

English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy

Anti-bullying Policy



DATE: MAY 2015

REVIEW DATE: MAY 2018

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

At English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy we are very aware of the possible consequences of bullying and through this policy and practice we strive to address the negative effect that such experiences may have on both pupils and staff within the school.

In accordance with our Mission Statement we pledge through our Christian ethos, our school curriculum, our employment practice of management of incidents, to keep pupils and staff safe from bullying in any of its forms.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies e.g. Behaviour, Health and Safety, Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable Use Policy (Internet and e mail). Through these policies we strive to build a school community where bullying is not tolerated.

Many pupils experience bullying at some point. The fact that incidents are not reported does not necessarily mean that bullying is not taking place. Bullying or other forms of harassment can make pupils' lives unhappy, can hinder their academic progress and can sometimes push otherwise studious children into truancy. In extreme cases it can lead to pupils harming themselves

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- To raise awareness of bullying
- To bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen in the future
- To ensure a whole school approach to bullying
- To reduce and if possible, eradicate instances of all types of bullying

1.2 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

- a. We, at English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy, seek to provide a safe, secure and positive environment in which children and adults can grow and develop, making full use of the range of facilities available to them.
- b. We are committed to a value system within which children and adults involved with them are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding and to participate without fear of intimidation. Any behaviour that undermines this is unacceptable.
- c. We seek to ensure that those acting on behalf of our school will:
- Actively listen to children
 - Act appropriately on information received in order to ensure that a safe, secure and positive environment exists.
- d. All our children have the right to feel secure, to be able to trust without fear, and to expect protection from adults in positions of care and responsibility. They also have a basic right to take full part in their education in an environment that does not subject them to cruelty or create despair.
- e. All bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it.
- f. Victims of bullying will be treated in a supportive manner, and their case heard in an atmosphere of positive concern.

2. WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet)
DfE, Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Oct 2014

Although there are a number of definitions of bullying, these definitions would include the following characteristics:

- It tends to be repetitive
- It involves an imbalance of power
- It may be verbal, physical or psychological

Bullying is an antisocial behaviour. We must respond in a way which will help the bullies improve their behaviour. Increasing their anxiety and alienation from us is not likely to work.

3. FORMS OF BULLYING/BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Bullying can take many different forms:

- **Cyberbullying***: e.g. chat-room/ blogs/message board, email, gaming console, 'happy slapping', Instant messaging (MSN, Yahoo, AOL), mobile phones including photos, social network site e.g. Facebook, Bebo, video hosting sites (YouTube), webcam
- **Damage to property**: e.g. graffiti, personal property

- **Inciting others to bullying behaviour** e.g. encouraging pupils with special educational needs/vulnerable children/vulnerable children to bully others so that they receive the consequences rather than the instigator
- **Literature:** e.g. distribution/possession of posters/leaflets/notes, literature or material.
- **Physical hurt/attack:** e.g. physical intimidation, mimicry, unwanted or inappropriate touching
- **Psychological:** e.g. damage to reputation (sexual, denial of identity, gender/ethnicity), extortion of belongings, identity theft / impersonation, isolation/refusal to work/play with other pupil, revealing personal information, threats
- **Verbal:** e.g. 'joke' making, mimicry/ridicule, name calling, spreading rumours, swearing, verbal abuse, gossiping
- **Victimisation after previous complaint** e.g. bullying due to either victims or bystanders speaking out as a result of a past bullying incident.

The appendix outlines some of the approaches that are taken to deal with some specific forms of bullying.

4. TYPES OF BULLYING

Bullying can happen for a large number of reasons and the most common are listed below:

- **Homophobic*** - any incident perceived by the alleged victim or any other person to be targeted around being lesbian, gay or bisexual. People do not have to be lesbian, gay or bisexual to suffer homophobic bullying.
- **Racist*** - any incident perceived to be racist by the alleged victim or any other person. Incidents related to religion, culture or those involving pupils who identify as Gypsy/Roma traveller come under this heading too.
- **Related to disability, SEN or health** - behaviour perceived to be insulting to people with a range of medical, mobility, sensory, mental health or learning impairments. Incidents related to other health or Special Educational Needs come under this heading too.
- **Related to home circumstances** (e.g. young carers or children in care)
- **Sexist** (incidents perceived to be demeaning to a gender in general. If unchallenged this can eventually lead to domestic violence)
- **Sexual** (incidents include intrusive language, damage to sexual reputation, inappropriate touching and other behaviour perceived to involve unwanted sexual attention)
- **Transphobic** (incidents are those perceived to be insulting to someone's gender identity or to transgendered people)

