

St Vincent De Paul R.C. Primary School, Knutsford

Mission Statement:

"It is the mission of this Catholic School to enable our children to become aware of the world that God has given them and to recognise their vocation and responsibilities within it."



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy Date: May 2018

Review Date: May 2021



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Introduction

We define bullying as:

‘Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, where an imbalance of power is used to intentionally hurt another either physically or emotionally.’

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the deliberate desire to inflict hurt, to threaten or to frighten someone. It is usually persistent, conscious and wilful and consists of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person(s).

A victim is an individual or group who suffers pain or distress as a direct result of intentional and persistent harassment.

Victims commonly find it difficult to counteract bullying behaviour or to report their experiences.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures. It may be perpetrated against individuals on the basis of their race, colour, nationality, culture, language or religion.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation.
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

Bullying is not:

- It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling or arguments. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose - **STOP**, (remember **STOP** – it happens **Several Times On Purpose**)
- Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is NOT classed as bullying. It is an important part of children’s development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Aims and objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individuals. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. Everyone at our school is equal and treats each other with respect and kindness.

We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person’s responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

Developing a whole school approach

At St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School we work closely with members of the schools' community to ensure the involvement and participation of students, parents, staff, governors and the wider community as part of the development of policy related to supporting a positive ethos within the school.

The role of Governors

The governing body supports the Head Teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the Head Teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti bullying strategies.

The role of the Head Teacher

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head Teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head Teacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong. The Head Teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of the Teacher

Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place.

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Head Teacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and support/intervention for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Head Teacher and the SENCo. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Head Teacher may contact external support agencies such as the social services.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying – see Behaviour Policy.

The role of Parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of Pupils

Pupils discuss their role in supporting the School's Anti-bullying Policy through the School Council, class discussion and through pupil questionnaires.

We believe that:

- All bullying is unacceptable irrespective of how it happens and/or what excuses are given in an attempt to justify it.
- We must investigate all incidents of bullying and take action where necessary, supporting both the bully and the victim at all times.
- Children who bully must be held to account for their wrongdoing, but may need support to change their attitudes and behaviour.
- Accountability will be sought in all incidents of bullying, seeking identification of wrongdoing and supporting repairing of harm done through a solution based approach.
- All inappropriate language that perpetuates attitudes underpinning bullying behaviour must be challenged at all times.
- Everyone in our school has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to all instances of bullying.
- We must communicate with parents/carers regarding any concerns about bullying and deal promptly with complaints.
- All our children must feel safe and be confident that any reported incidents will be dealt with effectively by all responsible adults.
- It is important to focus upon preventing bullying behaviours in school.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to underperform in school work
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber- message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. These behaviours may also need to be reported to the Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Davies – Head Teacher).

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are

investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

1. Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
3. Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
4. Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
5. The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
6. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
7. Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
8. The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
9. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
10. An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
11. Incidents will be recorded by staff on the standard Incident Report Sheet (See Appendix 1). All reports will be kept in a file in the Head Teacher's office.
12. Parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
13. After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
14. Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.
15. If necessary and appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school, Social Services or police will be consulted.

The following sanctions may be used:

The children have also discussed this question in the School Council and some of the sanctions they suggested are included in the list below:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Lose privileges
- Lose playtimes (stay with class teacher or do extra work)
- Spend playtimes/lunchtimes with an adult
- Parents will be invited in to school
- Be removed from class and work in isolation
- Report to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visit, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. The School Council developed ideas about how positive behaviour can be promoted. These can include:

- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy
- Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy

- Producing a ‘child speak’ version of the policy for the children
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies
- PHSE and RE scheme of work from Reception to Year 6 used to support this policy
- Discussions on bullying issues
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- Children writing stories and poems and drawing pictures about bullying
- Children being read stories about bullying
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situation
- Confidential ‘worry’ boxes where children can write and post their concerns and ideas
- Playground improvements and initiatives
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Intervention/nurture groups for children when needed

After discussions with the pupils, the School Council also generated ideas about promoting a Friendship School to help prevent fall outs developing into bullying issues. They decided to:

- Liaise with class teachers about having a star of the week
- Audit play equipment
- Designate an area of the playground to be the ‘Happy Area’ and would arrange a competition for children to design a sign for this area
- Make friendship bracelets
- Design and make friendship posters for each class
- Appoint ‘Friendship Buddies’
- ‘Friend of the week’ – School Council to choose anonymously

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored regularly by the Head Teacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors’ responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school’s anti-bullying records, and by discussion with the Head Teacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

Person responsible: Mrs Davies (Head Teacher)

Date: May 2018

Next Review Date: May 2021

APPENDIX 1

Internal Record of incidents of violent behaviour, bullying and homophobic/racial abuse

Name of Victim(s):	Year:
Name of Perpetrator(s):	Year:
Reporting member of staff:	
Date and time of incident:	
Account of incident:	

Proposed Action	By Whom	Timescale

Have parents been informed?		Yes		No
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Signed:	Member of Staff:	
	Child Protection Designated Teacher:	

To be completed and returned to Child Protection Lead (Head Teacher) immediately following any incidents.