



Berwick  
St Mary's  
CE First School

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Achievement - Creativity - Endeavour

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

# Anti-bullying Policy

Berwick St Mary's C of E First School

Adopted: October 2015

To be reviewed: October 2017



## 1 RATIONALE

Everyone at St Mary's C of E First School has a right to learn, to be respected and to be safe. We are intent on providing a caring, safe, happy and healthy environment for all our pupils, guided by the teachings of Jesus in delivering our Christian values and vision.

Bullying is regarded as unacceptable. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a community within our school, and this means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform the staff.

## 2 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. To do this we will:

- Ensure that staff, governors, pupils, parents, relatives and childcare providers develop a shared understanding of the concept of what is and is not bullying.
- Take positive action to prevent cases of bullying
- Promote a positive and caring ethos within the school environment
- Have in place a consistent, swift and positive response to any bullying incidents that may occur
- Provide support for children, parents, relatives and childcare providers to enable them to identify and solve problems, for both the victim and the bully.

## 3 PREVENTATIVE STEPS TO MINIMISE BULLYING

Some of the measures and activities we use in St Mary's to minimize bullying include:

- The RE programme and Christ's teaching 'Love one another.'
- Worship themes friendship power conflict trust etc.
- Development of the SEALS programme.
- Clear representation around school of rights, rewards sanctions etc.
- Regular reminders of school rules and mission statement.
- Displays around school.
- Support for Anti Bullying Alliance and Anti Bullying Week (Friendship Week).
- All pupils are able to comment on behaviour in school in their annual

- questionnaire.
- Discussion and drama, role play, designing posters etc.

#### 4 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. As a school we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. We are working with staff, pupils and parents to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated.

Our School Community:

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our anti- bullying policy on a regular basis
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and to identify and tackling bullying appropriately
- Ensures that all pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively and that pupils feel safe to play, learn and socialise
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns about bullying and deals promptly with any complaints
- Seeks to learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere and utilises the support of the LA anti-bullying co-ordinator and relevant organisations when appropriate
- Shares in discussions about anti-bullying during an annual anti-bullying week in the Autumn term

#### 5 WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is behavior which deliberately makes another person feel uncomfortable, distressed or threatened.

Bullying is activities that are repeated over time.

Bullying makes those being bullied feel powerless to defend themselves. It results in worry, fear and distress which can interfere with the wellbeing of the child. The victim may be made to believe that telling others will result in worse abuse.

Bullying is distinct from conflict, which is part of everyday life. This difference is not immediately clear to children. Bullying is not:

- A one off fight or argument
- A friend or peer sometimes being nasty
- An argument with a friend or peer
- Falling out with friends or peers on an occasional basis.

## 6 FORMS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Bullying can take many forms, they include:

- Physical bullying – pushing, hitting, kicking, hiding/taking belongings.
- Verbal bullying – name calling, insults, threatening language, offensive remarks.
- Indirect bullying – spreading gossip or malicious rumours or stories about someone; excluding someone from social groups
- Cyber bullying – any form of bullying using a mobile phone, chat rooms, social networking sites, instant messaging or email.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality

It may also be:

- The same person or group always leaving someone out
- Someone making threats of violence against someone else
- Someone damaging some else's kit, clothes or belongings deliberately
- Someone taking another person's belongings deliberately
- Someone trying to force someone else to do something they do not want to do
- Someone demanding money/goods with threats

## 7 WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING?

A person may indicate by signs or behaviours that they are being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if the person:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school or changes route
- Doesn't want to go on the school / runs away
- 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
- Becomes aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts stammering
- Threatens or attempts suicide
- Threatens or attempts self harm
- Threatens or attempts to run away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Performance in school work begins to drop
- Comes home with clothes torn, property damaged or 'missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home 'starving'
- Changes in eating habits
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

- Gives improbable excuses for their behaviour.

Please remember although these are common signs of someone suffering from bullying there maybe others, and it is the duty of us all at St Mary's to be vigilant and help by informing staff of the need to become involved.

