St. John's C of E VC Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

At St. John's Primary school, we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to 'Together, Fly High Like an Eagle'. We expect pupils and staff to feel safe in school, including an understanding of the issues relating to safety, such as bullying.

This anti-bullying policy complements the shared Christian values on which St. John's Primary School bases its work. It also complements and draws from the school's Behaviour, Online Safety and Safeguarding policies

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community. Pupils contribute to the development of the policy through the School Council and circle time discussions. The School Council will develop a pupil-friendly version of this policy for all of the children of St. John's School.

Aims of the Policy

1) To ensure that all people (children and adults) in the school community are able to work in a safe and secure environment free from humiliation, harassment, oppression and abuse.

2) To clarify for all members of the school community that bullying is not acceptable and must be totally discouraged. Everyone must act in a proactive way to ensure that bullying is challenged and reported.

3) To ensure that all pupils, parents, carers, staff, governors and others know that appropriate action will be taken.

4) To recognise that bullying can take place off-site and that the school will endeavour to respond appropriately as if it had happened on site.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, local authority and outside agencies, and general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Creating a safe environment and promoting a culture of mutual respect.
- Policy development and review involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies.
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice.
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review.
- Overseeing the management of bullying incidents and the restoration process.
- Ensuring the reporting and recording of bullying incidents.
- Assessing and coordinating training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate.
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour.

The school has a responsibility beyond the school day and the school gates to respond to incidents of bullying behaviour. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as outside the local shops, or in a town centre.

The nominated Governor with the responsibility for anti-bullying (behaviour) is the Chair of Governors.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally (DFE, July 2017). Bullying is about power. Targets of bullying behaviour feel powerless to stop it. Others may feel powerless to know how to help. The Diana Award defines bullying as: **"repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe,"** (RNI- Repeated Negative Intended)

When children abuse other children it is referred to as 'child-on-child abuse' (formally known as peer on peer abuse) Bullying can fall under this category.

It is important to recognise that for a child with additional needs, such as severe social and communication difficulties, even if their behaviour is negative and repeated towards another pupil it needs questioning as to whether it is intentional and therefore is it bullying. Often it is not a choice the pupil with SEND is making and so reasonable adjustments need to be made to protect all parties (Equalities Act 2010).

Bullying can take many forms within Verbal, Indirect and Physical bullying (VIP) Some examples are:

1. **Physical bullying is the repeated, negative use of body contact to intentionally hurt others**: e.g. hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, slapping or inappropriate touching.
2. **Verbal bullying is the repeated, negative use of speech, sign language, or verbal gestures to intentionally hurt others**: e.g. name calling, teasing, insulting, making racist remarks, writing unkind notes.
   3.Indirect bullying is:
   a) **the repeated, negative use of actions, which are neither physical nor verbal, to intentionally hurt others** e.g. spreading rumours, excluding from groups, tormenting, staring, damaging or stealing someone's property
   b) **Cyberbullying which is the repeated. negative use of technology to intentionally hurt others**: e.g. posting unwanted pictures or messages, creating fake accounts to impersonate or harass someone, texting, emailing, or through chat rooms, WhatsApp or other social networking sites

The NSPCC state that: "Any child can be bullied for any reason. If a child is seen as different in some way, or as an easy target they can be more at risk.

This might be because of their:

- **Race or ethnic background**
- **Gender**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Disability**

Or it could be because they:

- **Appear anxious or have low self esteem**
- **Lack assertiveness**
- **Are judged because of their home life or family circumstances**

The Equality Act 2010 ensures that schools need to take all forms of prejudice- motivated bullying very seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.

There is a difference between banter, teasing, conflict and friendship fallouts and when they become bullying.

(See definition above)

Those being bullied may show changes in behaviour such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or clinging to adults. Their school work may deteriorate. They may lack concentration or even truant from school. Further signs are given in the appendix.

Bullying can involve a person, or group of people. See appendix for more information about Bullying as a group behaviour and the different roles within an incident.

Reporting and Responding to Bullying

Our school has clear systems to report bullying for the whole school community (including staff, parents/carers, children and young people). This includes those who have experienced bullying or have witnessed bullying behaviour. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated involving all parties.

It is important that we create an atmosphere in school where anyone who is experiencing or has experienced bullying behaviour, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to, and that action taken will be swift and sensitive to their needs. Children are encouraged to have at least 2 trusted adults in school that they can talk to. Staff are annually reminded and advised on how to deal with bullying and its prevention to ensure consistency across the school.

