



## **Anti-Bullying Policy September 2024** **(Including Cyberbullying, Prejudice-based and Discriminatory Bullying)**

### **Introduction**

“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.”

At St. Cuthbert's we endeavour to create a safe and stimulating environment where everyone knows that they are valued.

A person has the right to be treated with respect and has the responsibility to treat others in the same way. Children are given the confidence and strategies to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences, knowing that positive action will be taken.

### **Aims and objectives**

- To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment or any type of bullying behaviour.
- To create a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- To produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps maintain a bullying-free environment?

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is a conscious and wilful repetitive act of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person or people. It is also an abuse of power by those carrying out the bullying, which is designed to cause harm. If bullying is allowed it harms the target, the perpetrator and the whole school community and its culture of safety and wellbeing in the school.

### **The Nature of Bullying**

Bullying is considered to be:

- Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- Repeated often
- Often difficult for individuals who are being bullied to defend themselves against

### **People may bully others because of varying perceived differences:**

- sexism,
- racism,
- religion or belief,
- academic ability,
- gender identity,

- sexual orientation,
- homophobia,
- transphobic bullying,
- disability,
- perceived characteristic (e.g. hair colour or weight)
- because of an associate (family member or friend)

**Prejudice and discriminatory-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance and is unlawful.**

### **Bullying can take many forms:**

- Emotional- Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- Physical- Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, threatening or obscene gestures, taking belongings
- Racial- Using racial taunts, graffiti, gestures because of someone's colour and/or origin.
- Sexual/Sexist- Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments because of gender.
- Verbal Insults- sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing and name-calling including comments made against particular groups for example because of disability, Special Educational Needs or on grounds of religion, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation or transgender status.
- Cyber- All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, social network sites, threats by text messaging & telephone calls, and misuse of photographic technology, e.g. cameras and videos. This includes sexting or threatening and/or blackmailing a person to share images of that person or purporting to be that person or connected with them in some way.
- Religious- Unkind words or actions because of someone's religion.
- SEND- Unkindness because of physical or mental disabilities or having Special Educational Needs.
- Homophobic- Treating someone unkindly because people think that they are or might be homosexual.
- Transphobic- Unkindness due to someone's gender identity, their perceived gender identity or because they do not conform to culturally conventional gender roles.
- Family related- Unkindness because a child is adopted or is a carer, or the like
- Indirect: spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours

### **Our Approach to Bullying**

We believe that if children are encouraged to be good citizens in an environment where they feel stimulated and excited by their learning, it will minimize the occurrence of bullying. We feel it is important 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.

## **Impact of bullying**

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying is serious as it can make the lives of its victims a misery. It undermines their confidence and self-esteem and can destroy their sense of security. Bullying impacts upon its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be targeted and can have life-long psychological damage. At worst, bullying can be a factor in pupil suicide. It is acknowledged that bullies have complex reasons for their behaviour and may need help.

The consequences of the bullies being allowed 'to get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to their victim. All pupils deserve the right to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is

Bullying is always unacceptable and always serious. We are committed to creating a safe environment where children can learn and play, can talk about their worries, confident that an adult will listen and will offer help.

Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum such as circle time, role-play, class performances, sharing assemblies, our children gain in self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions.

Encouraging children to take responsibility by becoming a member of the school council, applying to be a singing leader, Friendship Stop Buddy or Reception class Buddy promotes children's self confidence. In having this approach we believe this helps to reduce a code of secrecy where children feel too scared to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences.

Our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum will ensure that each Year Group addresses issues related to bullying. This may take the form of an explicit approach or maybe implicit, in terms of looking at friendships and valuing each other, appreciating differences, to develop individual self-confidence. In addition to this, the issue of bullying in its many forms is the focus of circle time discussions.

Incidences of bullying brought to the attention of the class teacher are investigated as soon as possible. Information is gathered from pupils and any staff concerned. Any relevant observations are recorded in the teacher's records and the Head Teacher is kept informed.

### **We have two aims when reacting to incidents of bullying:**

1. To make the child who has been bullied feel safe
2. To encourage better behaviour from the child who has displayed bullying behaviours, colluders and bystanders.

In order to achieve this we use a range of strategies appropriate to the nature, severity and history of the bullying.

If the bullying is a recently established behaviour by an individual or a group which involves regular name-calling, intimidation or social exclusion (but not gross physical violence) a problem solving approach is adopted. The underlying intention is to change the dynamics of the situation, to raise the awareness of the participants about bullying, and to support the peer group in taking responsibility for bullying.

If the bullying involves an individual or group, who have been involved in bullying on a previous occasion and the school has previously implemented the above problem solving approach, then the following procedure will be followed:

1. The Head Teacher is informed
2. The pupil who has been bullied is interviewed and their comments recorded
3. The pupil or pupils who have displayed bullying behaviours is/are interviewed and comments recorded
4. The parents of the individual who has shown bullying behaviour are contacted and invited to a meeting; a meeting between the Head Teacher, pupil and parents is held; the incidents are outlined and the sanctions are detailed.
5. Individual Behaviour Plans to set targets to improve and monitor behaviour are set up which may involve calling upon the expertise of outside agencies.
6. In persistent circumstances sanctions may include:
  - Permanent exclusion
  - Suspension
  - Suspension from the school premise at lunchtime
  - Removal from the playground at lunchtime
  - Arrangements for parents to supervise pupil to and from school daily
7. The parents/carers of the pupil who has been bullied are kept informed throughout the whole process

### **The Role of the Local Governing Body**

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly.

This will be done through a monitoring log and through the sample questionnaire which is conducted annually with parents. The governors require the Head Teacher 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.

The governing body responds within ten school days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Head Teacher and asks her/ him to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

### **The role of the Head Teacher**

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.

The head teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The head teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The head teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the head teacher may

decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The head teacher ensures that all staff receives sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying. The Head teacher makes sure that anti-bullying is an agenda item discussed each term at staff meetings and senior management meetings.

The head teacher sets the school 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 role of the class teacher**

Teachers in our school take **all** forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school.

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 phase leaders, assistant head teachers or head teacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.

We keep an anti-bullying logbook in the Head Teacher's office where we record all incidents of bullying that occur outside lesson time, either near the school or on the children's way home or to school. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, they should report the event and it will be logged.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the head teacher and the special needs co-ordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the head teacher may contact external support agencies such as the social services.

Teachers routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management. This training usually occurs during whole school inset training or during staff meeting time.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

## **The role of parents**

Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator 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.

## **Monitoring the Policy**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Head teacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. 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 (recorded on CPOMS) and strategies will be reviewed regularly

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's bullying records on CPOMS and by discussion with the Head Teacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation and any other characteristic/ background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

**If you are not satisfied with the way in which a bullying incident has been dealt with then please follow our complaints policy which is available on our website.**

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Behaviour and Deescalation & Physical Intervention Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Positive Playground Behaviour

Review Date September 2025.