

St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2024

The Governing Body and staff of St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School aim to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment. The school's Behaviour Policy sets out a number of principles and strategies associated with this aim and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Definition of Bullying

'Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.' Department for Education: 'Preventing and tackling bullying'-July 2017

The Department of Education further states the bullying is defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example 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 (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Often discrimination ('protected characteristics') is cited when bullying, it is therefore key that all those within school staff and students, are aware that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Both the Online Safety Policy and SEND Policy must be read in conjunction with this policy:

Ref.

- Online Safety Policy [Online Safety Policy Sep 23](#)
- SEND Policy [SEND Policy Oct 23](#)

Although bullying can occur between individuals it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders'.

Bystanders can prevent bullying by:

- reporting the incident to a trusted teacher or adult (this can be done anonymously)
- sticking up for the target through disagreeing with what the bully has said and making it clear that their behaviour is not acceptable
- making a special effort to include others and befriend peers who appear isolated.

The role of bystanders must be considered in bullying incidents and there must be the opportunity for bystanders to be part of any restorative strategies in place.

Our Approach

At St Polycarp's we work to provide a supportive, caring and safe environment in which pupils can attend school without fear of being bullied. We are committed to tackling bullying and require everyone who works with children to take it seriously and know what steps to take to achieve positive outcomes for those involved.

We recognise that bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. It is a failure to recognise that we are all created by God, in the image of God and is contrary to our school mission, 'Here in St Polycarp's family we follow in the footsteps of Jesus through playing, praying, loving and learning together.' An anti-bullying culture promotes inclusion, positive behaviours, and respect for all others across the school community.

'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' John 13:34

We consider all concerns regarding bullying are taken seriously. All those involved and affected are able to share what happened, can agree on what needs to happen to repair the harm caused and can make agreements about the future. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to benefit fully from the opportunities available at school.

Through the sharing of this policy it is intended that the following will be achieved:

- An ethos that values positive relationships and develops the capacity to recognise other people's feelings and treat each other with respect.
- Raising the awareness of bullying through the PSHE curriculum and other subjects.
- Ensuring that everyone understands what bullying is, the harmful effects of bullying, preventative measures, responses to it, relevant resources and where and how to access support if needed.
- Promoting, encouraging, expecting and praising good behaviour, adopting a 'zero tolerance' to bullying behaviours.
- Establishing a clear protocol for the recording of concerns about bullying.
- Ensuring that each reported incident is taken seriously.

- To ensure that there is follow up to each incident by supporting children who are the victims of bullying.
- To ensure that those that have bullied, have the relevant consequences, support and restorative support
- Ensuring that relevant adults are kept informed at all stages.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parent/carers, LA and outside agencies. They will work with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure its implementation.

The Headteacher:

- Ensures staff are appropriately trained to be equipped to deal with incidents of bullying.
- Co-ordinates the recording system and keeps all records of bullying. CPOMS Safeguarding software is updated when incidents are reported and alerts are set up to inform the class teacher/SLT/DSL/HT and any other staff that may have been involved.

SENDco

The SENCO Louisa Woolley has responsibility for the coordination of support for children with Special Educational Needs/Disability in the school. It is therefore essential that any instances involving children on the school Special Needs register, either as perpetrators or victims are also reported to her.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL Paula Best has responsibility for responding to any safeguarding concerns. It is therefore essential that any instances involving children that relate to safeguarding are also reported to her.

The Anti-Bullying including Cyber-Bullying Lead

The Anti-bullying lead Martyn Peebles has responsibility for:

- Co-ordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour.
- Implementing the policy and monitoring and assessing its effectiveness in practice.
- Ensuring evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review.
- Liaising with Headteacher in managing bullying incidents.

Staff

- Take all forms of bullying seriously.
- Are vigilant and look out for signs of bullying.
- Will intervene to prevent incidents from taking place.
- Will address the bullying through the curriculum.
- Distinguish between friendship issues, aggressive behaviour and bullying.
- Aim to establish a climate of trust and respect for all.

How does bullying differ from teasing/falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- It is persistent/repeated
- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.

We use our 'Happiness and Friendship' booklet with all children to help them understand what bullying is and how to recognise it.

Responding to and reporting Bullying

Schools' teaching and support staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Staff will:

- Listen carefully and calmly to pupils regarding the alleged bullying incidents and record significant incidents on CPOMS Safeguarding software. Victim and bully should be made aware that records are being made.
- Inform the Leadership Team so that actions can take place and where appropriate inform other colleagues.
- Respond promptly to concerns expressed by pupils.
- Treat bullying incidents appropriately for each individual situation. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on.

