



THE HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY COMPANY

Schools: Our Lady of the Angels Infant School and Nursery, St. Anne's Catholic Primary School, St. Benedict's Catholic Primary School, St. Francis Catholic Primary School, St. Joseph Junior School, St. Thomas More School and Sixth Form College.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SignedChair of Directors

Date.....

To be reviewed annually in the Autumn term.

Anti-bullying Policy

Introduction

All schools in the Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company are committed to providing a welcoming, caring, friendly, and safe environment for all members of our community so that we can learn, achieving our maximum potential, in a happy and secure atmosphere. Our relationships will reflect our belief and our shared vision, made clear in our School Mission statements.

We aim to develop our children in an environment of respect and understanding reflecting gospel teaching and values. Bullying of any kind prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos. This policy is also to support staff who are being bullied in the workplace.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our schools. If bullying does occur, all members of the community should be able to 'tell', and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell someone who can make a difference. Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying.

Bullying, as opposed to conflict, involves repeated, orchestrated power over someone else, either by an individual or by a group.

The context of this anti-bullying policy is about respect for others and self and is underpinned by our equal opportunities policy. It is also to be considered alongside the policy for promoting race equality and good race relations.

Building an ethos of co-operation

Staff emphasise the importance of respecting the feelings and emotions of others. If a child/ young person has aggressive tendencies, he/she is made aware of this issue through the formal plans and a target setting process. School assemblies are often about resolving disputes and issues in, where pupils and staff are given the opportunity to reflect during a period of silence. The curriculum builds on this ethos directly through timetabled Personal, Social, and Health Education as well as Citizenship and supported by the SEAL programme and the TAKING CARE programme.

The schools work hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out". Worthy intentions can only be applied effectively by spreading the message of understanding and respecting others.

All schools within the Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company regard bullying behaviour to be unacceptable and it will NOT be tolerated .

What Is Bullying?

Definitions of Bullying

At **Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company** we understand bullying to be defined in the following ways:-

- Bullying is an act by a person or group which deliberately hurts, threatens or frightens another person usually repeated over a period of time.
- Bullying is always about power and it can take a variety of forms;
- It thrives on secrecy;

- It is usually deliberate;
- It is often observed by silent witnesses (“passive bullies” who as part of a group do things that they would never consider doing as an individual)

Bullying is the use of deliberate aggression, often over a period of time, with the intention of hurting another person. It is repeated intimidation of a victim that is intentionally carried out by a more powerful person or group in order to cause physical and/or emotional pain and distress.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional/Psychological
being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical
pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist
racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual
unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic
because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Disablist
bullying someone because they are disabled and/or have special Educational needs
- Verbal
name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, ridicule
- Cyber
All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

• **It may include:-**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------|
| Accusing others | Hair Pulling | Gangs |
| Bag Stealing | Belittling | Intimidation |
| Theft | Shoving | Smirking |
| Malicious nicknames | Spitting | |
| Blaming the Victim | Making Others do the Work | |
| Staring | Not letting others join in | |
| Clothes Ripping | Extortion of money/possessions | |
| Withdrawal of friendship | Receiving abusive text messages/emails/phone calls | |

We recognise this list is not exhaustive and people may be bullied because of the group to which they belong, because of them being perceived to be different.

Signs and Symptoms

A child/ young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning

- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a text message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

This policy document outlines how we make this possible at **Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company**.

Responsibilities

Legal Responsibilities

- Board of Directors delegate to the local Academy Committee the legal duty to take measures to prevent all forms of bullying among the pupils
- The Board of Directors as the employer has the responsibility to ensure the provision of a safe work place for children / young people as well as staff.
- The Headteacher is required to ensure the enactment of that responsibility within the school
- The Headteacher has a duty to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees. Bullying can damage the mental health of an individual.

School Community Responsibilities

- The Headteacher will be the "lead" person within their own school and coordinate the process.
- Staff will be made aware of procedures and policy on bullying at staff meetings.
- All staff should use their professional judgement to determine when to pass on their concerns about a bullying incident to a member of the management team.
- All children/young people are encouraged to "tell" someone who can make a difference to bullying incidents.
- All parents, employees and users of our schools should actively promote acceptable behaviour in school activities, within school and those taking place off site.

