

# ST VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

*“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus  
as we learn, love and grow together”*

**School's own version**

Document Date: Autumn 2020  
Review Date: Autumn 2022  
Reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee

Signature:

Chair of Governors

Date ratified: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## **1.0 Introduction**

St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School is committed to providing a safe, positive, valuing and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents/carers. The anti-bullying policy and practice plays an important role in this.

This policy is based on DFE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” (July 2017). It also takes into account the DFE statutory guidance, “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (2016).

The following principles inform our anti-bullying approach:

- Bullying behaviour is in all circumstances unacceptable.
- All adults in the school community (staff, governors and parents/carers) are expected to present positive role models to children.
- Bullying is a shared problem and staff and parents will need to work together in partnership to resolve incidents.
- The safety, welfare and wellbeing of the children concerned will at all times be central to decisions about actions taken in response to bullying.
- Anti-bullying approaches will be consistent with the values of a Catholic community and preparing children for life in an inclusive society. These include incorporating an acceptance of and valuing of difference and diversity, the need to cope with individuals whose behaviour we may find challenging and the role of forgiveness.
- When incidents have been dealt with, all parties should be supported and enabled to move on positively. In keeping with our shared faith, it is our aim that in the resolution of incidents pupils should, wherever possible, be reconciled and issues resolved in a restorative manner.

## **2.0 Links to legislation**

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions from school in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- The Education and Inspection Act 2016
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1998
- Public Order Act 1986

## **3.0 Definition**

Bullying is “behavior by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DFE “Preventing & tackling Bullying Together” July 2017)

The following 3 dimensions collectively help us to define bullying behaviour:

## **Bullying is intentionally hurtful.**

It is the deliberate, unjustifiable and unprovoked use of aggressive behaviour. It includes actions that cause physical, emotional or mental hurt to the victim and actions that violate another person's freedom and rights.

## **Bullying is a repeated experience.**

Being bullied is the experience of persistent or repeated anti-social behaviour. However, very rarely there could be single incidents which constitute bullying because of the fear and intimidation that projects beyond that initial incident or because of the number of people who have become involved (e.g. cyberbullying).

## **Bullying also involves an inequality of power.**

The person/s being bullied find it difficult to reject or deal with the offending behaviour, or those involved in the bullying behaviour have power over the victim. Some power imbalances can be subtle or build up over time, but more common examples include that they are bigger/stronger/older, have more friends, are more established in the school or care less about the consequences of their actions. Bullying behaviour can involve individuals or groups. It can occur with witnesses present or when there is no one else present apart from the perpetrator and the person being bullied.

### **4.0 Examples of hurtful behaviour that can contribute to bullying include:**

- Verbal unkindness – such as mimicking, putting people down, saying negative things about family, clothes or appearance, name-calling, anonymous notes and texts, blackmail, deliberately embarrassing or humiliating others or posting hurtful remarks on the internet.
- Hurtful physical behaviour – such as hitting, hurting, hair pulling, pushing, kicking, deliberately disrupting work or play and extortion, or physical sexual harassment.
- Indirect hurtful behaviour – such as spreading rumours, isolation, exclusion and getting others to be hurtful or unkind, forwarding hurtful texts, photographs or messages.
- Psychological bullying – such as intimidation, threats and looks to make another person feel uncomfortable or fearful.

All hurtful and bullying behaviour is taken seriously, including subtle actions which can build up for individuals over time, eroding self-esteem and building unhappiness or a climate of fear.

The school avoids at all times labelling pupils as either victims or bullies. It is important that pupils who have been the targets of hurtful or bullying behaviours are able to see that this experience will end and that it is not the result of something about themselves that has attracted or deserved such treatment by others. Similarly children who have engaged in hurtful or bullying behaviour will

be supported to resolve the matter and change their behaviour. It should be remembered that there is no typical “bully”. Many children may use hurtful behaviours from time to time.

**Not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all hurtful behaviour is unacceptable in school. The following are examples of hurtful behaviour which may not be bullying:**

- Children may fall out with their friends and engage in hurtful behaviour. Such experiences can be extremely distressing to the individuals involved.
- Children may retaliate against the hurtful behaviour of others.

Although not all hurtful behaviour is intentional, all hurtful behaviours are a matter of concern and will be dealt with by the school in the line with the Behaviour Policy. Where pupils cause harm or distress without intent, the impact of their behaviour will be pointed out and any continuance will be regarded as intentional. Similarly, all unsafe behaviours and unsafe environment issues will be dealt with in an appropriate and measured manner.

