

ST. MARGARET CLITHEROW ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Document Date: Spring 2024
Ratification at FGB: Spring 2024
Review Date: Spring 2025

Pupils in St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School are happy, confident and very proud of their school. They clearly understand their mission statement, 'Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him.' They can quote scripture to give examples of how they do their best to follow Jesus every day. Pupils explain that if they ever feel worried about something they are confident that adults will help them in a discreet and caring way. They are fully aware of their responsibilities towards the more vulnerable members of society and can reference Catholic social teaching when discussing their work with the local foodbank.

Catholic Schools Inspectorate October 2024

Pupils enjoy school. They respond well to the high expectations of staff. Pupils strive to do their best and achieve well. Pupils are extremely kind and caring. They frequently give up their free time to help each other. Lessons are free from disruption and lunchtimes are a buzz of happy and harmonious play.

Ofsted May 2024

Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our Church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him
At St Margaret Clitherow School we are committed to Safeguarding Children

Other Policies referred to within this Policy

Behaviour Policy

eSafety Policy

Equalities Policy and Scheme

Introduction

St Margaret Clitherow Roman Catholic Primary School is committed to providing a safe, positive, valuing and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents/carers. The anti-bullying policy and practice plays an important role in this.

The following principles inform our anti-bullying approach:

- Bullying behaviour is in all circumstances unacceptable.
- All adults in the school community (staff, governors and parents/carers) are expected to present positive role models to children.
- Bullying is a shared problem and staff and parents will need to work together in partnership to resolve incidents.
- The safety, welfare and wellbeing of the children concerned will at all times be central to decisions about actions taken in response to bullying.
- Anti-bullying approaches will be consistent with the values of a Catholic community and preparing children for life in an inclusive society. These include incorporating an acceptance of and valuing of difference and diversity, the need to cope with difficult individuals whose behaviour we may find challenging and the role of forgiveness.
- When incidents have been dealt with, all parties should be supported and enabled to move on positively. In keeping with our shared faith, it is our aim that in the resolution of incidents pupils should wherever possible be reconciled and issues resolved in a restorative manner.

Definition

The following 3 dimensions collectively help us to define bullying behaviour:

1. Bullying is intentionally hurtful.

It is the deliberate, unjustifiable and unprovoked use of aggressive behaviour. It includes actions that cause physical, emotional or mental hurt to the victim and actions that violate another person's freedom and rights.

2. Bullying is a repeated experience.

Being bullied is the experience of persistent or repeated anti-social behaviour. However, very rarely there could be single incidents which constitute bullying because of the fear and intimidation that projects beyond that initial incident or because of the number of people who have become involved (e.g. cyberbullying).

3. Bullying also involves an inequality of power.

The person/s being bullied find it difficult to reject or deal with the offending behaviour, or those involved in the bullying behaviour have power over the victim. Some power imbalances can be subtle or build up over time, but more common examples include that they are bigger/stronger/older, have more friends, are more established in the school or care less about the consequences of their actions. Bullying behaviour can involve individuals or groups. It can occur with witnesses present or when there is no one else present apart from the perpetrator and the person being bullied.

Examples of hurtful behaviour that can contribute to bullying include:

- Verbal unkindness – such as mimicking, putting people down, saying unkind things about family, clothes or appearance, name-calling, anonymous notes and texts, blackmail, and deliberately embarrassing or humiliating others, posting nasty remarks on the internet.
- Physical hurtful behaviour – such as hitting, hurting, hair pulling, pushing people around, kicking, deliberately disrupting work or play and extortion.
- Indirect hurtful behaviour – such as spreading rumours, isolation, exclusion and getting others to be hurtful or unkind, forwarding hurtful texts, photographs or messages.
- Psychological bullying – such as intimidation, threats and looks to make another child feel uncomfortable or fearful.

Where appropriate see also the [eSafety Policy](#).

All hurtful and bullying behaviour is taken seriously, including subtle actions which can build up for individuals over time, eroding self-esteem and building unhappiness or a climate of fear.

The school avoids at all times labelling pupils as either victims or bullies. It is important that pupils who have been the targets of hurtful or bullying behaviours are able to see that this experience will end and that it is not the result of something about themselves that has attracted or deserved such treatment by others. Similarly children who have engaged in hurtful or bullying behaviour will be supported to resolve the matter and change their behaviour. It should be remembered that there is no typical “bully”. Many children may use hurtful behaviours from time to time.

Not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all hurtful behaviour is unacceptable in school. The following are examples of hurtful behaviour which may not be bullying:

- Children may fall out with their friends and engage in hurtful behaviour. Such experiences can be extremely distressing to the individuals involved.
- Children may retaliate against the hurtful behaviour of others.

Although not all hurtful behaviour is intentional, all hurtful behaviours are a matter of concern and will be dealt with by the school. Where pupils cause harm or distress without intent, the impact of their behaviour will be pointed out and any continuance will be regarded as intentional. Similarly, all unsafe behaviours and unsafe environment issues will be dealt with.

