

# Anti-Bullying Policy



## St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

### The School Mission Statement

*To love and serve as Jesus shows us*

### DOCUMENT STATUS

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## **Introduction**

### **The second aim of our school's Mission Statement is:**

*To foster happy caring relationships within a school which offers a safe and secure environment and enables individuals to grow in confidence, dignity and self-esteem.*

At St Vincent's every child has the right to be educated in a safe environment. Every member of the school community is entitled to be safe. We aim to provide a caring, courteous and safe environment where our children can learn and grow to their full potential. Every effort will be made to create an atmosphere in which the Gospel values are lived out. This will be characterised by mutual trust, an openness to differences and a respect for each other and his/her possessions. We aim to teach that respect and consideration for other people are essential ingredients for life.

The school policy has been developed in line with legal requirements and statutory guidance and is linked to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child protection
- Behaviour
- Equality
- Inclusion
- Disability
- Confidentiality

## **Objectives**

- To prevent acts of bullying
- To identify and deal with every act of bullying
- To give each pupil the confidence, skills and opportunities to report their fears and their experience of bullying
- To teach an awareness about bullying and how children can identify, expose and overcome all bullying they encounter
- To provide effective supervision of the children especially in corridors, toilets and playground, to prevent any opportunity for inappropriate behaviour, and so create an environment in which the children are safe.
- To act professionally when dealing with bullying incidents appropriately.
- To work alongside the children and parents to modify inappropriate behaviour and improve outcomes for all children involved.
- To help children understand the consequence of their behaviour for themselves and for others.

## **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying usually has three common features:

- It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour;
- It is repeated, often over a period of time;
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can be direct (verbal or physical) or indirect (spreading of stories, excluding from groups, cyber bullying). Bullying may include:

- Cyber-bullying (see Social Media policy), or
- Prejudice-based bullying related to special educational need, homophobia, gender, race, religion and belief, or disability.

## **Dealing with Bullying - Principles and Procedures**

All members of the school community have a responsibility to recognise bullying and to take appropriate action when they are aware of it happening. In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- Raise awareness amongst the children of effective strategies for managing bullies through focus weeks and PSHE learning. These are:
  - Tell someone you can trust
  - Stick together. There is strength in numbers.
  - Say "**No**" to the bully.

When it is felt that inappropriate behaviour has escalated into bullying, this should then be escalated to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher. The victim should be reassured that they have done the correct thing in bringing the matter to a member of staff's attention.

"The No Blame Approach to Bullying" developed by George Robinson and Barbara Maines will be used to manage any bullying. It is a simple 7 step process that has the following four essential ingredients:

- The absence of blame
- The encouragement of empathy
- Shared Responsibility
- Problem Solving

Parents will be kept informed throughout the process, being asked to work in partnership with school to modify behaviours for the best possible outcome for all involved. A record of this and subsequent meetings will be kept.

The purpose of this process is to modify inappropriate behaviour, and help the children involved to realise the effect their behaviour has on fellow pupils. At all times we should try to promote positive behaviour and recognise those who act with care, courtesy and concern.

### **Step 1 - Talk with the victim**

The Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher will talk to the victim to establish the impact that the bullying has had on them. It is not designed to gather "facts" about who said or did what to who. The victim will be encouraged to suggest the names of people to form a group who should help solve the problem. These will include those involved, colluders and perhaps friends of the victim. The victim is also asked to produce a piece of writing or a picture to express how the bullying is affecting them.

Step 2 - convene a meeting of the group

The group is gathered together ensuring that there is a balance between helpful and reliable students and those whose behaviour has been causing a problem.

Step 3 - explain the problem

The Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher will explain that there is a problem and that the victim is experiencing certain difficulties. Without discussing specific incidents or accusations the facilitator explains how the child is feeling using the piece of writing from the victim to illustrate this.

Step 4 - share responsibility

It is made clear that no one is going to be punished and that the group has been convened to help solve the problem because there is a shared responsibility for the happiness of another child in their class.

Step 5 - Ask for ideas

The group is asked to suggest ways that they may be able to alleviate the suffering felt by the victim. Members of the group are encouraged to use "I" language (I will sit next to her in lessons, I will walk to school with her etc) so that they take ownership of the solutions. These ideas are not imposed on the group.

Step 6 - leave it up to them

The meeting ends by passing responsibility for the problem over to the group, thanking them for their support and arranging a meeting to see how things are going.

Step 7 - meet them again

Over a 2 week period initially, the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher meets each of the group individually each day as an intensive monitoring period to check how things are going. The regularity of the meetings will then be reviewed, leaving gradually longer periods of time to see how things are going.