## **5.0 Prejudice related hurtful incidents**

Incidents can also sometimes be hurtful because of the use of language, behaviour or ideas that are, or may be seen to be, related to the identity of the individual on the receiving end. As required by the Equality Act 2010 and recommended by the Home Office and DfE the school is responsive to:

*“Any incident which is perceived to be racist / sexist / homophobic / transphobic / disablist by the victim or any other person”*

The intention in using this definition is not to label individuals as prejudiced, but to take full account of the possibility of such a dimension and to record incidents on a uniform basis. The investigation of any such incident will seek to establish whether the behaviour, language or expression related to any of the protected characteristics was intentionally hurtful. Responses to such incidents will vary, depending on whether the intention was to cause harm or offence. Wherever offence is caused it needs to be understood and resolved. In all cases resolution will aim to educate and support children and to restore good relations between those with a particular protected characteristic and others.

## **6.0 Strategies for preventing bullying**

All incidents considered to be bullying or prejudice related incidents (as defined above) are recorded **on the school’s CPOMS system and are tagged appropriately, and monitored using the forms in Appendix 2. Notes of the investigation including witness statements where appropriate and records of all conversations with staff, parents and pupils will be recorded fully on CPOMS.**

Actions relating to such conversations will also be recorded. The process for recording incidents is used to inform preventative strategies. Pupils will understand the school's procedures for responding to bullying and know that they are safe through regular Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) work in classrooms.

At all times, children's concerns are our concerns. Pupils are encouraged to express their concerns about themselves and others and to seek help and support whenever they need it. However, we recognise that children can sometimes be reluctant to seek help, so pupils can report their concerns anonymously by using the communication box, situated in each classroom from Year 1 to Year 6. These are checked daily by school staff.

It is important for children to know that procedures are being followed. In order to encourage pupils to continue to express their concerns, pupils should be able to see that incidents have been dealt with and resolved.

Assemblies are used regularly to reinforce positive friendship messages and to raise issues concerning bullying within the context of a Christian message. Activities across the curriculum (largely in PSHE & R.E.) develop pupils' understanding of bullying and this includes key Christian messages, such as respect and forgiveness. Children are taught that each person is special and unique and that differences should be celebrated and should not be the focus of negative behaviour. In order to build children's resilience and reduce their vulnerability, pupils are coached and guided in developing coping strategies and in how to respond positively to hurtful behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to look out for each other and to show good witness behaviour by reporting their concerns for others.

Guidance is given to pupils who display behaviour which raises concern.

## **7.0 Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying and hurtful behavior including the role of the school**

If parents have concerns about bullying or hurtful behaviour they should take up those concerns with the class teacher or the Headteacher as soon as possible.

All incidents of bullying must be reported and all such reports will be taken seriously. The perspective of the person who feels bullied will contribute to understanding and establishing the seriousness of the incident. When bullying has occurred special actions will follow.

The school recognises that speed of response is important and wherever possible incidents will be resolved quickly. However, significant incidents will involve investigation and this can cause delay to the resolution. The school will need to take the time necessary to respond to and resolve incidents appropriately, while ensuring the safety of the child who feels bullied.

The role of all staff in responding to hurtful behaviour is made clear to them as part of their induction, including midday supervisors and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants will usually be involved as playground supervisors to give continuity of care. Incidents of bullying (see definition above) observed or reported at play and lunch times will be referred to a member of the Senior leadership team and to the class teacher.

Single incidents of hurtful behavior should be reported too **using a CPOMS behaviour tag** and will be dealt with by the class teacher. (The SLT will be kept informed of any incidents dealt with by the class teacher so that s/he holds the overview across the school and these may be shared on CPOMS). Follow up and ongoing monitoring will be conducted by the class teacher whilst keeping the SLT informed at all times, even if it is felt that the matter has been resolved. If the behaviour dealt with by class teachers continues it will be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership team and ultimately to the Headteacher.

All repeated hurtful or bullying behaviour should be reported directly to the Headteacher **and recorded on CPOMS on the same day as a matter of urgency.** ~~Significant incidents will be entered as an incident on CPOMS.~~ All parents whose children are directly involved will be notified of significant incidents. All actions and follow-up conversations will also be recorded.

Responses to all bullying behaviour will be educative and seek to ensure that this behaviour will not be repeated. A child who has been involved in bullying behaviour will be expected to take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour on others. The reasons for their behaviour will be explored and they will be expected to improve and change. The aim will be to resolve incidents, rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all. Incidents will be resolved in age-appropriate ways. Those who have been bullied have a right to know that action has been taken.

Persistent bullying – where support mechanisms are not having the desired outcomes or bullying episodes of an extreme nature – could result in fixed term or permanent exclusion. (See *Behaviour Policy*)

The **weekly** ~~Friday morning~~ staff briefing will be used to share any concerns about pupils so that all staff can be alert to any concerning behaviour and the vulnerability of individuals.