Disclosure (telling an adult) can be direct and open or indirect and anonymous. Everyone must realise that not telling means that bullying is likely to continue. Additional guidance is included in the appendix to this policy.

When dealing with an incident it is vital to establish whether it is an act of misbehaviour or bullying (misbehaviour will be dealt with following the guidance in the Behaviour Policy). The exact course of action will vary with each situation but the main objective should be the restoration of relationships through the open discussion of the bullying incidents, and the implementation of strategies to help resolve the problem. It is always important to make clear that:

1. The behaviour of the person who shows bullying behaviour is unacceptable and the bullying behaviour must stop.
2. Everything that happens is carefully recorded on CPOMS (our secure online recording tool).
3. The application of sanctions should be with the aim of transforming the behaviour of the person who has shown bullying behaviour and will depend on the individual circumstances of each incident; in many cases a restorative justice approach may be more effective.
4. Revenge is not appropriate for those affected; opportunities should be provided to allow forgiveness.
5. The school will work with the parents/carers of all children affected.
6. Support and follow-up will be available for all of the children affected, including improving the behaviour and attitudes of the child showing bullying behaviour.
7. **Interventions**: Where pupils do not respond to prevention strategies it will be necessary to use the interventions described in the Behaviour Policy.

Strategies for Preventing Bullying

We understand that bullying can be fuelled by prejudice so at St John's we strive to create an inclusive culture where prejudice and hatred are not accepted. As part of our on-going commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils, we have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour, empathy and inclusion and discourage bullying behaviour so that all children can 'Fly High Like an Eagle'.

The school curriculum is used to:

1) Raise awareness about bullying behaviour and about the school's anti-bullying policy.

2) Challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for pupils targeted by bullying behaviour and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school. This is achieved through a whole school approach via:

   • Anti-bullying Week & Blue Friday
   • Assemblies focussed on friendship, bullying issues & relationships
   • Safer Internet Day

Over the course of the year children will be taught specific planned lessons about bullying:

   • PSHE lessons

- Other subject areas, for example online safety/cyberbullying in Computing, drama
- Circle times and check-ins

We also use opportunities to promote inclusion and empathy for example through:

1. Using a problem- solving approach to dealing with behaviour
2. Reinforcing positive behaviours, including through house points, for demonstrating the school values – particularly friendship, equality and respect
3. Celebrating differences and recognising similarities such as in our annual Culture Week
4. Using assemblies and wider curriculum opportunities to celebrate difference in all its forms
5. Reinforcing key messages through circle times and check-ins
6. Helping children to understand differences, particularly SEND, by raising awareness in assemblies and PSHE, for example Autism, Downs Syndrome and Alzheimer's
7. Creating opportunities for playground buddying and collaboration
8. Providing targeted counselling, therapy or support to aid children with relationships

Recording Bullying and Evaluating the Policy

This policy and accompanying procedures will be monitored and their effectiveness will be evaluated in the light of:

- numbers of pupils who have experienced bullying as recorded on CPOMS
- pupils' willingness to report incidents
- staff vigilance and response to bullying behaviour
- numbers of pupils and parents feeling secure about the school's response to bullying.
- feedback on the annual staff, parent/carer and pupil questionnaires

Related Policies

Behaviour Policy

Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)

Safeguarding Policy

SEND Policy

Equalities Report
Complaints Procedures
Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance

EqIA was carried out but all outcomes were "neutral" or "positive" for all

Due regard was taken by carrying out an EqIA to consider the impact on protected groups. However, the impact of the proposal was positive (or at least neutral) for all.	Tick required: ☒	Date: 9.5.2024.

Appendix: Guidance on Bullying

All adults on the school site have a responsibility to be aware of signs of distress in children as well as responding to a direct/indirect disclosure. This guide is intended to support adults in recognising the signs and knowing how to deal with bullying issues.

Signs of Bullying

Children do not always ask directly for help or discuss their concerns openly. Be particularly mindful of pupils with SEND. When bullying is involved, they may feel at fault or anticipate that there will be negative repercussions if they tell an adult. Changes in a child's behaviour and body language cannot indicate for certain that bullying is happening. However, the following signs will certainly tell you that something may be wrong.

- Unexplained injuries;
- Lost or broken possessions;
- Low self-esteem;
- A loss of friends;
- Withdrawing from social situations;
- Change in attitude or behaviour;
- Difficulty sleeping or bed wetting;
- Truanting or feigning sickness;
- Declining performance and a lack of interest in school;
- Self-destructive behaviour;
- Refusal to talk about what is wrong.

Responding to Bullying

Where a bullying incident is reported or disclosed it is important that swift and considered action is taken.

School Staff should:

- Take the information seriously and record details of any incidents which are disclosed, reported or observed using or transferring to CPOMS (online secure recording system).
- Reassure those involved that we take this seriously and will endeavour to find out more, but will deal with the situation appropriately.
- Report all incidents to a member of SLT who will advise about future action in respect of both individuals/ groups involved.
- Hear all voices and involve parents/carers on both sides when dealing with suspected bullying.
- Be aware that, in most cases, raising and discussing the issue is often sufficient to prevent future occurrences. Provide opportunities for forgiveness and restoration, this may be through a restorative justice approach.
- Where appropriate, implement sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- Hold in mind the ultimate goal of self-regulation for those involved; this may include de-escalation or assertiveness support for targets of bullying.
- Be mindful that issues can be quite complex and emotive and staff should be aware that:
    - Blame may not be all on one side
    - It may never be possible to prove what really happened
    - Levels of tolerance may vary enormously for children and parents
    - Children with SEND may have different needs and responses
    - Ensure that ongoing monitoring and support is in place to check that the situation has improved and does not decline; this monitoring should also be recorded on CPOMS.
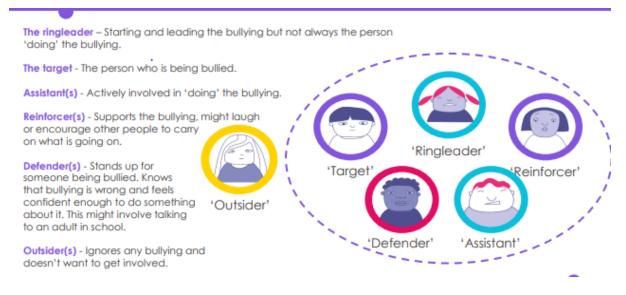- Continue to promote the honest sharing of feelings and worries.

Bullying as a group behaviour- Different Roles

The ringleader – Starting and leading the bullying but not always the person 'doing' the bullying.

The target - The person who is being bullied.

Assistant(s) - Actively involved in 'doing' the bullying.

Reinforcer(s) - Supports the bullying, might laugh or encourage other people to carry on what is going on.

Defender(s) - Stands up for someone being bullied. Knows that bullying is wrong and feels confident enough to do something about it. This might involve talking to an adult in school.

Outsider(s) - Ignores any bullying and doesn't want to get involved.

'Outsider'

'Target'   'Ringleader'   'Reinforcer'

'Defender'   'Assistant'

Advice for Pupils

Remember that **all** pupils have a right not to experience bullying behaviour. If you are being bullied then you should:

1. Tell an adult you can trust straight away and keep telling them as long as the bullying behaviour continues.

   If you are too scared to tell an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you, or contact Childline

2. Try being clear and assertive, 'Stop - I don't like it when . . . "

3. Not blame yourself – it's not your fault

4. Try not to react, even if this is difficult for you

5. Keep with your friends and ask for support

6. Be proud of who you are – it's good to be an individual

7. If you feel unsafe, get away You can help <u>stop</u> the bullying behaviour by:

1. Getting help straight away. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the person who is showing bullying behaviour

2. Showing that you and your friends disapprove

3. Giving sympathy and support to children who may be experiencing the negative, repeated intentional behaviour

4. Being careful about teasing or personal remarks - imagine how you might feel

5. Telling a trusted adult straight away, if you know about someone is the target of bullying behaviour; it's not telling tales, the person may be too scared or lonely to tell.

Advice for Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers should:

1. Use this policy to be clear about what <u>is</u> and <u>isn't</u> bullying and watch for early signs.

2. Understand the difference between one off unkind actions, friendship fallouts or conflict and bullying behaviour (The repeated, negative behaviour or actions that are intended to make someone feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe)

3. Listen supportively, take seriously your child's comments, try to stay calm and make notes which may be useful later; if it is cyberbullying, take screen shots of any messages.

4. Reassure your child that they are doing the right thing to tell you about the bullying behaviour.

5. Encourage your child to talk to someone they trust at school, but also contact the class teacher or year group leader yourself.

6. Recognise there are two sides to every story and allow the school time to find out what has happened.

7. Support your child in being assertive and not retaliating as this usually escalates the difficulties.

8. Avoid approaching the other child(ren) or their parents directly, but work with the school to draw up ideas that will help to support your child both inside and outside school.

Useful Links with Advice and Resources:

[Anti-bullying Alliance](#)

[KidscapeNSPCC](#)

[Childline](#)

[Internet Matters](#)

[Diana Award Anti-bullying](#)