

St John's C of E Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone intimidates or causes harm to another person on purpose on subsequent occasions. The victims of bullying can be verbally, physically or emotionally assaulted and are often threatened and made to feel frightened.

Bullying should not be viewed as an unfortunate but unavoidable part of school life. No child deserves to be bullied - it's unacceptable behaviour.

Bullying in school can include:

- verbal harassment - face to face, by phone, text or **over the internet**
- hitting, hair-pulling and kicking
- teasing and name-calling
- spreading rumours
- damaging, stealing or hiding possessions
- threatening or intimidation
- exclusion at playtime or from social events and networks

Different kinds of bullying:

Homophobic – Bullying someone because they are a different sexual orientation from you. Saying that someone is 'gay' or using words like 'gay' as an insult.

Racist – Treating people differently because of their race, the colour of their skin, where they are from or what they believe in and using offensive words that describe race to bully people.

Sexist – Treating people differently based on whether they are female or male. For example, thinking that boys are better than girls.

Treating someone differently if they are disabled, or using offensive language to describe people who are disabled and using this to bully people.

Treating people differently based on looking different such as if they have a certain hair colour or wearing glasses.

Many children can cope with falling out with others but when the problems continue and children are unhappy we have to intervene and help.

We should support the children to have confidence to deal with a bullying situation by supporting each other and encouraging them to tell if they are being victimised or suspect someone else is being bullied.

1. We do not accept bullying at St John's C.E. Primary School.
2. The message to all members of the school community is that bullying will not be tolerated.
3. All children will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying (whether they are victims or not)
4. The member of staff will record all incidents of reported bullying. There is a book in the head teacher's office for those considered more serious incidents.
5. The victims of bullying will be given maximum support in school.
6. Parents of both victim and bully will be informed and invited to visit the school for discussion.
7. Members of the school community will be given access to skills to equip them to deal with bullying and to aid the victim and support the bully. For instance, 'Wishes and Feelings' or 'Circle of Friends' training.
8. Resources will be allocated and regularly updated. The issue must be monitored.

Aims:-

1. To be as aware as we can of bullying and to make sure that the appropriate action is taken - this will depend upon the incident in question.
2. To have a policy that must be shared by all members of the school community. The issue must be regularly monitored and reviewed.
3. To have a style and quality of discipline that is influential and in line with the behaviour policy. A balance is needed. Being over punitive may offer a model for aggression whereas less discipline might leave pupils at risk. Rules need to be uniform, consistently applied, few and well known. See behaviour policy.
4. To promote the school as a community. This is a strong issue as relationships are the foundation of a school. Social developments, character building and group interaction should be encouraged. This is part of our SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) curriculum.
5. To ensure the curriculum must offer opportunity for the development of self worth and access for every individual to the goals society promotes.

St John's is a telling school. This is a key recommendation from BullyingUK and ensures that a culture of anti bullying is in place. It also means that the onus to tell and access support is not just on the victim but all members of the school community.

How can we tell a child is being bullied?

We hope a child may have the confidence to tell an adult at home or school but this is not always the case. The worry box is available as a non verbal option.

- unwillingness to go to school
- feeling unwell, often with a headache
- irritability
- anxiety
- aggression towards you or others in your family
- bedwetting
- waking in the night
- missing or damaged belongings
- afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- school work is affected
- frightened to walk to or from school
- changes in eating patterns

Bullying

Our School seeks to provide an environment which is stable, well ordered and disciplined. We expect all children and adults to behave with courtesy, common sense and respect for others. This principal should govern pupils' behaviour in the classroom, around the building and on their way to and from school.

As a staff we will not accept any form of bullying or intimidation by pupil, group of pupils upon another, or by adults. Bullying can take a variety of forms ranging from name calling to the threat or use of physical violence but we should treat all examples of this unsociable behaviour seriously.

It is all too easy for a teacher or other adult to dismiss the pupil's complaint that she or he is being bullied or intimidated because we may believe that the child is being over sensitive in that he or she brought about the incident upon himself or herself, or even as an adult we may feel that the individual should stand up for himself or herself.

We should not underestimate the traumatic effects that bullying can have upon a child.

Both research and specific incidents that have been reported have pointed to the feelings of unhappiness, fear, insecurity and desperation that bullying can generate.

All staff should therefore;-

1. Be vigilant in their observation and in their day to day conversations with pupils to discover any incidents of bullying which might take place.
2. Report any incident or suspicion of bullying to the Deputy Head or the Head Teacher.

