

St John's Church of England Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy



Reviewed	May 2015
Adopted by Governors	June 2015
Next review due	

RATIONALE

All children are a gift from God. They are all special and should be allowed to develop and grow in a nurturing environment secure in the knowledge that they are cherished.

"Valuing All God's Children-guidance for Church of England Schools On Challenging Homophobic Bullying" May 2014

This guidance aims to help our school express God's love by ensuring that we offer a safe and welcoming place for all God's children.

At St John's Church of England Academy, we believe that effective teaching and learning can only take place in a calm, caring and orderly environment. We pride ourselves on being a caring community, whose Christian values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. During their time at our school, all children are encouraged to develop a strong sense of what is right and wrong and to respect themselves and others. We believe that all pupils and adults have a right to feel safe and secure so that they can concentrate on their work and learning, free from all forms of bullying.

Research shows that bullying can have long term effects, often in evidence well into adulthood.

"Children who are bullied are ... much more likely than average to experience low wellbeing."
The Good Childhood Report 2012

"Children and young people who are bullied are more at risk of developing mental health problems, including depression and anxiety. Children at the highest risk are those who are both bullied, and who bully others."

Victoria Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development, 2013
NICHD, 2012

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously and pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to. Bullying will not be tolerated. The school will seek to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within the school or in the local community. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will consistently challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

At St. John's, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The school is now a Stonewall Champion School in relation to homophobic bullying and all staff are trained in how to address this in the classroom. We aim to celebrate difference and diversity in everyday school life, which benefits the whole school community.

AIMS

- To promote a Christian ethos where children and adults are treated with respect and can take part in any activity to their full potential, regardless of gender, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, ability, learning disability, appearance, background or culture.
- To raise awareness about the many forms of bullying and how they manifest themselves.
- To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To intervene effectively when bullying happens.

OBJECTIVES

- To raise awareness that bullying exists and be alert for any signs.
- To effectively challenge and use strategies to cope/deal with bullying.
- To provide help and support to victims.
- To provide help and support to those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To ensure that any reported incidents of bullying are fully investigated.
- To record any incidents on an Anti-Bullying Log and take further action as necessary.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy, Child Protection, Equal Opportunities, Anti Racism, S.M.S.C. Development, PSHE and Citizenship, E Safety Policy and the Anti-bullying policy and guidelines.

DEFINITION

Bullying involves dominance or intentional hurt, either physical or emotional, of one person by another, or a group of others, is premeditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour.

In other words, bullying at St John's is considered to be, “unacceptable behaviour which occurs ‘lots of times, on purpose’.”

Remember STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying can be:

Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	Pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic	Because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
Direct or Indirect Verbal	Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber Bullying	All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat, Twitter and Facebook misuse Mobile threats by text messaging and calls Misuse of associated technology ie camera and video facilities, I-pad, games, consoles

Bullying may be related to:

- Race

- Gender/Transgender
- Religion
- Culture
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- SEN or disability
- Gifted and talented
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances, incl. young carers, poverty, family members serving prison sentences, looked after children
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying, homophobia

Bullying can be:

- Child to child
- Staff to child
- Staff to staff
- Parent to staff
- Staff to Parent

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace.

Bullying outside the school premises: Schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose pupils are bullying.
- Talk to the police.

Bullying is not: It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

PROCEDURES

Bullying is discussed as part of the curriculum in order to build up the self help skills needed to challenge bullying. All staff must be alert to possible signs of bullying and act consistently to challenge it effectively.

The following strategies should be reinforced with pupils:

When you are being bullied:

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop.

- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Tell an adult or tell another child what has happened straight away.
- If you receive an inappropriate text/email do not delete it and show it to an adult immediately.

After you have been bullied:

- Tell a teacher or another adult in school.
- Tell your family.
- If you are too scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you or write your problem down and put it into the plastic wallet outside the Headteacher's room.
- Keep on speaking until someone listens.
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

When you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about:

- What has happened to you.
- How often it has happened.
- Who was involved.
- Where it happened.
- Who saw what was happening.
- What you have done about it already.

If you see someone being bullied:

- Tell any member of staff straight away.

If you are bullying someone:

- You may think teasing people at school is harmless fun but for the victim it can be no fun at all. Try to put yourself in the victim's place.
- There are serious consequences for you if you are found to be bullying someone.
- Admit to yourself that you are a person who is bullying others.
- If you feel you can't stop by yourself then ask someone you trust to help you.

**If you find it impossible to talk to anyone at school or at home, ring ChildLine
Freephone 0800 1111. E mail www.childline.org.uk**

The following key points must be followed by staff:

- Never ignore suspected bullying.
- Don't make premature assumptions.
- Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same thing does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth.
- Adopt a problem solving approach.
- Record incidents of bullying in the Anti-Bullying Log located in the Headteacher's office. (Where bullying is of a racist nature, we will report this to the Local Education Authority using the Racial Incident Report Form).
- Follow up repeatedly, checking that the bullying has not been resumed.
- Inform the Headteacher of major concerns.
- In the most serious, persistent cases of bullying a child may be excluded.

The following advice/strategies are given in our School Prospectus and used in discussion with parents: Every school is likely to have some problem with bullying at one time or another. Parents are often the first to detect symptoms of bullying which may include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. Please contact school immediately if you have any worries.

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

- Watch for signs – avoiding friends, possessions disappearing, uncharacteristic behaviour and those listed above.
- Listen and talk to your child, be calm, show sensitivity but reassure your child that he or she is not to blame.
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
- Explain to your child that should further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher or another adult immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

Talking with teachers about bullying:

- Try and stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
- Stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if the problem continues.