Prejudice-related hurtful incidents

Incidents can also sometimes be hurtful because of the use of language, behaviour or ideas that are or may be seen to be related to the identity of the individual on the receiving end. As required by the Equality Act 2010 and recommended by the Home Office and DfE the school is responsive to:

“Any incident which is perceived to be racist/ sexist/ homophobic/ transphobic /biphobic/ disablist by the victim or any other person”

The intention in using this definition is not to label individuals as prejudiced, but to take full account of the possibility of such a dimension and to record incidents on a uniform basis. The investigation of any such incident will seek to establish whether the behaviour, language or expression related to any of the protected characteristics (see *School Equalities Policy and Scheme*) was intentionally hurtful. Responses to such incidents will vary, depending on whether the intention was to cause harm or offence. Wherever offence is caused it needs to be understood and resolved. In all cases resolution will aim to educate and support children and to restore good relations between those with a particular protected characteristic and others.

Strategies for preventing bullying

All incidents considered to be bullying or prejudice related incidents (as defined above) are recorded and monitored. The process for recording incidents is used to inform preventative strategies. Pupils will understand the school's procedures for responding to bullying and know that they are safe.

At all times children's concerns are our concerns. Pupils are encouraged to express their concerns about themselves and others and to seek help and support whenever they need it. However, we recognise that children can sometimes be reluctant to seek help, so pupils can report their concerns anonymously by using a communication box. The school's *Behaviour Policy* details the behaviour standards set within the school.

It is important for children to know that procedures are being followed. In order to encourage pupils to continue to express their concerns, where appropriate, information is shared across the school about hurtful or bullying incidents having been dealt with and resolved.

Assemblies are used regularly to reinforce positive anti-bullying messages and to raise issues concerning bullying within the context of a Christian message. Activities across the curriculum (largely in Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education, R.E. and English) develop pupils' understanding of bullying and this includes key Christian messages, such as respect and forgiveness. Children are taught that each person is special and unique and that differences should be celebrated and should not be the focus of negative behaviour. In order to build children's resilience and reduce their vulnerability, pupils are coached and guided in developing coping strategies and in how to respond positively to hurtful behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to look out for each other and to show good witness behaviour by reporting their concerns for others.

Guidance is given to pupils who display behaviour which raises concern.

Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying and hurtful behaviour (including staff responsibilities)

All incidents of bullying must be reported and all such reports will be taken seriously. The perspective of the person who feels bullied will contribute to understanding and establishing the seriousness of the incident. When bullying has occurred special actions will follow. The school recognises that speed of response is important and wherever possible incidents will be resolved quickly. However, significant incidents will involve investigation and this can cause delay to the resolution. The school will need to take the time necessary to respond to and resolve incidents appropriately, while ensuring the safety of the child who feels bullied.

The role of all staff in responding to hurtful behaviour is made clear to them as part of their induction, including midday supervisors and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants will usually be involved as playground supervisors to give continuity of care. Incidents of bullying (see definition above) observed or reported at play and lunch times will be referred.

Single incidents of hurtful behaviour must be reported to and will be dealt with by the class teacher. (The Headteacher will be kept informed of any incidents dealt with by the class teacher so that s/he holds the overview across the school.) Follow up and ongoing monitoring will be conducted by the class teacher whilst keeping the Headteacher informed at all times, even if it is felt that the matter has been resolved. If the behaviour dealt with by class teachers continues, it will be referred to the Headteacher.

All repeated hurtful or bullying behaviour should be reported directly to the Headteacher. Significant incidents will be recorded on the school's internal system and all parents whose children are directly involved will be notified of significant incidents.

Responses to all bullying behaviour will be educative and seek to ensure that this behaviour will not be repeated. A child who has been involved in bullying behaviour will be expected to take responsibility for the impact of their behaviour on others, the reasons for their behaviour will be explored and they will be expected to improve and change. The aim will be to resolve incidents, rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all. Incidents will be resolved in age-appropriate ways. Those who have been bullied have a right to know that action has been taken.

Persistent bullying – after support & counselling – could result in fixed term or permanent exclusion as a last resort. (See *Behaviour Policy*)

The Monday morning staff briefing will be used to share any concerns about pupils so that all staff can be alert to any concerning behaviour and the vulnerability of individuals.

The role/involvement of pupils

Pupils will progressively develop their understanding of bullying and related behaviour issues through the whole school curriculum, both implicitly and explicitly. All pupils will be expected to develop appropriate witness behaviour and to show concern for others across the school community. Pupils will have opportunities to develop their resilience and problem solving strategies in the face of hurtful behaviour.

Concerns and worries related to incidents and bullying in general may be explored and shared in 'circle time', but pupils will have access to anonymous reporting opportunities through the use of a communication box. The seriousness of making false reports will be understood.

Pupils will be actively involved in anti-bullying developments through the school council, curriculum work and in special initiatives. From time to time pupils may be involved in group support for vulnerable individuals (those who have been bullied and those who have bullied).