Members of staff should;-

1. Act promptly upon any incident or suspicion of bullying by talking to the pupil concerned to establish both the nature of the bullying and who is doing it.
2. The member of staff should assure the pupil how seriously we view such behaviour and that action will be taken. (Supportive counselling may be appropriate if the pupil is upset). Depending upon the particular incident it may be appropriate to speak to the parents of both the pupil that is bullied and the parents of the bully.
3. Encourage the pupil to report any repetition of the incident.
4. Interview the pupils who have undertaken the bullying and make it clear that such behaviour is totally unacceptable, setting an appropriate punishment and explaining that future behaviour will be monitored closely in order to ensure that there is no repetition of the incident. Staff should make reference to the discipline policy. It will be appropriate, in most cases, to speak to the parents in order to explain what has occurred and ask them for their support in backing up what has been said. It is also appropriate to inform the Head Teacher of such action.
5. It may be appropriate to record incidents of bullying in the bullying incidents book, kept by the Head Teacher. It may be also be necessary to record details on SIM's.
6. Resolution to be reported back to parents/carers.

Children will be actively encouraged and made aware of the people they can speak to should they feel they are being bullied. These include:

- Family members
- Friends
- Safety Patrollers
- Class teacher
- Any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable

Reporting an Incident

Any bullying issues should be reported (via another source as above, if necessary) to the child's class teacher.

Complaints Procedure: If the matter is not dealt with to the child's and parents' satisfaction, the matter should be then taken to the Deputy Head/Head Teacher.

Each bullying incident reported will be dealt with upon its individual circumstances and severity. In extreme situations, it may be necessary to inform the governing body. There will be individual support given for both the victim and the bully with specific interventions put in place for them and their parents, if appropriate.

Prevention

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

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- 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 (or using KIDSCAPE role-plays)
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters
- completing a SEAL topic on bullying in the Autumn term

We have many anti-bullying strategies in place in school. These include:

- Teachers patrolling the cloakroom areas after school
- The Head Teacher is on duty during lunch times
- Safety cameras are installed in shared areas such as cloakrooms, hall, corridors etc.
- Safety Patrollers are on duty before and after school, and during break and lunch times including in the key areas e.g. the cloakrooms and the dinner hall.
- Playground Leaders (older children working with younger children during play times)
- Lunchtime buddies (linking y5/6 with younger children)

Support for the victim of bullying

Following bullying, victims may feel very vulnerable and need support in regaining confidence. They may need support or counseling. What form this takes will depend on the child. Possible routes may be 'Wishes and Feelings', 'Circle of Friends', participating in a pragmatics group or providing a peer buddy in school or a named adult that they can access when they feel the need.

The victim may need advice and guidance on dealing with challenging situations. It is important that they have the tools to handle difficult situations in future.

It is important to work alongside parents/carers of victims so that the school and home response does not contradict or undermine each other. For instance, our school could never condone physical retaliation as a response.

As well as the school tackling the bully/bullies there may be practical steps that the school could take to minimise any likelihood of a repeat incident. Examples include, making all relevant staff aware of the bullying and the need to be vigilant or regrouping children so that contact between them is minimised.

It is important that to minimise the likelihood of a repeat incident that a clear picture of the bullying that has taken place is understood. For instance where, when and how it happened. The school may be able to practically respond and may alter supervision or other policies as a result.

Support for the bully

There are many reasons children and young people may get involved in bullying, such as:

- Feeling powerless.
- Low self-esteem.
- Trying to get admiration and attention from friends.
- Fear of being left out if they don't join in.
- Not understanding how someone else is feeling.
- Taking out their angry feelings.
- A culture of aggression and bullying.
- Being bullied themselves.

The bully themselves may need counseling and guidance to change their behavior. They may need support for issues linked to low self esteem or mental health. It may be appropriate to refer them to an agency such as CAMHS or to provide a programme in school such as 'Wishes and Feelings'.

It is important to work with the parents/carers of the bully. They may be able to offer an explanation for issues of low self esteem such as a parental separation, bereavement or the child themselves being bullied.

The parents/carers are also key in helping the bully to change their attitude and see the impact of their actions. It is important for children to realise which of their actions has contributed to bullying. It may be that a parent can support the school in tackling this through the removal of internet or mobile phone use or collecting their child from the school site each day.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the school community.

Evaluation and Review of this policy and its effective implementation would be undertaken by the Senior Management Team and the Governing Body.

See also:

Behaviour Policy
Premises Policy