## 8 WHAT CAUSES BULLYING?

People bully for different reasons. The reasons could be:

To feel powerful

Jealousy

To feel good about themselves

To be in control

Because they want something (attention, possession or friends)

To look good in front of other people

To feel popular

Because of peer pressure

To be big/clever

For what they believe to be fun

Because they are being bullied themselves

Because they see and pick on an easy target (small, won't tell anyone, lonely or different in some way)

## 9 PRACTICAL GUIDELINES – STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

Our school fosters a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is not acceptable. This is done by:

- Developing an effective anti-bullying policy and practice. The school will then become a safer and happier environment, with consequent improvements in attitudes, behaviour, and relationships and with a positive impact on learning and achievement.
- Regular praise of positive and supportive behaviour by all staff.
- Work in school which develops empathy and emotional intelligence (SEAL).
- Regular collective worship which discusses the types of behaviour and ethos we expect in school.
- Regular 'anti bullying' weeks.
- Any incidents treated seriously and dealt with immediately.
- A consistent level of understanding of procedures and a clear behaviour policy.

## 10 PROCEDURAL RESPONSES TO BULLYING

A bullying incident can be reported by a victim, parent, carer, friend or anyone who has knowledge of the problem. It may also be reported by a member of school staff who will take it to the class teacher. The class teacher will decide upon which stage below is appropriate as a starting point:

Please note: The Headteacher may override these steps and intervene at an earlier opportunity depending on the severity and complexity of the incident.

- **Step 1**  
Complaint is listened to and discussed between children and the children's chosen teacher to identify the problem and possible solutions. A way forward is suggested. Short review time.
  
- **Step 2**  
  
Discussion/Interview with all parties'. Clear instructions given regarding what is acceptable behaviour/unacceptable behaviour. A clear message that unacceptable behaviour must stop. Teacher closely monitors the situation. Teacher logs the incident in the incident file and informs other staff. Children and teacher to agree actions and the way forward. Short term review is actioned.  
  
Parents may be informed if felt necessary
  
- **Step 3**  
  
HT reiterates Clear instructions regarding what is acceptable behaviour/unacceptable behaviour. A clear message that unacceptable behaviour must stop. Meeting recorded by HT.
  
- **Step 4**  
  
Head teacher speaks to both the victim and bully and offers listening, thinking and discussion time and advice to both. Headteacher informs parents of bully about the problems and discusses ways of helping the bully to change their behaviour.  
  
The ultimate step can be exclusion from school
  
- **Step 5**  
  
Headteacher and Chair of Governors inform/seek advice and support from Local Authority including services such as LIST, Anti-bullying lead for NCC.

## 11 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 11.1 The role of the Headteacher :

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school antibullying policy and procedures and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in our school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children what is appropriate and what is inappropriate behaviour.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets a climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The Headteacher is accessible to all and children are aware of this.

The Headteacher will record incidents if required in the school's incident book which is held in the office. Major incidents will be recorded separately by the Headteacher.

### **11.2 The role of the teacher:**

Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place.

If teachers become aware of any bullying taking place they deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the target of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. They spend time talking to the child who has bullied; they explain why the action of the child was wrong, and endeavour to help the child change his/her behaviour in future.

If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, teachers inform the Headteacher and the Headteacher then invites the child's parents into school to discuss the situation.

In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies.

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

It is common practice in our school for teachers to inform the Headteacher of incidents of bullying so she has an overview of the situation across school and can recognise repeated incidents.

Teachers attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their classes and to establish a safe climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, recognising and celebrating the success of children and by valuing difference, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

Teachers are aware of and follow the policy and procedures for dealing with bullying.

### **11.3 The role of parents:**

Parents who are concerned that their children might be being a target of bullying, or who suspect that their child may be exhibiting behaviour of bullying should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Parents have a responsibility to monitor their child's use of the internet and mobile phones out of school to actively discourage cyber bullying and to support the school in the internet rules.

### **11.4 The role of children:**

Children are encouraged to tell an adult when they feel they are in a situation which makes them upset, or they feel unable to cope with. We are a 'telling school' where children are encouraged to tell if they witness bullying.

### **11.5 The role of governors:**

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher and the staff in implementing the policy.

The Governing Body reviews the effectiveness of the policy on a regular basis.