Any incidents of bullying will be reported to the Local Authority and Governing Body on a termly basis.

### **Bullying outside of school premises**

As bullying may take place outside of the school gates and on journeys to and from school, we encourage pupils **not to suffer in silence**. We also:

- Talk to police and the Community Support Officers and invite them in to talk to the children.
- Liaise with other head teachers in the area.
- Encourage the community to inform us of any incidents.

### **Sanctions for dealing with bullying**

The following sanctions may be applied as appropriate to the circumstances, although alternative sanctions might also be appropriate:

- isolation from peers at break time or lunchtime
- temporary withdrawal to another class
- withdrawal from clubs etc.
- withdrawal from off site visits
- Issuing a home/school behaviour contract or Individual Behaviour Plan
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

The last two actions will only be used in extreme situations, where all other attempts at modifying behaviour have failed.

As behaviour improves then activities can be reinstated. This will rebuild the child's self esteem which may have been damaged after being caught bullying or could have been low anyway – hence the bullying.

Where bullying is reported to be of a sexual nature, then we will follow the child protection and safeguarding procedures. Where a serious assault or wounding has occurred, we will inform the police. Any reported bullying, intimidation or harassment of staff will be dealt with through WBC Bullying and Harassment Policy.

## **CREATING AN ANTI-BULLYING CLIMATE IN SCHOOL**

Our school's Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils behave well; we use our school's 'Code of Conduct' of RESPECT to promote a positive ethos throughout the school where staff, pupils and parents are all made aware of the value of these statements to promote emotional and social well-being and to include and support each other.

We believe that prevention is better than cure. All staff contribute to ensuring effective supervision especially during pre- and post-school periods, lunchtimes and breaks. There is efficient patrolling by staff of the school site. Staff greet the children at the school gate each morning and are present on the playground at the end of the school day.

We promote appropriate behaviour through direct teaching during circle time /PSHE sessions based on the Jigsaw materials, and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where these skills are learned and practised. Our aim is to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the school community.

Our curriculum will be used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and our anti-bullying policy,
  - Increase understanding for the feelings of others and help build an anti-bullying ethos, and
  - To teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others.
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- Circle Time, role plays and stories will be used to show what pupils can do to prevent bullying, and to create an anti-bullying climate in school.
  - *Bullying will not be tolerated and we make this clear in the information we give to pupils and parents when they join our school and on our website*
  - We will use school assemblies, collective worship and class sessions to reinforce our message that bullying will not be tolerated.
  - Periodic poster campaigns on the school notice boards / classrooms will be used to remind pupils that bullying is not acceptable, and to tell them what to do if they are bullied.
  - Posters will tell pupils about Childline and other sources of confidential help
  - We will provide guidance to all our pupils to explain what they should do if they are being bullied, or if they see another pupil being bullied especially through 'Anti-Bullying Week'.
  - We will supervise and try to eliminate any potential areas on the school site where bullying may occur.
  - We will provide training for teachers and non-teaching staff (including mid-day supervisors) on spotting the signs of bullying and how to respond.

### **The Role of Governors**

The governing body supports the Headteacher 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 Headteacher 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 governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

### **The Role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher 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 Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to

this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher 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 and all Other Staff**

All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They ensure through positive relationships that all pupil worries, however small, will be taken seriously and will not be regarded as 'telling tales'. Pupils learn that telling leads to positive outcomes as incidents are followed up. The children are encouraged to 'TELL'. They keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school.

If a member of staff witnesses an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

We keep an Anti-bullying record where we record all incidents of bullying that occur. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, they should record the event on the system.

Teachers and support staff routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

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

### **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.

### **Buddy System**

Children from Year 6 are appointed as 'buddies' and these are made known to the other children and can be identified by wearing red hi-visibility vests. Children who are feeling vulnerable are encouraged to talk to a buddy. Individual buddies can be allocated to particular children.

### **The Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct is displayed in every classroom and is referred to regularly. It is used as a source of discussion during class discussion time.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored on a regular basis by the Headteacher, who reports to Governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. The Deputy Headteacher assists the Headteacher in monitoring the effectiveness of the policy.

This Anti-bullying Policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. Bullying incidents are reported to the Governors at Full Governors Meetings. (Part Two).

### **CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS ... AND COMPLIMENTS**

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying – and we would ask that this is brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure, by contacting the Chair of Governors who can be contacted through the school office.

We would also be pleased to receive Compliments – feedback from parents when things have gone well