



Stapleford Baptist Church

Albert Street, Stapleford, Nottingham
NG9 8DB

Registered Charity Number 1175549

Anti- bullying Policy

Adopted: 30th March 2023

Review due: March 2026

Owned: by the Trustees

Overseen by:

Consultants: John Horry (Elder), Jo Dunn (DSL)



Stapleford Baptist Church

Albert Street, Stapleford, Nottingham
NG9 8DB

Registered Charity Number 1175249

Anti-bullying Policy

Adopted: 30th March 2023
Review due: March 2026

Owned by the Trustees

Overseen by:

Consultants: John Hony (Elder), Jo Dunn (DSL)



Stapleford Baptist Church Anti- Bullying Policy (2023 Revision)

Objective

This policy aims to:

- State the biblical guiding principles for our relationships with one another.
- To define bullying and note that it is contrary behaviour to the Biblical principles.
- To provide a broad framework to enable SBC to identify, investigate and manage alleged and/or proven cases of bullying.
- Provide additional guidance in the case of children's and young people's work.

Principles

1. We believe that **each human is uniquely created in the image of God** and is therefore **worthy of dignity and respect**. All members of Stapleford Baptist Church are personally responsible for demonstrating this in their relationships with others.
2. SBC recognises the authority of Christ over his people (including elders) and the subsidiary authority of an eldership. Under this authority specific teams are empowered to administer (Acts 6: 1-7) 1 . This authority is to be exercised, in humility and self-sacrificially, following the example of Christ who loved the church and gave himself for her (Ephesians 5:28).
3. We acknowledge the impact of our relationships with each other on those outside of the Church fellowship, accepting Christ's assertion that 'By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another' (John 13:35).
4. We recognise that leaders in the Church have a specific responsibility to ensure the welfare of those in their care: 'Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood' (Acts 20:28). Members of the Church should, in turn 'Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden' (Hebrews 13:17).
5. We recognise that sometimes in the life of the Church, relationships can go wrong, leading to people feeling belittled, disempowered, offended or intimidated. Accordingly, Church Rules outline the procedure for action in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17¹. The approach and involvement of the Elders is determined on an individual case basis.

¹⁵ "If your brother or sister sins go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.



Stapleford Baptist Church Anti- Bullying Policy (2023 Revision)

Definitions of Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance² defines bullying as:

“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.”

This definition has three key behavioural traits: hurtful, repetitive, intentional. Further this behaviour is facilitated by a power imbalance.

Finally, it can happen in a variety of ways: physical, verbal and psychological.

To this definition, in the context of a church situation terms such as emotional and spiritual abuse can be added.³

Bullying, as defined, denies dignity and respect, and is not loving behaviour and as such is contrary to the Biblical Principles outlined. Further if given authority within SBC provides the power imbalance to facilitate bullying then this too is a denial of the Biblical principles as stated and an abuse of that authority.

Framework

As part of the overall Safeguarding activity of SBC it is all members' responsibility:

- To ensure their behaviour is in-line with Biblical principles. Specifically, that they do not engage in bullying behaviour.
- To notice and take action (in accordance with principle 5 above) if bullying is experienced or observed.

It is the leaders' responsibility:

- To watch themselves and ensure they do not abuse the authority and trust invested in them.
- To inform and educate the membership (part of the ongoing Safeguarding activity).
- To provide a structure that enables reporting, investigation and documentation of alleged incidents (part of the ongoing Safeguarding activity).
- To take the necessary action if incidents are proven. The ultimate sanction is the removal of a person from church membership or removal of permission to attend church meetings and events – In accordance with SBC rules.

Additional Guidance for Children's and Young People's Work

Children's and young people's leaders have a specific responsibility to model godly behaviour to those with whom they work. Group leaders should establish clear rules so that everyone understands what is expected. In support of this, all leaders should be firm and consistent in

² <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/understanding-bullying/definition>

³ Challenging Leaders, preventing pastoral malpractice and investigating allegations – edited by Graham Nicholls. Published by Christian Focus, 2023.