## **8.0 The role/involvement of pupils**

Pupils will progressively develop their understanding of bullying and related behaviour issues through the curriculum. All pupils will be expected to develop appropriate witness behaviour and to show concern for others across the school community. Pupils will have opportunities to develop their resilience and problem solving strategies in the face of hurtful behaviour.

Circle time and the use of the communication box will be used to explore issues of friendship, hurtful behaviours and bullying. Pupils will also have the opportunity to

explore the impact and consequences of making false reports as part of their PSHE work. Pupils will be actively involved in anti-bullying developments through curriculum and in special initiatives.

## **9.0 The role/involvement of parents**

Parents have an important role in actively encouraging their child/ren to be a positive member of the school. Dealing with behaviour problems effectively requires the school and parents to work in partnership. To this end it is included in the Home School Agreement.

If parents have concerns about bullying or hurtful behaviour they should take up those concerns with the class teacher or a member of the SLT as soon as possible.

Parents should raise any concerns about bullying or other hurtful behaviour directly with the school and not with the parents of other parties involved. While we recognise that parents who are friends may wish to resolve matters informally they are advised that the school should always be made aware of tensions and difficulties between children so that they can be supported appropriately. The best place to resolve conflicts between children is in school where all sides and aspects of incidents can be explored.

Parents are expected to exercise ~~reasonable~~ confidentiality around incidents in which their children are involved. In particular, parents are requested not to spread stories about incidents. Partial information can be inaccurate and may affect the reputation of the school and of individual children and damage the atmosphere in the school community.

Parents will be informed of any significant incidents involving their children in order to enable them to support their child and the school in seeking resolution and restoring a safe environment for all children. A leaflet is provided to assist parents in supporting their children and working with the school to resolve incidents ("Appendix 1").

## **10.0 The role/involvement of governors**

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all strategies to eliminate bullying from our school. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor and review the anti-bullying policy and its effectiveness. They require the Headteacher to keep records of all reported incidents and their investigation. **These records are held on the school's CPOMS system.** The Governing Body monitor data in relation to bullying through the termly Headteacher's Report. The designated governor's role is to ensure that policy and practice is appropriate, that the school is held to account for its actions and reported data and that the needs of children are adequately met. The governor's role does not involve mediation with parents or involvement in ongoing investigations. However, senior staff may consult with the designated governor where issues become more complex. Where there is a complaint relating to how the school has dealt with a matter involving bullying, the school's Complaints Policy will guide all actions in relation to this.

**The governor who is linked to child protection, safeguarding and anti-bullying is Mrs G Cartwright.**

### **11.0 Links to other organisations that may be able to provide information and support:**

The following organisations provide support for schools and parents dealing with specific bullying issues including the social, mental or emotional affects caused by bullying.

- The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Restorative Justice Council: [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk)
- Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)
- MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)

### **Cyber-bullying and online safety**

- ChildNet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)
- Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

### **LGBT issues**

- Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

### **SEND**

- Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)
- Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)

- Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.
- Anti-bullying Alliance SEND programme of resources: Advice provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance for school staff and parents on issues related to SEND and bullying.  
[www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying-and-send-module-final.pdf](http://www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying-and-send-module-final.pdf)

### **Race, religion and nationality**

- Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)
- Educate Against Hate: [www.educateagainsthate.com](http://www.educateagainsthate.com)
- Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srrtc.org/educational](http://www.srrtc.org/educational)
- Kick It Out: [www.kickitout.org.uk](http://www.kickitout.org.uk)

### **Sexual harassment and sexual bullying**

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW):  
<http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/campaign/schools-safe-4-girls/>
- Disrespect No Body: <https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/>
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying:
- [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related)

Note: Additional links can be found in 'Preventing & Tackling Bullying' (July 2017):

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying)

# Appendix 1.

Leaflet for parents/carers

# St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School

## Working Together to Deal with Bullying:

### *A leaflet for parents/carers*



Document Date :

Reviewed: January 2020

#### **Aims of this leaflet.**

As a school community we have a shared responsibility for the well-being of all our children. We take this responsibility very seriously and wish to work together with you and your child to ensure that our school is a happy place for everyone. This leaflet is intended to help ensure that we have a shared understanding of what bullying is, of the approaches and strategies used by the school to respond to incidents of bullying and of the responsibilities of all concerned. We hope you find the leaflet informative and useful.

***“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus  
as we learn, love and grow together”***

#### **Our approach**

Our anti-bullying approaches are consistent with the values of a Catholic community and preparing children for life in an inclusive society. These include incorporating an acceptance and valuing of difference, the need to cope with individuals whose behaviour we may find challenging, the role of forgiveness and ensuring acceptable standards of behaviour. We seek to create an environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour and respect for others through consistently reinforced expectations.