There are different types of bullies and victims:

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|----------------------|--|
| • Aggressive bullies | - physically aggressive individuals or bully groups |
| • Anxious bullies | - children recruited into bully gangs by intimidation |
| • Victim bullies | - children often victims at home and bullies at school |

- Passive victims - children with poor social skills/are unassertive
- Provocative victims - children who bring out the worst in other children.
-Often have poor relationships with primary carers.
-Can be attention seeking.
- Attention seeking victims - Children with good social skills who deliberately seek the kudos of being a victim.

5. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BULLYING

Signs of bullying can be extremely variable and will very much depend on the individual. It is important, however, that parents/carers and school staff are aware of the signs and symptoms associated with bullying so that they can identify possible problems. The more common signs include:

- **Physical signs** e.g. Physical injuries, damaged clothing with no convincing explanation and general ill-health due to stress
- **Emotional signs** e.g. mood swings, apparent changes in personality, constant anxiety/nervousness, depression or tearfulness for no apparent reason, lack of confidence, negative self-image, hostility and defensiveness
- **Behavioural signs** e.g. withdrawn, frequent, unexplained absences, poor concentration, eating disorders, alcohol/substance misuse, evidence of self-harming and disruptive/challenging/bullying behaviour
- **General** e.g. frequently “lose” money/possessions, appears tired and lethargic, avoids entering/leaving school with others.

It should be stated that usually victims of bullying become so through no fault or action of their own. However, on occasion, it is important to recognise that there can be different types of victims because they:

- Are new to the class
- Are different in appearance, speech or background from other people
- Suffer from low self-esteem (but this is not clear whether this is the cause or effect of bullying).

6. PREVENTING BULLYING

Through the following preventative strategies and planned curricular opportunities we hope to lay the foundations of positive behaviour and to eliminate bullying before it becomes an issue:

- Awareness raising through Anti-Bullying week, assemblies or lessons
- Clear Anti-Bullying policy which all members of the school are aware of
- Anti-Bullying message embedded throughout the curriculum (including RE) and through Anti-bullying week in November each year
- Reward system for positive behaviour
- Circle Time – opportunities for children to discuss sensitive issues in a safe environment
- Worry box – placed in an agreed place within the school that all children can access in a discrete way.
- Buddy system
- Liturgies
- Play leaders – older pupils supporting the younger pupils at play time
- Pupil consultation – through questionnaires and School and Class Council

- Positive role models reflected through staff behaviour
- Ethos of the school

7. RESPONDING TO BULLYING

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

Bullying allegations can come from a number of different sources including from the child, child's friends, parent/carer or staff member. All allegations will be listened to, taken seriously and acted upon. Allegations can be made face to face e.g. a child reporting directly to a member of staff, or indirectly via the worry box, or through our buddy systems and class or school council.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

When bullying has been alleged, reported or observed then the following 7 steps will be taken:

- 1. INVESTIGATION** When a teacher finds out that bullying has happened she starts by talking to the victim about his/her feelings. Lead adult to complete **Form 1 and 1a, 1b** (Initial Investigation into allegation of bullying, Factors to help determine if incident constitutes bullying, initial investigation of bullying additional information sheet and Restorative questions). It is at this point a judgement is to be made as to whether bullying has occurred or not. Parents of all parties are informed.
- 2. CONVENE A MEETING** The teacher arranges to meet with the pupils who have been involved, this may include bystanders. The victim must give permission for this to take place and feel easy about it. The meeting will include bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate bullying. Complete forms 3a and 3b (Support provided for targeted child and Support provided for child who bullied).
- 3. EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM** The teacher tells them/the perpetrator about the way the victim is feeling and might use the victim's poem, piece of writing or drawing to emphasise his/her distress. At no time does the teacher discuss the details of the incidents.
- 4. SHARE RESPONSIBILITY** In cases of group bullying the teacher does not attribute blame but states that they know that the group are responsible and can do something about it.
- 5. ASK THE GROUP/INDIVIDUAL FOR IDEAS** The perpetrator or each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses but will not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.
- 6. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY** The teacher ends the meeting by passing the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. They arrange to meet with them again to see how things are going on.
- 7. FOLLOW UP MEETING** A week later the teacher discusses with each pupil, including the victim, how things have been going. They arrange to meet with them again to see how things are going on.