Give school time to deal with the problem.

Do not attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be behaving inappropriately or by speaking to their parents **OR** encourage your child to be 'a bully' back. Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

If your child is bullying other children:

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or another. Often their parents are not aware.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They are copying older siblings or people in the family they admire.
- They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with school friends.
- Their friends encourage them to bully.
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

If your child has seriously hurt or has repeatedly bullied another child, you may be asked to make an appointment to discuss the problem.

To stop your child bullying other you could:

- Talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and make others unhappy.

- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or using aggression to get what they want.
- Show your child how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.
- Discuss with your child's teacher to explain the problems your child is experiencing.
- Regularly check with your child to see how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people.

Contact Parentline Plus for help and support at www.parentlineplus.org.uk.

PROVIDING SUPPORT

We will provide support to pupils who are bullied:

- They will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault.
- We will assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We will encourage them to talk about how they feel.
- We will try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- We will try to ensure that they feel safe.
- We will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.
- We will affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.
- We will involve their friends / older pupils in peer support / mediation

We may then adopt strategies from the following list as appropriate:

- We will interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying separately.
- We will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying.
- We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop and seek a commitment to this end.
- We will affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.
- We will adopt a joint problem solving approach where this is appropriate, and ask the pupils involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage pupils involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others.
- We will consider sanctions under our school's Behaviour Policy.
- We will advise pupils responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that bullying stops.
- When bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage.
- We will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them.
- We will follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again.

There is a tendency, often quite a natural one, to want to investigate an incident and “get to the bottom of it.” Sometimes this will be entirely appropriate. There will be other occasions where an extended investigation is actually unhelpful and where a problem solving approach will be the most effective response. Our policy will be to use our discretion to respond flexibly and in an appropriate way to each incident.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur.

We use a range of teaching and learning strategies with an emphasis on active participation, with the children engaging in discussions, role play, circle time and problem solving activities.

Our value statement is displayed in all classrooms and is regularly referred to in collective worship alongside regular anti-bullying assemblies.

We encourage our children to take part in the setting of our school values (See Appendix 1) and each class is responsible for writing their own class rules along with their teacher.

We have a valuable School Council who meet regularly to discuss current issues.

Our PHSE/Citizenship curriculum is based around the SEALS programme which includes units on relationships, communication, and dealing with bullying.

The school plans for the local community to work with the children to promote an anti-bullying message, e.g. the school nurse, local policeman.

We have an annual whole school focus on Anti-Bullying to coincide with the national Anti-Bullying week organised by the Anti-Bullying Alliance where children write stories, songs and poems about bullying and design anti-bullying posters which are then displayed around the school. There is also a whole school focus on e-safety and how to deal with cyber bullying.

We conduct regular reviews of playground provision and train Y6 pupils to be Young Leaders.

The school is now a Stonewall Champion School in relation to homophobic bullying, which involved the PSHE co-ordinator attending a Stonewall training day. This programme supports the school to prevent and tackle homophobic bullying and language and talking about different families in school. Irrespective of an individuals' personal view, we celebrate difference and diversity in everyday school life. Staff attend regular training and feel confident to tackle homophobic bullying following the procedures above.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Pupils with special needs are often at greater risk of being bullied and may not be able to articulate their experiences as well as other children. Classroom activities must be sensitive to their needs and they may need extra help to build up their skills to say 'no' and get help.

CONCERN AND COMPLAINTS

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure a copy of which may be obtained from the school office.

OWNERSHIP OF THIS POLICY

This policy was written in conjunction with children, parents and staff in accordance with best practice. The Headteacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. However all staff, all pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy, and in its success. Governors will be given regular information on bullying within school, and a report on the operation of this policy.

MONITORING

A record of bullying incidents, and type, is kept in the Headteacher's office and these will be monitored as part of the evaluation process. Records will be kept on file for 2 years then

destroyed. These records are confidential and subject to the Data Protection Act. The PSHE Co-ordinator will liaise with the school council on an annual basis to discuss any issues regarding bullying.

EVALUATION

The policy will be evaluated using feedback from staff, parents, pupils, governors and the school council annually alongside the numbers of incidents, and type, that are reported to staff over a given period.

REFERENCES

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is just a small selection of the support available that teachers, parents and children have found useful.

Name of organisation	Telephone number	Website
Act Against Bullying	0845 230 2560	www.actagainstbullying.com
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0207 704 3370	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Anti-bully	not available	www.antibully.org.uk
Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)	0207 843 1901	www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
Anti-bullying Network	0131 651 6103	www.antibullying.net
Beatbullying	0845 338 5060	www.beatbullying.org.uk
Bully Free Zone	01204 454 958	www.bullyfreezone.co.uk
Bullying Online	020 7378 1446	www.bullying.co.uk
BBC	not available	www.bbc.co.uk
Childline	0800 1111 (helpline for children) 020 7730 3300 (general enquiry number)	www.childline.org.uk www.kidscape.org.uk
Kidscape	08451 205 204 (helpline for adults only)	www.beyondbullying.com
NSPCC	0207 825 2500	www.nspcc.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222	www.parentlineplus.org.uk
Stonewall	0207 593 1862	www.stonewall.org.uk

The Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
The Office of the Children's Commissioner	0844 800 9113	www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk
UK Government Website	not available	www.direct.gov.uk

Reviewed P Lambert (PSHE Co ordinator) alongside SLT
V Cadd (Safe Guarding Governor)