### **What is bullying?**

The following 3 dimensions help us to define bullying behaviour:

- Bullying is intentionally hurtful, physically, emotionally or mentally
- It is a repeated experience, rather than an isolated incident. However, very rarely there could be single incidents which constitute bullying because of the fear and intimidation that projects beyond that initial incident or because of the number of people who have become involved (e.g. cyberbullying).
- It involves an inequality of power, such that it is difficult to reject or deal with the hurtful behaviour

### **Examples of hurtful behaviour that may contribute to bullying may include:**

- Verbal – mimicking, put-downs, humiliation, hurtful remarks, name-calling, racist remarks, homophobic/transphobic language or remarks about someone's sexuality, posting nasty remarks on the internet
- Physical – hitting, pushing, hurting, disrupting work or play
- Indirect – spreading rumours, exclusion, getting others to be unkind, making unkind remarks and then saying it is a joke, forwarding hurtful texts, photographs, images or messages
- Psychological – intimidation, threats, looks to make someone fearful

### **The School's role**

The Headteacher has active oversight of the anti-bullying policy, procedures and strategies at the school.

**The governor who is linked to child protection, safeguarding and anti-bullying is Mrs G Cartwright.**

### **The school will:**

- Create an environment where children feel safe to raise their concerns
- Listen and respond
- Teach pupils to understand what bullying is, to recognise their responsibilities towards others, to be resilient and reduce their own vulnerability. This includes key Christian messages such as respect and forgiveness
- Act to eliminate inappropriate or hurtful behaviour through education alongside appropriate individualized sanctions and ensure that bullying behaviour stops
- Act with integrity to resolve incidents, strive to rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all
- Make staff aware of concerning behaviour and vulnerable children so they can provide appropriate support
- Inform parents of any significant incidents involving their children so they can support their child and assist in achieving resolution
- Record all significant incidents
- Provide follow up support to vulnerable individuals as appropriate

## Parents/Carers: How you can support your child

Parents have an important role in encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community. We can only be fully effective in dealing with incidents with parents' support:

- Be aware that an anti-bullying policy is available from the office and on the web-site
- Inform the school of all incidents of bullying. Report single incidents to the class teacher or repeated hurtful behaviour to the Headteacher
- Please do not approach other parents or children directly or spread stories about incidents either in person or on-line
- If you think your child is being bullied:
  - listen carefully and reassure her/him
  - explain the importance of telling an adult at school
  - work to raise her/his self-esteem and self-worth
  - help her/him to implement any strategies that have been agreed with the school
- If your child has used bullying behaviour:
  - help her/him understand why their behaviour is unacceptable and the impact it is, or may be, having on others
  - support her/him in co-operating with the school
  - help her/him to implement any strategies that have been agreed with the school
  - encourage and praise positive change
- In all cases parents can help their child to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind them by encouraging a forward looking approach and reminding of the fact that resolution has been achieved.

**Please do come and talk to us if you have any concerns in relation to bullying or hurtful behaviours. No problem is ever too big or too small to tackle!**

# APPENDIX 2

Factors that will be considered in deciding whether an incident is hurtful or bullying in nature

## Factors to help determine if an incident constitutes bullying

Incident was bullying (all 3 amber warnings confirmed)

- Hurt has been deliberately/knowingly caused (physically or emotionally)
- It is a repeated incident or experience e.g. multiple incidents, cyberbullying or the involvement of a group
- Involves an imbalance of power:
  - target feels s/he cannot defend her/himself, or
  - perpetrator/s exploiting their power (size, age, popularity, coolness, abusive language, labelling/name-calling, etc.)

Incident was not bullying on this occasion because it was

- the first hurtful incident between these children
- teasing/banter between friends without intention to cause hurt (should not happen again)
- falling out between friends after a quarrel, disagreement or misunderstanding
- conflict that got out of hand (should not happen again)
- activities that all parties have consented to and enjoyed (check for subtle coercion)
  - got out of hand
  - parental concern

## Focus of Bullying/Hurtful Behaviour that must be considered as part of the investigation

	Definitely applies	Possibly applies
Age/ Maturity		
Appearance		
Size/weight		
Class/Socio-economic		
Family circumstance (e.g. caring role)		
Ethnicity/Race		
Religion/Belief		
Gender		
Transphobia/Gender identity		
Homophobia/transphobic /sexuality		
Sexualised		

SEN and Disability		
Ability		

**Manifestations of Bullying that may be witnessed**

Perception of individual: feelings of being bullied/harassed	
Isolation/ignoring	
Teasing	
General expressions of prejudice/stereotype	
Racist literature, graffiti or insignia	
Verbal abuse or name calling (specify below)	
Targeted graffiti or hurtful note writing	
Threats including threatened physical assault	
Mobile phone/text message bullying/harassment	
Internet related bullying/harassment	
Camera phone bullying/harassment	
Actual physical assault	
Other:	