Stapleton Baptist Church Anti-Bullying Policy (2023 Revision)

Definitions of Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as: "The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group where the victim is involved on an unequal basis of power, fighting back is pointless, and the victim has to look out for themselves."

This definition has three key components: 1) repetition, 2) intentionality, and 3) power imbalance. Further, this behavior is facilitated by a power imbalance.

Finally, it is important to note that bullying can be physical, verbal, and psychological.

In this definition, the context of a church is included. Bullying can be emotional and spiritual abuse and can be subtle.

Bullying, as defined, denies dignity and respect, and is not loving behavior and as such is contrary to the biblical principles outlined. Further, it gives priority within the church to power imbalance. To facilitate bullying then this too is contrary to the biblical principles as stated and an abuse of trust.

Framework

As part of the overall stewardship strategy of SBC, all members' response will:

- To restore their relationship with the church and biblical principles. Specifically, that they do not engage in bullying behavior.
- To create a safe environment for all members with practical steps to being implemented or engaged.

It is the leaders' responsibility:

- To educate themselves and ensure they do not cause the culture and trust invested in them.
- To be an end educator in the church (part of the church's pastoral care strategy).
- To provide a safe environment for all members including investigation and documentation of alleged incidents (part of the church's pastoral care strategy).
- To take the necessary action if incidents are proven. The ultimate sanction is the removal of a person from their membership or removal of permission to attend church meetings and events - in accordance with the rules.

Additional Guidance for Children's and Young People's Work

Children's and young people's leaders have a specific responsibility to model early responses to those with whom they work. Group leaders should establish clear rules for all participants and ensure that a response to any incident should be firm and consistent.

Effective bullying prevention - we will work to ensure all children and young people are safe and protected from bullying. We will ensure all children and young people are safe and protected from bullying. We will ensure all children and young people are safe and protected from bullying.



Stapleford Baptist Church Anti- Bullying Policy (2023 Revision)

challenging teasing, name-calling, abuse and banter among the young people. In a contemporary culture in which sexualised language is common parlance, it is important for youth leaders to be proactive in helping those in their care to understand how to show care and respect in the way they speak to each other.

In the running of an ongoing activity or a specific event:

- Leaders, parents and children/Young People should be made aware of bullying and SBC's anti-bullying policy and related procedures.
- A procedure for the reporting, investigation and documentation of alleged incidents should be available.
- Training of leaders regarding this procedure should be undertaken and recorded.
- The procedure should ensure, as appropriate, the communication with and involvement of parents /carers of all children/young people involved in the incident/s.

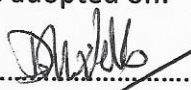
The leadership team for each ongoing activity or specific event is encouraged to discuss potential strategies for making children/young people aware of bullying and thereby to prevent it.

Further Guidance

If further guidance or help is required, in general, or in response to a particular issue, then the Designated Safeguarding Lead or an elder should be consulted.

SBC is committed to reviewing our policy and practice regularly.

This policy was adopted on:

Signed.....
(Chair of elders' meeting)

Date 31/3/23

Stapleford Baptist Church Anti-Bullying Policy (2023 Revision)

challenging teasing, name-calling, abuse and hurtful among the young people. It is a responsibility of all young people to be respectful and to be respectful for young people to be active in helping those in their care to understand how to show care and respect in the way they speak to each other.

In the running of an ongoing activity or a specific event:

- Leaders, parents and children/young people should be made aware of bullying and SBC's anti-bullying policy and related procedures.
- A record of the reporting, investigation and documentation of alleged incidents should be available.
- Training of leaders regarding this procedure should be undertaken and recorded.
- The procedure should ensure, as appropriate, the communication with and involvement of parents/carers of all children/young people involved in the incident.

The leadership team for each ongoing activity or specific event is encouraged to discuss potential strategies for dealing with children/young people aware of bullying and thereby to prevent it.

Further guidance

If further guidance or advice is required in general or in response to a particular issue, then the designated safeguarding lead or SBC officer should be consulted.

SBC is committed to reviewing our policy and practice regularly.

The policy was adopted on:

Signed: _____
(Chair of elders' meeting)

Date: 21/11/23