



Anti-bullying Policy

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Introduction

At St. George's Church of England Primary School, we strive to create a positive culture where everyone feels safe, confident, and respected, particularly regarding individual differences.

Our policy aligns with the Equality Act 2010, which prohibits discrimination, harassment, or victimisation of pupils in schools.

Bullying incidents should be treated as child protection concerns if there's reasonable cause to suspect significant harm. In such cases, staff will follow the school Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying

Bullying involves an imbalance of power which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves. This may be seen or felt physically, online or psychologically, and includes social isolation or intimidation, as well as any threat of violence. It is defined as follows:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour; and
- It is repeated over time.

Bullying may take various forms, and is often motivated by prejudice, including:

Cyber: The use of electronic communications, including email, mobile phones, text/multimedia messaging, photographs/video, online profiling, websites, social networks, and instant messaging, with the intent to intimidate, embarrass, or harass. This can occur at any time of day, potentially reaching a broader audience as individuals forward content with ease.

Disability: Targeting or emphasizing issues related to disability.

Emotional: Exhibiting unfriendly behavior, excluding individuals, or tormenting them (e.g., hiding books, making threatening gestures).

Homophobic or Transphobic: Targeting or focusing on issues of sexuality and/or gender identity.

Physical: Using physical force such as pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, or any form of violence against another individual.

Racist/Cultural/Religious: Engaging in taunts, comments, or gestures based on racial, cultural, or religious differences.

Sexual: Making sexually abusive taunts, comments, or gestures.

- **Verbal:** Engaging in name-calling, sarcasm, or spreading rumors.

We believe that bullying is a behaviour choice and that anyone can be encouraged to change their behaviour. It can be an individual or a group.

Bullying can result in long-term psychological damage and, in extreme cases, suicide. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation including transgender, special educational needs and/or disability, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Any prejudice-based language is unacceptable.

Off-site Behaviour

School visits are a part of everyday school life and, as such, this policy applies in full when pupils are off site. Moreover, teachers have a power to discipline pupils in a reasonable way for conduct on and off the school premises. As such, any bullying incidents occurring off the premises, such as on public transport, school buses or in the local community, will fall under this policy and be treated accordingly. If the matter involves criminal activity, the police will always be informed.

Objectives

Our policy is implemented whenever the school is responsible for the conduct and welfare of children and young people. The Senior Leadership Team and all staff are responsible for its implementation.

Our objectives are to:

- Enable pupils to understand clearly what constitutes bullying and to understand that bullying, whatever its form, will not be tolerated by the school community;
- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they feel assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted upon;
- Enable parents to feel confident that bullying incidents will be firmly dealt with by the school;
- Create a safe environment and promote an inclusive ethos in the school where pupils can discuss the cause of bullying without fear of further bullying or discrimination;
- Raise staff awareness of the presence of different types of bullying, and an awareness of groups of pupils who are bullied disproportionately;
- Develop a range of effective strategies for pupils to learn about moral and social issues;
- Ensure pupils are able to explain how we expect them to behave; and
- Celebrate success as an important way of creating a positive school ethos around antibullying.

Our Procedures

Effective staff training is an important aspect of our work to prevent and tackle bullying, including the different types of bullying. All staff have had relevant training and understand the importance of this policy. In particular, our Senior Leadership Team ensures that all staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, the legal responsibilities, how to resolve problems and where to seek support. We use specialised skills to help our staff

understand the needs of any pupils, including special educational needs and/or disability and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) pupils.

Preventing and raising awareness of bullying is essential in keeping incidents in our school to a minimum. We do this through a range of means, such as:

- Assemblies
- British Value lessons
- PSHE lessons
- Anti-bullying events
- E-safety days
- E-safety workshops
- School's website
- Newsletters

We all understand that bullying can occur in any school and that we have a responsibility to be vigilant for incidents, especially at times and in places where it is more likely to occur.