## **12 ADVICE FOR PUPILS, PARENTS AND STAFF**

### **12.1 Advice for children:**

Advice that may be given to children by adults includes:

#### **There is safety in numbers:**

- Go around with a friend or two
- Stay with groups of people even if they are not necessarily your closest friends
- Get your friends together and say 'no' to the bully
- Only go to places where bullying happens if you have some friends or an adult with you.

#### **Ask for help:**

- Talk to a teacher or adult in school, you know they will take it seriously.
- Talk to an adult you trust
- Talk to the adult again if the problem continues

#### **Try to do something different:**

- Try not to show you are upset, which is difficult
- Walk confidently, even if you don't feel that way on the inside. Practise.
- Just walk past people if they call you unpleasant names.
- Practise what you could say to the bully in a mirror.

#### **Look after yourself:**

- If you are in danger get away. Do not try to keep possessions.
- Don't fight back; talk to an adult.
- If you are different in some way be proud of it! It is good to be an individual.
- Tell yourself you do not deserve to be bullied.

#### **If you witness bullying:**

- Be a friend – let them know you saw it – you wouldn't like to be bullied, and telling them will make them feel better – remember, there is safety in numbers.
- Encourage them to talk to someone – offer to go with them.
- If they won't talk and you are worried about them, is there someone you can talk to? You can help by telling someone.

### **MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT THE BULLYING**

#### **12.2 Advice for parents**

What to do if you think your child is being bullied:

- Watch for signs – not wanting to go to school, minor illnesses, headaches, avoiding friends, coming home with bruises, torn clothing or possessions disappearing. Listen to what your child says – try to establish that the problem is really bullying and not something else.
- Discuss with your child what they can do.
- Talk to the teacher or another adult in school. Do this for as long as the bullying continues.
- Help your child deal with the problem him/herself. Be tactful. Don't encourage conflict – a 'thump back' approach rarely helps and may only make things worse for your child.
- Try not to be over anxious or over protective. It may sometimes be helpful to talk with the bully's parents, but before you do this talk to the school and take their advice.
- Most children are called names at school. Usually these names are used in a humorous way and are not meant to cause offence. If your child is upset by the names used then let the school know. It may not be bullying but will need to be addressed.
- If a name is used that refers to your child's physical appearance/characteristics, then let your child know that you love him/her for what they are – their characteristics make them individual. Let the school know so that they can deal with it.
- It is important that you support your child and the school. Sometimes fallouts and name calling are just that, but if they escalate they can become bullying. Always talk to the teachers.

#### **12.3 Advice for teachers and other staff**

- Watch for early signs of distress in pupils – deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, often being late for school, low self esteem, bruises and cuts, avoidance of school. All of

these may be symptomatic of other problems, but may also be early signs of bullying.

- Be available and willing to listen – treat the information seriously.
- Speak to the class teacher or headteacher – refer to the ‘steps’ in the main policy – put the procedures into operation.
- Avoid the ‘bullying model’ – do not treat the bully unfairly – try to negotiate an agreed form of atonement that is acceptable to both the victim and the bully.
- All observed incidents of bullying must be stopped immediately. The Bullying is always wrong – a victim of bullying must not be made to feel guilty because he/she is bullied.
- If bullying is happening on the way home, inform the parents of this.
- Use peer pressure against bullying behaviour – ensure that all children understand what bullying is and that it is unacceptable.
- Help children to think about strategies to use.
- Ensure that pupils know what to do if they are bullied.
- Ensure that all pupils know that bullying of any kind is not tolerated at school. Everyone is expected to ensure that it does not happen and has the responsibility to tell – this is not telling tales.
- Always follow the procedures of the policy – if you have any concerns speak to the headteacher.

## 12 USEFUL INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

- Anti-bullying Alliance - the alliance brings together over 60 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying. Their website has a parent section with links to recommended organisations who can help with bullying issues  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- Kidscape  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
02077303300
- Childline – advice and stories from children who have survived bullying  
08000 1111
- Bullying on line  
[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)
- Parentline Plus – advice and links for parents [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk)  
08088002222
- Parents Against Bullying  
01928 576152

### Useful sources of information

- Stonewall - the gay equality organisation founded in 1989. Founding members include Sir Ian McKellen. [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk).