

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Preventing and Dealing with Racist Incidents policy

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

To be read in conjunction with the following Policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Reviewed: Autumn 2023
Next review: Autumn 2024
Reviewed by: Safeguarding Committee

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chair of Governors

Date ratified: 5th December 2023

Introduction

All members of the school community (staff, pupils, parents and visitors) have a right not to experience racism at school, whether or not this is directed at them. St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School values all children and seeks to ensure that they learn that challenging hurtful behaviour and discrimination is an important part of the Catholic ethos.

Racism is evident in wider society and therefore inevitably will occasionally occur within schools. Racist incidents can occur in any school setting, including this one. In St Vincent de Paul School we work actively:

- To develop a climate which is intolerant to racism.
- To ensure an atmosphere in which all pupils feel valued and listened to and have confidence that their concerns will be addressed.

Pupils are taught about racism, that it is unacceptable and that it diminishes us all.

As a school we aim to recognise and value diversity by ensuring that:

- All pupils have an equal and strong sense of belonging within the school community.
- There are few racist incidents and these are dealt with effectively.
- Pupils from different ethnic and faith backgrounds mix and get on well with each other
- Ensuring that the curriculum is inclusive in its regular content of diverse people and themes.

What is a racist incident?

Schools are required to use the following definition for recording and responding to racist incidents:

“Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”.

The Home Office Code of Practice explains that, “The purpose of the definition ... is to ensure that investigations take full account of the possibility of a racist dimension to the incident and that statistics of such incidents are collected on a uniform basis”.

In recording incidents under this definition, it is not the intention to label individuals as racist. Records of incidents are held centrally in the school and not on individual children's or adults' records.

By recording all incidents the school is able to:

- Demonstrate that they have dealt satisfactorily with incidents.
- Monitor trends and patterns of behaviour if they exist.
- Take preventative action against racism which may come into the school from society in general.
- Provide good educational responses to any behaviour that is of concern.

Consequently, any incident which is perceived by anyone to be racist will be investigated, recorded and monitored as such. This designation does not necessarily mean that racism has occurred.

In investigating any incident as defined above the school will be seeking to establish whether any behaviour, language or expression has occurred which has **caused harm or offence** in relation to colour, culture, ethnic group or religion. In some incidents it may be found that the motivation was

to cause harm or offence, in others it may have been unintentional, but both would still be recorded. Intentionally racist behaviour will be dealt with differently to unintentional incidents. For example, younger pupils may unwittingly use offensive language which they do not understand and did not intend.

It is important to note that racist incidents and racist bullying can be subtle and may not always be racially explicit. These kinds of incidents can be just as damaging to victims as explicit racism. Pupils may also suspect the motives and intent of their fellow pupils when perfectly acceptable language is being used. **Importantly, wherever offence is caused it needs to be understood and resolved, and where it concerns elements related to colour, culture, ethnicity or religion it will be recorded as a racist incident.**

It should be noted that under the prescribed definition racist incidents can occur without a victim or target being present, for example telling a racist joke or making derogatory remarks about a particular ethnic community. Such incidents will also be recorded and resolved.

Some racist incidents involve allegations that the school itself has failed to provide equal and fair opportunities or treatment to individuals or groups on the basis of their colour, culture, ethnicity or religion. Where such an allegation is made this too will be recorded and investigated as a racist incident.

Racist incidents may include*:

- Threatened or actual physical assault.
- Verbal abuse.
- Racist graffiti (on school furniture, walls or books).
- Distributing racist literature.
- Wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known racist organisation.
- Name calling.
- Teasing in relation to language, religion or cultural background.
- Expressions of prejudice calculated to offend or to influence the behaviour of others.
- Intimidation.
- Isolation and spreading of rumours.
- Inappropriate and hurtful humour.

* N.B. This list is not exhaustive

This policy is fully consistent with and should be considered alongside the school's policy on anti-bullying but also complies with additional legal requirements for identifying and responding to racist incidents.

