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 and happy environment. Our school is a place where every person has the right to be themselves and to be included. Everyone at our school is equal and treats each another with respect and kindness.

We provide a caring, courteous and safe environment where our children can learn and grow to their full potential. We create an atmosphere in which the Gospel values are lived out. This is characterised by mutual trust, a celebration and acceptance of differences and a respect for each other and our possessions. We teach that respect and consideration for other people are essential ingredients for life.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school. At St Vincent's the safety, welfare and well-being of all pupils and staff is a key priority. We take all incidences of bullying seriously and it is our duty as a whole school community to take measures to prevent and tackle any bullying, harassment or discrimination. We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community. We want to enable our pupils to become responsible citizens and to prepare them for life in 21st Century Britain. These values reflect those that will be expected of our children by society, when they enter secondary school and beyond in the world of work or further study.

We are committed to improving our school's approach to tackling bullying and regularly monitor, review and assess the impact of our preventative measures.

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
- Exclusion
- Single Equality

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 carried out by an individual or group directly towards an individual or group;
- It is repeated, often over a period of time;
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

The STOP acronym can be applied to define bullying – **S**everal **T**imes **O**n **P**urpose.

The nature of bullying can be:

- Physical — such as hitting or physically intimidating someone, or using inappropriate or unwanted physical contact towards someone
- Attacking property — such as damaging, stealing or hiding someone's possessions
- Verbal — such as name calling, spreading rumours about someone, using derogatory or offensive language or threatening someone
- Psychological — such as deliberately excluding or ignoring people
- Cyber — such as using text, email or other social media to write or say hurtful things about someone

Bullying can be based on (but not exclusive to) any of the following:

- Race (racist bullying)
- Religion or belief
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Sexual orientation (homophobic or biphobic bullying)
- Gender identity (transphobic bullying)
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disability
- Appearance or health conditions
- Related to home or other personal situation

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.

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

"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.

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**. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according. 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.

Use of derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored as with any other type of unacceptable behaviour. Follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for children and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language even where no further action is required.

Sanctions for dealing with bullying

The restorative justice approach outline above will be used to manage incidents of bullying however in some circumstances, sanctions outlined below (although not an exhaustive list) may also be applied as 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 within 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. The school values of equality and respect are embedded across the curriculum to ensure that it is as inclusive as possible.

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

- A child-friendly anti-bullying policy displayed around school and in the home-school diary
- Anti-bullying Week activities
- Internet Safety Day
- School assemblies which help raise children's awareness of bullying and use of derogatory language, but a much higher emphasis on promoting the values of respect, acceptance and celebration of difference and diversity
- Diversity is celebrated across the school through diverse displays, books and images.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and pupils across the school
- Play leaders, prefects and "Special Friends" enable our older children to act as a buddy and offer support and friendship to other children, including those who may have been the target of bullying
- School Council are heavily involved in continuing to develop school-wide anti-bullying initiatives and activities
- ChildLine posters around school

We promote appropriate behaviour and attitudes, and support children to manage their emotions, behaviours and relationships through direct teaching during 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.

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 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 Head Teacher and asks them to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the Governing Body.

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 is responsible for ensuring that this message is regularly reinforced through assemblies.

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

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 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 Head Teacher, 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.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Head Teacher, who reports to Governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. The Deputy Head Teacher assists the Head Teacher 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 Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher 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.