The role/involvement of parents/carers

Parents/carers have an important role in actively encouraging their child/ren to be a positive member of the school. Dealing with behaviour problems effectively requires the school and parents to work in partnership. To this end, it is included in the Home School Agreement.

If parents have concerns about bullying or hurtful behaviour, they should take up those concerns with the class teacher or the Headteacher as soon as possible.

Parents should raise any concerns about bullying or other hurtful behaviour directly with the school and not with the parents of other parties, involved or otherwise. While we recognise that parents who are friends may wish to resolve matters informally they are advised that the school should always be made aware of tensions and difficulties between children so that they can be supported appropriately. The best place to resolve conflicts between children is in school where all sides and aspects of incidents can be explored.

Parents are expected to exercise reasonable confidentiality around incidents in which they are involved. In particular, parents are requested not to spread stories about incidents. Partial information can be inaccurate and may affect the reputation of the school and of individual children and damage the atmosphere in the school community.

Parents will be informed of any significant incidents involving their children in order to enable them to support their child and the school in seeking resolution and restoring a safe environment for all children. A leaflet is provided to assist parents in supporting their children and working with the school to resolve incidents (Appendix 1).

The role/involvement of governors

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all strategies to eliminate bullying behaviour from our school, while still recognising that it is likely to occur in our school community from time to time, and to report on the effectiveness of the school anti-bullying strategies. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor and review the anti-bullying policy and its effectiveness. They require the Headteacher to keep records of all reported incidents.

The governor who is linked to child protection, safeguarding and anti-bullying is Sally Curtis.

Appendix 1

St Margaret Clitherow Roman Catholic Primary School



Working Together to Deal with Bullying *A leaflet for parents*

Aims of this leaflet.

As a school community we have a shared responsibility for the wellbeing of all our children. We take this responsibility very seriously and wish to work together with you and your child to ensure that our school is a happy place for everyone. This leaflet is intended to help ensure that we have a shared understanding of what bullying is, of the approaches and strategies used by the school to respond to incidents of bullying and of the responsibilities of all concerned. We hope you find the leaflet informative and useful.

Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our Church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him.

Our approach

Our anti-bullying approaches are consistent with the values of a Catholic community and preparing children for life in an inclusive society. These include incorporating an acceptance and valuing of difference, the need to cope with individuals whose behaviour we may find challenging, the role of forgiveness and ensuring acceptable standards of behaviour. We seek to create an environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour, respect and concern for others.

What is bullying?

The following 3 dimensions help us to define bullying behaviour:

- Bullying is intentionally hurtful - physically, emotionally or mentally
- It is a repeated experience, rather than an isolated incident
- It involves an inequality of power, such that it is difficult to reject or deal with the hurtful behaviour

Examples of hurtful behaviour that may contribute to bullying may include:

- Verbal – mimicking, put-downs, humiliation, hurtful remarks, name-calling, racist remarks, homophobic language or remarks about someone’s sexuality, posting nasty remarks on the internet
- Physical – hitting, pushing, hurting, disrupting work or play
- Indirect – spreading rumours, exclusion, getting others to be unkind, making unkind remarks and then saying it is a joke, forwarding hurtful texts, photographs, images or messages
- Psychological – intimidation, threats, looks to make someone fearful

The School's role

The Headteacher has active oversight of the anti-bullying policy, procedures and strategies at the school.

The governor who is linked to child protection, safeguarding and anti-bullying is Sally Curtis.

The school will:

- Create an environment where children feel safe and are encouraged to raise their concerns
- Listen and respond
- Teach pupils to understand what bullying is, to recognise their responsibilities towards others, to be resilient and reduce their own vulnerability. This includes key Christian messages such as respect and forgiveness
- Act to eliminate inappropriate or hurtful behaviour through explicit curriculum provision and implementation of sanctions to ensure that bullying behaviour stops
- Act to resolve incidents, strive to rebuild relationships and restore a safe environment for all
- Make staff aware of concerning behaviour and vulnerable children so they can provide appropriate support
- Inform parents of any significant incidents involving their children so they can support their child and assist in achieving resolution
- Record and monitor all significant incidents
- Provide follow up support to vulnerable individuals/groups of pupils as appropriate

Parents/Carers: How you can support your child

Parents/carers have an important role in encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community. We can only be fully effective in dealing with incidents with parents'/carers' support:

- Be aware that an anti-bullying policy is available from the office and on the website
- Inform the school of all incidents of bullying. Report single incidents to the class teacher or repeated hurtful behaviour to the Headteacher
- Please do not approach other parents/carers or children directly or spread stories about incidents either on or offline
- If you think your child is the victim of bullying behaviour:
 - listen carefully and reassure her/him
 - explain the importance of telling an adult at school
 - work to raise her/his self-esteem and self-worth
 - help her/him to practise/implement any agreed strategy
- If your child has used bullying behaviour:
 - help her/him understand why their behaviour is unacceptable and the impact it is or may be having on others
 - support her/him in co-operating with the school
 - help her/him to practise/implement any agreed strategy
 - encourage and praise positive change
- In all cases parents/carers can help their child to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind them.