St Aidan's RC Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

Adopted: September 2021

Reviewed: August 2022

Introduction

Catholic belief is that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and as such, should all be treated justly.

> *"The dignity of the human person is rooted in his or her creation in the image and likeness of God."*
> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

At St Aidan's RC Primary School we strive to ensure that this belief is put into practice so that all are welcome. We work to ensure that each person, in all their uniqueness, is able to thrive in our Catholic school, irrespective of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic background, physical appearance, disability or the actual or perceived sexual orientation of themselves or of their parents/carers.

> *"Because all people are equal in God's sight, every person possesses the same dignity and has a claim to the same human rights. Hence every kind of social, racist, sexist, cultural or religious discrimination against a person is an unacceptable injustice."*   *YOUCAT 330*

At St Aidan's RC Primary School we endeavour to create a safe and stimulating environment where everyone knows that they are valued as God's children. Every person has the right to be treated with respect and each person has the responsibility to treat others in the same way.

Our mission statement:

<u>*"In the love and truth of Jesus We Grow"*</u>

is lived out so that children are enabled to have the confidence and strategies to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences, knowing that positive and fair action will be taken.

Aims and objectives

- To provide a secure, safe and positive Christian environment free from threat, harassment or any type of bullying behaviour, where children and adults can grow and develop.
- To create a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- To produce a consistent whole school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

- To work with all members of the school community (staff, children, parents/carers and governors) to foster productive partnerships which help maintain a bullying–free environment.
- To celebrate diversity and the uniqueness of individuals.

What is bullying?

Bullying can take many forms and can be experienced in many different ways.

DCSF 'Safe to Learn' 2007 defines bullying as

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as

'The intentional repetitive or persistent hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power'

DFE 'Bullying at school' November 2014 states that there is no legal definition of bullying. However, it states that bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- *repeated*
- *intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally*
- *often aimed at certain groups, eg because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation*

  It takes many forms and can include:
- *physical assault*
- *teasing*
- *making threats*
- *name calling*
- *cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (eg email, social networks and instant messenger)*

The DFE 2014 guidance states that schools should have their own definition of bullying.

Bullying is defined by our school community as any behaviour in school that is intentionally harmful to another person.
The circumstances of this behaviour will be:
  ➢ Deliberate – targeting a vulnerable person.
  ➢ Persistent – not an isolated incident.
  ➢ Unfair – there is an in-balance of power.
All children have a right to feel safe in school. No-one has the right to make anyone feel unsafe in our school.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can be categorised into seven main types:

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- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities
- Bullying related to gifts and talents
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying related to gender

Bullying related to race, religion or culture

Racist, faith-based or cultural bullying is bullying based on a person's background, colour, religion or heritage. This form of bullying has a negative impact on a child's sense of identity, self-worth and self-esteem. It also can be negative about the child's family, and about their ethnic or faith community as a whole.

Bullying related to home circumstances

The home circumstances of children can make them vulnerable to bullying. This may include obvious signs of affluence or lack of it, being a looked after child, being a young carer or having a family member with a disability or special need.

Bullying related to appearance or health conditions

Children with health or visible medical conditions, or perceived physical characteristics, such as size and weight may be vulnerable to bullying.

Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities

Children with SEN and disabilities are vulnerable to bullying. Their differences can be used by bullies to isolate them from friendship groups.

Bullying related to gifts and talents

Children and young people who are gifted and talented can be vulnerable to bullying. Their achievements and abilities can set them apart from their peers. This may lead to resentment and jealousy among their peers which may make them targets for bullying behaviour.

Bullying related to sexual orientation

Homophobic bullying involves the targeting of individuals on the basis of their perceived or actual sexual orientation. Homophobic bullying includes all forms of bullying but in particular it can include homophobic language. This is terms of verbal abuse used towards lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual people or those who are perceived LGBT. It can be used as an insult or to refer to something or someone as inferior eg derogatory use of the word 'gay'.

Bullying related to gender

Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying affects both genders. Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes that, when expressed, demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Both sexes may be victims and each may be a victim of their own sex. Children who feel that they belong to another gender or do not conform with the stereotypically defined roles often ascribed to particular genders, can also become a target of bullying.

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Forms of Bullying

Different forms of bullying can be seen within the seven identified types of bullying. Forms of bullying include:

Physical

This can include physical harm such as punching or pushing, being made to give money or belongings, or forcing a child to act against their will.

Verbal

Verbal bullying can include being teased in a nasty way, being called 'gay' in a derogatory way, being insulted about race, religion or culture, being called names or being the subject of offensive comments.

Indirect

This can include being deliberately excluded from groups or ignored, or being the subject of tales or rumours.

Electronic /'cyberbullying'

This form of bullying includes verbal or indirect bullying via text message, email, instant messenger services or social network sites or images spread via the internet or mobile phones.

Our Approach to Bullying

Our approach to bullying is informed by the Catholic faith.

"Every human being is created in God's image and likeness and therefore is valuable and worthy of respect." *Christ at the Centre*

Key Principles

- The school leadership will work with all in our community to prevent all forms of bullying, including prejudice based bullying, and to fully address incidents of bullying as they arise.
- All bullying in its variety of forms and types will be taken equally seriously and addressed appropriately.
- We will address bullying within the framework of Catholic beliefs and Church teaching and in a way which is age-appropriate.

Responding to bullying

When responding to incidents of bullying we aim:

- to make the child who has been bullied feel safe
- to encourage better behaviour from the child who has displayed bullying behaviours

All pupils are encouraged to talk to their teachers when they have a concern through the PHSCE curriculum. They learn that if a pattern of unkind behaviour begins to emerge they must speak out. They also learn that if they know bullying is happening and don't act to prevent it, then they share some responsibility for the hurt the victim is feeling. All class teachers keep a behaviour log and deal with incidents in line with the Behaviour Policy. Once a pattern emerges or concerns raised re bullying then the following procedure is undertaken.