- Playground supervision by both teaching staff and lunchtime supervisors will be carefully carried out and children / young people's behaviour monitored effectively. Information will be passed to Senior Leaders who will monitor activity and save record in the Class Behaviour Log.

Relationships and Curriculum

- Children / young people should be "listened to" and supported in a practical way.
- Children / young people being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development
- Children / young people should be given opportunities to talk about bullying in general.
- Children / young people should be encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying
- Regular 'circle time' sessions should be held – minimum of half-term reminders.
- Support systems are in place following appropriate training e.g. Play leaders, School Council, Class Councils, Tutor groups
- Outside agents visits to support creating a supportive climate e.g. NSPCC/Police
- Personal Social and Health Education and Citizenship Scheme of Work developed for the whole school which will incorporate strategies to give appropriate 'assertiveness' training.

Strategies to tackle bullying

Prevention is better than cure so at all schools within the **Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company** we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour.

We will use various methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of class instructions
- signing a home-school agreement
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters

Pupils are told that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within their school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of incidents. The Class teacher / Form Tutor of the victim will be responsible for this and will be required to give a copy of the report, and the action taken, to an SLT member. Older pupils involved in bullying behaviour, may be asked to write a statement. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate co-ordinated action, all proven incidences of bullying should be reported to the Headteacher. If bullying includes racist abuse then it should be reported to the Headteacher to be recorded in the Racial Incident Book and reported termly to the Academy Committee and LA.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

There are various strategies that can be applied if more than one pupil is involved in bullying another. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time. If held regularly, this can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just within the affected group to confront bullying that already exists.

Victims who are worried about openly discussing an incident when the aggressors are present (eg taunting during a lesson) can be encouraged to go to the teacher with a piece of work, using this as a reason to speak to the teacher. Victims need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour, and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying. Setting up a buddy system, or peer counselling possibly with pupils who already hold a position of responsibility, such as School Council members can also be beneficial.

Supervision at Playtimes

- ◆ Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where praise, recognition, and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- ◆ Our approach is to build an ethos of non-confrontation; use of counselling

Parental Involvement

The parents of children / young people who are exhibiting bullying behaviour and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The child / young person will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. (Persistent behaviours may be excluded from school). A monitoring tool may also be used, usually incorporating a reward for achieving desired behaviours.

Parents are reminded through assemblies, letters and newsletter, website and the learning platform link to inform their children that they must tell someone should they ever be bullied. Keeping information from the school, or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer.

Action to be taken once bullying has been reported

Every observed or reported incident requires action.

Act immediately to stop/prevent any incident of bullying/harassment or discrimination – ignoring what happens is colluding.

Investigate all incidents thoroughly.

Bullying incidents should be reported to staff.

Listed below are a number of steps, however they may not be delivered in this order depending on the nature of the incident.

Reporting Incidents

STEP 1

The first step is for the victim (child or adult) to tell the perpetrator to “stop” and say they “don’t like it”. This should include a stop hand sign where appropriate.

In cases of deliberate acts, or for a serious matter this can be taken to an adult immediately, if unable to speak to the perpetrator.

STEP 2

If the behaviour does not stop the child / young person should take it to someone who can make a difference, this may be an older child / young person or Play Partner (who should take the matter to an adult or a

member of the Leadership Team, if an adult is the victim) or any adult within the school community. The adult will make a decision whether the incident meets the definition of Bullying and what further action should be taken. This may be referring to the classteacher / from tutor or learning mentor or member of SLT. It is the responsibility of the parent to bring those incidents that are shared at home, to the attention of the school, for the school to monitor the situation and to use the school's policy to resolve the matter.

STEP 3

When the same perpetrator has been involved in an incident three times this should require a Bullying Behaviour Incident Report

Serious incidents will be dealt with immediately.

The investigation should be passed to a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will

- interview the victim
- interview the perpetrator/s (Perpetrators should always be interviewed separately).
The perpetrator should produce a written record.
- complete the report on behalf of the victim and ask for a written statement from the perpetrator
- determine the consequence for the perpetrator's action

STEP 4

Follow-up meetings

After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

STEP 5

- If, after extensive work carried out by the school, the 'perpetrator' continues with bullying behaviours or harassment, then exclusion may be necessary.
- The Academy Committee and Police should be informed in the case of serious physical attacks either by individuals or groups.