The above procedure is Stage 1. During Stage 1, all adults who come into contact with the children are informed. Additional supervision is put into place if required. If the situation is not resolved, after following this process and the behaviour continues, then the following stages are considered:

STAGE 2 Contact parent/carer and convene a meeting to discuss the above. Decide if any sanctions need to be applied in line with the school behaviour policy

STAGE 3 Contact other agencies e.g. Behaviour Support Team, Educational

Psychologist, Police (If a child is over 10 years of age they are criminally responsible). Complete form 4 (Confirmed Bullying Incident Reporting Form)

STAGE 4 Put a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) in place possibly leading to a fixed term exclusion.

8. RECORDING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

An incident log is completed on the server. If this incident involves racist or homophobic language this is also logged and reported to Governors at the Pupil and Personnel committee meetings.

9. PREJUDICE RELATED INCIDENTS

A prejudice related incident is one involving for example racist graffiti or homophobic language, which needs to be addressed but may not constitute bullying because it is not repeated, not intentional or not directed at an individual. These incidents often involve the same behaviour as that included in the 'types of bullying' section. An incident may be a prejudice-related incident or a bullying incident or both. These incidents are also logged.

10. BULLYING OF STAFF BY PUPILS, PARENTS/CARERS OR OTHER STAFF

Bullying can occur between adults. Bullying tactics are sometimes employed in business, relationship between members of staff are sometimes characterised by bullying. Parents, teachers and other adults sometimes bully children and vice versa. Staff are sometimes bullied by parents. Staff as well as children benefit if school establishes an ethos that repudiates bullying. The Senior Managers and Governors of the school strive to support the emotional health and well-being of the staff in the school and so we believe that all bullying incidents must be investigated. This includes any incident reported by a member of staff or being bullied by a child and or parent. Members of the school workforce suffering from or concerned about bullying can also contact their trade union or professional association for support and advice.

11. INVOLVING PARENTS

The school has an open door policy and the staff will strive to speak with parents to discuss any concerns immediately. Parental involvement in the response process has been outlined in the Response to Bullying section above. Parental questionnaires will be completed annually.

12. ANTI-BULLYING COMPLAINTS

If parents are unhappy about the way that an alleged bullying incident has been handled they should in the first instance speak with the class teacher or Head Teacher. There is a School Complaints procedure if parents are still concerned. Parents will be advised of this procedure by the Head Teacher and a copy will be made available from the school office.

13. MONITORING AND EVALUATION THE POLICY

- The policy will be part of the everyday life of the school. It will be maintained regularly through display of posters, curriculum, RE curriculum and assemblies
- It will be a regular item on School and Class Council Agendas, at staff and Governors' meetings.
- Its effectiveness will be monitored through annual parent, pupil and staff questionnaires and reported incidents.
- The policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

HOMOPHOBIC BEHAVIOURS

Homophobic bullying/name calling occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbians, gay or bisexual people

It can include spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something someone is inferior and so they are "gay" — for example, "You're such a gay boy" or "That's gay"

- Even when pupils may not know what the words mean, but use homophobic language against others, it is still a form of bullying/name calling
- We do not view homophobic name calling as "harmless banter". We recognise that if it is not challenged at primary school it is harder to address at secondary school
- If a pupil is not explicitly told that homophobic bullying is wrong they may think it is OK to do this

REPORTING OF PREJUDICE AND HOMOPHOBIC BEHAVIOUR

The school would record and report a prejudice related incident in the same way as any other bullying incident. Our school actively promotes equality and cohesion and therefore operates a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying and prejudice related incidences. If we hear a child using homophobic language we will address it, using our knowledge of the individual pupil's maturity and personal circumstances.

Foundation pupils:

1. Establish why homophobic language was used? What was the motivation?
2. How did it make X feel?
3. Explain 'gay' is not the right word to use. What could they have done/said instead? Help child to understand how their behaviour affects others.
4. Ask the child to choose other words/actions which would help solve the problem in a positive way.