THE SUPPORT GROUP APPROACH		
When bullying has been observed or reported:		
Step1	**Meet with the victim**	When the 'Group Leader' finds out that bullying has happened she starts by talking to the victim about his/her feelings.
Step 2	**Convene a meeting with the people involved**	The 'Group Leader' arranges to meet with the group of pupils who have been involved. This will include some bystanders or colluders and even friends of the victim who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. A group of up to six usually works well. *(Usually one supporter for each pupil involved and a peer mediator nominated by the group, whom all concerned will trust)*
Step 3	**Explain the problem**	'Group Leader' tells them the way the victim is feeling.
Step 4	**Share responsibility**	No blame attributed but 'Group Leader' states that she knows that the group are responsible and can do something about it.
Step 5	**Ask the group for their ideas**	Each member of the group to suggest a way in which they could help the victim to feel happier/safer. The victim also to suggest what they could do themselves to make it less likely that this will happen again.
Step 6	**Share responsibility**	The 'Group Leader' ends the meeting by formally agreeing the strategies the group have decided to use in order to resolve the situation.
Step 7	**Meet again**	Within the week then usually weekly, the group meet again with the 'Group Leader' to discuss how things have been going. This allows the 'Group Leader' to continue to monitor the bullying and keeps the pupils involved in the process. When all agree that things have improved the group meets at increasingly lengthy intervals until the victim feels completely secure and confident that he/she is no longer a target.
Parents and teachers of pupils involved, to be kept informed of progress. Longer term follow- up and monitoring is essential.		

Homophobic bullying and using homophobic language

Homophobic language can be used as an insult or to refer to something or someone as inferior such as the derogatory use of the word 'gay'. The derogatory use of homophobic language in our school will always be challenged even if it appears to be being used without any homophobic intent.

Children with SEN or disabilities

Our school is committed to actively promoting the equality of opportunity for all children with SEN or disabilities. Where children with SEN and disabilities are themselves found to be bullying, in most cases (except those related to specific conditions) school will expect the same standards of behaviour as those which apply to the rest of the school community, having made the reasonable adjustments necessary.

Staff training

Training of all staff including all teaching and support staff takes place annually and attendance is logged. All adults working in the school know the anti-bullying policy and the procedures and proformas used for reporting of incidents. Training on anti-bullying is part of the induction of new staff.

All staff receive training about being sensitive to the changes of behaviour that may indicate that a child is being bullied. Those being bullied may demonstrate physical, emotional and behavioural problems or changes.

Staff are expected to take preventative measures. This includes being aware of where and when bullying might take place. This awareness is informed by discussions with children and from annual questionnaires completed by children. The staff training includes equality training to raise awareness among staff of potential prejudicial behaviour and how not to reinforce stereotypes.

Curriculum
As a Catholic school Religious Education is the core subject of our curriculum. Opportunities within RE are capitalised upon to reinforce the principles of human rights, Catholic social teaching and the uniqueness of the individual, made in God's image and likeness. Our curriculum as a whole is planned and delivered to enable children to develop empathy, to understand the effect bullying has on people and to take responsibility for trying to prevent bullying. Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum such as circle time, role-play, class performances, celebration assemblies, our children gain in self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of diversity and an assortment of strategies to protect themselves from bullying. This is explicitly planned within the PSHE and Citizenship programmes delivered in school and through the annual celebration of Anti-bullying week. Staff are also expected and encouraged to take advantage of unplanned opportunities to celebrate diversity and to reinforce the principles of anti-bullying.

Pastoral structure

Children are elected to the school council each year. The elected school council regularly meets with the Head teacher and have the opportunity to raise any concerns.

The class system provides a structure of support for all children and helps to create an atmosphere where our children know that they will be listened to and where their problems and worries are taken seriously and responded to with sensitivity.

Collective Worship

In collective worship themes and values play a part in challenging prejudice and promoting justice for all. The timetable of collective worship includes specific opportunities throughout the year such as Statements to Live By, Anti-bullying week and House Assemblies which support work in anti-bullying (see collective worship file). The children are encouraged to live the gospel values by following Christ's example.

Reporting and recording of incidents of bullying

Our school has a clear and well publicised system for reporting bullying. Staff have annual training and children and parents/carers are explicitly reminded of the school's procedures each year during anti-bullying week.

See appendix 1.

Reporting to the Local Authority

All incidents of racist bullying are reported to the local authority.

The Role of the Governing Body

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. This is done through a monitoring log and through the annual questionnaire and Ofsted Parentview data. The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

Monitoring the Policy

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy annually. To discover the extent to which bullying exists in school and to monitor the extent to which our anti-bullying policy is effective, the log and strategies will be reviewed alongside the Year 6 questionaire.

It is the responsibility of the school governing body to review the effectiveness of this policy. This is done by examining the school's anti-bullying logbook, and through the report of the headteacher. Governors will analyse information with regard to the types and forms of bullying.

This policy was written in February 2016

It will be reviewed in the Autumn 2018.

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St Aidan's RC Primary School

Alleged Bullying Incident

Pupil Allegedly bullied:
Name
d.o.b
Year group & Class

Ethnicity	Gender	SEN
Home language	Looked after Y/N	
Date of incident		
Time of incident		
Location of incident		

Nature of incident, identify any details of any injury etc
Circle any elements that apply:
Racist sexist SEND Other

Member of staff to whom incident was reported

Alleged perpetrator(s)
Name(s)
d.o.b
Year group & Class

Witness to incident

Witness reports of incident

Action	Member of Staff Responsible:

Follow up:

Action	Member of Staff Responsible:

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