Roles and responsibilities

1. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that a proper investigation of incidents occurs, for overseeing the application of the policy across the school, for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and for reporting to Governors. A designated Governor (Mrs Cartwright) and the Safeguarding Committee work closely with the Headteacher in this regard.
2. All staff are involved in dealing with racist incidents and maintaining good race relations.
3. Teachers wherever necessary will:

- Immediately address any pupil's negative, stereotyped or racist response to difference related to culture, colour or ethnicity.
 - Provide support to any pupil who has experienced offence from another person.
 - Refer language or behaviour that has been hurtful to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher for further investigation and resolution.
 - Provide educational responses to ensure that pupils develop the knowledge and skills necessary for living in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-faith society.
4. All staff will be vigilant at all times and open to pupils' concerns about experiences of racism, being ready to listen and to take reports seriously. Distressed pupils will be supported and all incidents reported on to the appropriate member of staff.

Expectations of pupils

All pupils, as appropriate to their age and understanding, have a responsibility for promoting a harmonious school community and challenging and/or reporting racist and other hurtful behaviours. (It is understood however that it may be difficult for pupils who are the targets of racism to report it.)

Expectations of parents

We always take parents' concerns seriously. However, the school can only respond to incidents that are drawn to their attention.

Parents are expected to ensure that their children display appropriate and acceptable behaviour in and out of school with their school fellows. When problems arise in school we will seek the support of all parents in ensuring their children understand where and why offence has been caused and what, if any, change might be necessary to adhere to the school's race equality policies.

Responding to incidents

In responding to incidents that may occur the school will aim to:

- provide appropriate support to pupils
- deal with any unacceptable behaviour
- prevent racism and discrimination
- re-establish good race relations across the school.

Support will be given to anyone who has experienced offence; their concerns will be listened to.

An investigation will look into the details of what has occurred.

The cause of offence will be clearly identified and an educational response provided where appropriate.

Where offence was intentional pupils will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Where offence was unintentional pupils will need to understand how offence was caused and be supported to make any changes necessary in their behaviour. A high priority will be placed by the school on resolving any breakdown in relationships and ensuring that pupils can move on positively from the experience.

Pupils who have experienced racism and their parents will be kept informed throughout the investigation and resolution of the incident.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

1. All incidents will be recorded, including the date, the names and ethnicity of the perpetrators and victims, the nature of the incident, and action taken in response using the CPOMS system, tagged with 'Racist incident'.
2. Where an incident is brought to our attention during the school day parents (perpetrator and victim) will be kept informed.
3. Where racist incidents occur which involve any of the following, the advice of the relevant Local Authority adviser will be sought:
 - Physical violence or serious damage to property.
 - Repeated or orchestrated harassment, including text messaging and cyber bullying.
 - Links with extremist groups, including distributing of racist literature.
 - Racist graffiti.
 - Absence related to a racist incident.
 - Exclusion related to a racist incident.
4. On a termly basis the Headteacher will report the number of incidents to the Full Governing Body through the Headteachers' Report. Individuals will not be identified in this process.

Performance indicators for preventing and dealing with racist incidents

In reviewing the effectiveness of this policy staff and Governors will consider:

- The feelings of victims (and their parents) on the satisfaction of the support received and the resolution of incidents.
- The continued good progress and high self esteem of those who have been offended.
- The continued good progress and high self esteem of those who have caused offence.
- Whether the action taken successfully prevented repeat incidents.
- The willingness of pupils (and parents) to draw their concerns to the attention of staff.
- The consistency of response and confidence of all staff in following school policy.
- Whether good race relations are being maintained in the school community.
- Underlying causes for any rise in numbers of incidents, whether these were preventable and if further action or change in policy and practice is now necessary.

Where review indicates that change is needed, policy and practice will be amended.

Reporting procedures for concerns relating to the school's PREVENT duties can be seen in Appendix 1.

APPENDIX 1

Prevent

From 1 July 2015 specified authorities, including all schools as defined in the summary of this guidance, are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the CTSA 2015”), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard¹³ to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”¹⁴. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies. Bodies to which the duty applies [must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015](#) (“the Prevent guidance”). Paragraphs 57-76 of the Prevent guidance are concerned specifically with schools (but also cover childcare). It is anticipated that the duty will come into force for sixth form colleges and FE colleges early in the autumn.

The statutory Prevent guidance summarises the requirements on schools in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies.

- Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools and colleges should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. These procedures may be set out in existing safeguarding policies. It is not necessary for schools and colleges to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.
- The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs).

The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.

- Schools must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. Schools should ensure that suitable filtering is in place. It is also important that schools teach pupils about online safety more generally.

The Department for Education has also [published advice for schools on the Prevent duty](#). The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

⁸ According to the Prevent duty guidance ‘having due regard’ means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

⁹ “Terrorism” for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).