Y1-Y3 pupils:

1. Establish why homophobic language was used? What was the motivation?
2. How did it make X feel?
3. Ask if they know what the word means. After pupil answers
 - Clarify "It's when two men or two women love each other".
 - State "Calling someone gay/something gay is not acceptable when the word is used to tease or upset someone." Help child to understand how their behaviour affects others.
4. Resolve conflict (write letter, verbal apologies, shake hands etc) in line with Behaviour Policy.
5. If name calling continues sanction child in line with Behaviour Policy.

Y4 - Y6:

1. Establish why homophobic language was used? What was the motivation?
2. How did it make X feel?
3. Ask if they know what the words mean. After pupil answers —
 - Clarify "It's when two men or two women love each other and there's nothing wrong with that/the law says there is nothing wrong with that"

- State "Calling someone gay/something gay is not acceptable when the word is used to tease or upset someone, as it's not using the word appropriately." Help child to understand how their behaviour affects others.
4. Resolve conflict (write letter, verbal apologies, shake hands etc) in line with Behaviour Policy.
 5. If name calling continues sanction child in line with Behaviour Policy.

REPORTING OF CYBER BULLYING

(See esafety policy)

The school would record and report incidents of cyber bullying in the same way as any other bullying incident. Our school operates a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying. If we hear or see a child using technology as a form of bullying we will address it, using our knowledge of the individual pupil's maturity and personal circumstances.

Racist BEHAVIOUR

The school would record and report a prejudice related incident in the same way as any other bullying incident. Our school actively promotes equality and cohesion and therefore operates a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying and prejudice related incidences. If we hear a child using racist language we will address it, using our knowledge of the individual pupil's maturity and personal circumstances.

Foundation pupils:

1. Establish why racist language was used? What was the motivation?
2. How did it make X feel?
3. Explain 'XXXX' is not the right word to use. What could they have done/said instead? Help child to understand how their behaviour affects others.
4. Ask the child to choose other words/actions which would help solve the problem in a positive way.

Y1-Y3 pupils:

1. Establish why racist language was used? What was the motivation?
2. How did it make X feel?
3. Ask if they know what the word means. After pupil answers
 - Clarify
 - State why we do not use these inappropriate words/phrases and its impact.
4. Resolve conflict (write letter, verbal apologies, shake hands etc) in line with Behaviour Policy.
5. If name calling continues sanction child in line with Behaviour Policy.

Y4 - Y6:

1. Establish why racist language was used? What was the motivation?
2. How did it make X feel?
3. Ask if they know what the words mean. After pupil answers —
 - Clarify
 - State
4. Resolve conflict (write letter, verbal apologies, shake hands etc) in line with Behaviour Policy.
5. If name calling continues sanction child in line with Behaviour Policy.

USEFUL CONTACTS

A list of useful contact numbers, websites etc for bullying issues,:

Phone numbers:

- Childline – 0800 1111 – A free, confidential helpline for children and young people offering advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day
- Connexions Direct - 080 800 13 2 19 - for young people aged 13-19. Calls from a landline are free and won't show on a phone bill. Calls from a mobile are charged but if you ring them they'll call you back.
- EACH - 0808 1000 143 - a free phone helpline for children experiencing homophobic bullying. Open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm
- Parentline Plus – 0808 8002222 – a free 24hr phone helpline for anyone caring for children or textphone 0800 783 6783 for the deaf or hard of hearing

Websites:

- Anti-Bullying alliance – www.Anti-Bullyingalliance.org.uk –information, resources and advice relating to bullying
- Beatbullying – www.beatbullying.org – resources and lesson plans looking at the issue of bullying for primary and secondary aged pupils
- Cybermentors – www.cybermentors.org.uk - a safe social networking site providing information and support for young people affected by bullying
- Kidscape – www.kidscape.org.uk - Bullying advice, helpline, information, Anti-Bullying resources and training
- Need2Know – www.need2know.co.uk – youth friendly site featuring tips on how to stop bullying, what to do if you bully others etc
- NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk - advice on what to do if you are being bullied or see someone who is
- Think U Know – www.thinkuknow.co.uk - Website for cyberbullying and e-safety information. Has separate areas for parent/carers, staff and children aged 5-7, 8-10 and 11-16