullying or harassment incidents. These processes aim to promote understanding, empathy, and reconciliation among all parties, with the goal of preventing future incidents and repairing relationships.

Training and Professional Development

a) **Staff Training:** Staff will receive regular training on recognising, preventing, and addressing bullying and harassment. This training will equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively respond to incidents, support victims, and intervene with perpetrators.

b) **Pupil Education:** pupils will receive age-appropriate education on bullying and harassment as part of the school's curriculum. This education will focus on promoting empathy, respect, and assertiveness, as well as teaching pupils how to respond to and report incidents of bullying or harassment.

Confidentiality and Non-Retaliation

a) **Confidentiality:** The school will handle all reports, investigations, and interventions with utmost confidentiality, to the extent allowed by law and with consideration for the safety and well-being of all individuals involved.

b) **Non-Retaliation:** Stonyhurst School Penang prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report incidents of bullying or harassment, participate in investigations, or provide information related to such incidents. Any retaliatory actions will be subject to disciplinary measures.

Partnership with Parents and Guardians

Communication: The school will maintain open lines of communication with parents and guardians regarding incidents of bullying and harassment. Parents will be promptly informed of any reports involving their child and will be included in the support and intervention process. We do ask for patience, as parents should be aware that the school does not apply immediate punitive consequences except in cases of extremely serious harm or immediate risk. Effective responses require time to understand the situation fully and put appropriate support in place.

Parent Education: Stonyhurst School Penang will provide resources, workshops, or information sessions for parents and guardians to educate them about bullying and harassment, signs to look out for, and strategies to support their child at home.

Respectful communication about pupils: Parents and carers must not label, refer to, or discuss another child as a "bully" with other parents, in community spaces, on social media, or in messaging groups. Doing so creates a significant power imbalance, constitutes bullying behaviour by an adult towards a child, and breaches our Parent and Community Code of Conduct. It can unfairly stigmatise a child, spread misinformation, and undermine the school's ability to respond fairly and proportionately. Parents with concerns about behaviour must bring them directly to their child's Tutor or Playroom Leader (Head of Year) so that the matter can be properly assessed and managed. If a parent feels that the school has not acted appropriately, we invite them to follow the School Complaints Procedure, rather than risk a child being publicly criticised, targeted, or victimised. This ensures concerns are resolved safely, respectfully, and

in partnership with the school.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

a) **Partnerships:** The school will actively collaborate with external organisations, agencies, and experts in the field of bullying prevention and support services to enhance its anti-bullying initiatives. This may include guest speakers, workshops, and participation in community-wide campaigns against bullying and harassment.

b) **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Data on reported incidents, interventions, and outcomes will be collected and analysed to identify trends, inform policy improvements, and ensure the ongoing effectiveness of anti-bullying efforts.

This Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy reflects Stonyhurst School Penang's commitment to providing a safe and nurturing environment where all individuals can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. By fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and inclusion, we can create a school community free from bullying and harassment.

Awareness Campaigns

a) Stonyhurst School Penang will organise awareness campaigns focused on bullying and harassment prevention. These campaigns will engage the school community and may include activities such as assemblies, workshops, guest speakers, creative projects, and discussions. The goal is to reinforce the importance of respectful behaviour, empathy, and the reporting process.

b) The awareness campaigns will also address the various forms of bullying and harassment, including cyberbullying, verbal abuse, social exclusion, and discrimination. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own behaviour and take a stand against bullying and harassment in all its forms.

Cyberbullying

a) Stonyhurst School Penang recognises that cyberbullying poses a significant threat to the well-being of pupils in the digital age. Cyberbullying refers to the use of digital technologies, such as social media, instant messaging, emails, AI or online platforms, to engage in bullying or harassing behaviour.

b) The school's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy extends to address cyberbullying, emphasising that it is unacceptable and will be treated with the same seriousness as other forms of bullying. Pupils are expected to adhere to the policy both on and off campus, including their online interactions.

c) The school will actively educate pupils, parents, and staff about the risks and consequences of cyberbullying, as well as provide guidance on safe and responsible online behaviour. This education will cover topics such as digital citizenship, privacy settings, reporting mechanisms for online platforms, and the impact of online actions on others.

d) Pupils can easily report such incidents to designated staff members. The school will promptly investigate reported incidents and take appropriate action, which may include disciplinary measures, counselling, or involvement of parents/guardians.

e) Alongside prevention and intervention efforts, the school will collaborate with parents/guardians and external organisations to promote digital literacy and encourage responsible online behaviour. This may involve workshops, resources, and partnerships aimed at fostering a culture of respect and empathy in the digital realm.

f) The school will regularly review and update its strategies to address cyberbullying, keeping abreast of evolving technologies and trends. This will ensure that the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy remains effective in tackling the complexities of cyberbullying and provides a safe online environment for all pupils.

Stonyhurst School Penang is dedicated to combating cyberbullying and safeguarding the well-being of pupils in the digital age. By integrating measures specifically addressing cyberbullying within the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy, we aim to promote responsible digital citizenship, empower pupils to navigate online spaces safely, and create a school community that upholds kindness and respect both offline and online.

Review and Continuous Improvement

The Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with changing legal requirements and best practices. The review process will involve input from pupils, staff, parents, and external experts. Suggestions for improvement, emerging issues, and trends in bullying and harassment incidents will be taken into account to enhance the effectiveness of prevention strategies and support mechanisms.

Where behaviour meets the threshold for child-on-child abuse, the School's **Child-on-Child Abuse Policy** and **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** will be followed alongside this policy.

Stonyhurst School Penang is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where all members of the school community can thrive. By implementing and enforcing this comprehensive Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying and harassment, support victims, intervene with perpetrators, and foster a positive school culture that promotes kindness, empathy, and respect. Together, we can create a school community free from fear, discrimination, and harm.