If a member of staff suspects that bullying is taking place, or a disclosure is made to them about an incident of bullying, they should always consult a senior member of staff. Under the guidance of a senior staff member, an age-appropriate investigation should take place. Separate meetings, at which all conversations should be recorded in writing, on CPOMS, should be arranged with those involved to establish their version of events and assure them that the situation will be dealt with sensitively but firmly and fully.

Parents of both parties are always kept fully informed about how the alleged bullying is being handled.

Bullying behaviour will normally be addressed through the provision of pastoral support for all parties involved. A proven allegation of serious bullying will result in sanctions issued in line with the Behaviour Policy.

If the allegation of bullying is upheld, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should seek to use a restorative approach with the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) together. The perpetrator(s) should fully understand the consequences of their actions on the victim(s), and apologise without reservation. Both parties should be clear that a repeat of these behaviours will not be acceptable. Following the incident, a senior staff member oversees the monitoring of the situation, liaising directly with the relevant teacher to check that further bullying is not occurring.

Parents are asked to keep the school and staff informed of any concerns, and encourage their child to report any incidents immediately to an appropriate staff member. The Headteacher will ensure that the incident and any action taken are formally recorded in the behaviour incident log.

If the situation does not improve, the Headteacher (or senior leader) should meet with the parent(s) of the child(ren) and agree clear expectations and boundaries which would be shared with the pupils involved. Any further incidents should lead to intervention (e.g. through outside agencies), further monitoring, support and punitive sanctions as deemed necessary. Any necessary action should be taken until the bullying has stopped.

Preventative Strategies

As a successful school, we create an environment that prevents bullying from being a serious problem in the first place.

We proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. We talk with pupils through the curriculum about issues of difference and use dedicated project time and events such as special assemblies. We keep lines of communication open so pupils feel included.

We are aware that schools which excel at tackling bullying have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, British values, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment. We reinforce these messages through the behaviour and attitudes of our staff, who set a good example.

Successful Intervention Strategies

We implement disciplinary measures for pupils who engage in bullying to unequivocally convey that such behavior is unacceptable. In alignment with our Behaviour Policy, we apply sanctions in a fair, consistent, and reasonable manner, considering any special educational needs or disabilities of the pupils, as well as the needs of vulnerable students.

Moreover, we carefully examine the underlying factors that may have influenced the bullying behavior to assess whether there are any safety concerns regarding the perpetrator. If necessary, the child exhibiting bullying behavior may require support themselves.

We actively involve parents to ensure they understand that the school has a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying and are informed about the procedures to follow if they suspect their child is being bullied. We strive to instill confidence in parents that any complaint about bullying will be taken seriously and addressed in a manner that safeguards the child's welfare.

Additionally, we engage pupils to ensure they comprehend our stance on bullying and recognize the role they play in preventing it, especially when they are bystanders. Our approach is regularly evaluated to ensure that our policies and practices remain current and effective.

The consequences of bullying are designed to reflect the severity of the incident, reinforcing that such behavior is unacceptable. We educate pupils that any use of prejudice-based language is intolerable and will not be condoned.

In cases where bullying is particularly severe or persistent, or where a criminal offense may have occurred, we collaborate with the wider community, including the police and children's services. Furthermore, we provide multiple avenues for pupils to report bullying, assuring them that their concerns will be heard and addressed appropriately.

We leverage the expertise of specialist organizations with a proven record in addressing bullying to ensure our practices are effective and prioritize the safety of children. Notices are placed around the school with appropriate telephone numbers and email addresses for children to contact organizations such as ChildLine, Kidscape, and CEOP.

Listening to the voices of our pupils at all times and responding accordingly is a fundamental principle of our approach. We aim to employ restorative practices within the school that focus on reconciliation with those harmed. This allows all parties affected by an incident to participate in mending the harm and finding a constructive way forward, fostering conflict prevention and relationship-building.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher maintains a behaviour log that includes bullying incidents and implements and periodically reviews this policy to evaluate its effectiveness. Additionally, at governance meetings, the Headteacher reports on behaviour and bullying for monitoring and evaluation.