Pupils may report concerns about bullying by:

- Asking to speak to his or her class teacher; speaking to a midday supervisor during lunchtime; asking to speak to any other member of staff who the child feels confident to talk to; writing in the class 'thought box' for the teacher to read; talking to a parent, who will approach the school.

Anti-Bullying In Our Curriculum

In 'Preventing and tackling bullying' DFE July 2017 schools are advised to use a proactive approach. Children at St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School are taught to understand what bullying is and about forming positive friendships through planned learning in different curriculum areas and particularly through RE, class assemblies and PSHE lessons.

During national anti-bullying week each year, all children in the school are taught to understand bullying and the effect that it can have on people and learn to discuss strategies for forming positive friendships. While curriculum opportunities such as those provided through RE and circle time are used to discuss issues including bullying, we recognise that children with concerns that they are being bullied, or that someone else is being bullied, are unlikely to share those concerns in that forum. Pupils are taught that everyone has a responsibility to ensure that there is no bullying at the school. Through the PSHE curriculum, children are taught to be able to distinguish between those problems that children can resolve on their own and those that need adult intervention, such as bullying.

Preventing Bullying at School

Staff at the school understand that children can feel least safe during playtimes. Playground leaders support children. The lunchtime 'Zoners', alongside Wellbeing Ambassadors run by children in year 6. They help support younger children, helping them to form positive relationships with others.

Staff advice:

- Talk to the child who has been upset, find out what happened and how it made them feel - write a story/poem or draw a picture to illustrate feelings if needed. Help identify if the behaviour was 'mean, rude, or bullying' using the school poster. Record the incident on CPOMS.
- Talk to the 'bully' on their own, trying to identify any underlying issues and emotions. Explain how the other child is feeling and get them to explain what they could do to help change this. Use the school's 'Happiness and Friendship Booklet' and 'Is it rude, mean or bullying' poster to identify the behaviours.
- Give the 'bully' a specific task e.g. write a letter of apology with them. The Headteacher (or member of SLT) will involve parents.
- Talk with the victim about the actions taken. Teach and model how to use their personal power to deal assertively with children who confront them in future, using a firm tone and 'I feel' statements.
- Supervise the apology/hand over of the letter/agreement of future actions, ensuring that the apology is genuine and that the victim feels safer as a result.
- Set times and dates to follow up the incident and ensure that the situation has been resolved.

Further steps will be taken when dealing with continued incidents. Pupils who have been bullied will be further supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a class teacher or member of staff of their choice reassuring the pupil and offering continuous support.
- Agree any bespoke provision following a bullying incident eg ELSA
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Continued involvement of parents and guardians in the process.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken as per the school's behaviour guidelines and can supersede any of the previous steps should the situation change or be deemed serious as to warrant such intervention:

- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises.
- Internal exclusion.
- Fixed-term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion.

Child Advice:

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied.
- Try to show that you are not upset-be assertive.
- Get your friends to support you and show that you and your friends disapprove.
- Tell an adult. Do not stand by and watch. Go and get help.

Children who have communication difficulties are supported with conversations.

Parent advice:

Parents have the responsibility to support the school's anti bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school. Parents are able to help immediately if they feel there is potential for a situation to lead to, or may have already become bullying by:

- Discussing the matter sensitively with the child
- Empathising, listening carefully and try to calmly find out what happened
- Reassuring the victim that the bullying will stop
- Encouraging the child to talk to an adult at school
- Informing the school and discussing the matter with the class teacher or senior member of staff. (It is not acceptable or appropriate to take matters into your own hands e.g. approach the bully at school.)
- Do not advocate a 'hit-back' policy
- Contact school: Call to the office to make an appointment to speak to a member of staff/SLT
- Talk to the child's teacher after school, speak with the office, requesting an urgent call from the class teacher

Signs to look out for:

- Not wanting to go to school or truanting
- Becoming shy, withdrawn and lacking in confidence
- Having 'mysterious illnesses' e.g. tummy upsets, headaches
- Arriving home with unexplained cuts/bruises/torn clothing
- Becoming frightened of walking to school
- Asking for unexplained extra pocket money
- Reluctance to meet other children
- Personality changes e.g. irritability, tiredness, poor sleeping, weepiness, crying outbursts, loss of appetite, forgetfulness
- Temper outbursts, abusive language or impulsive hitting out
- Bed wetting and nightmares

Evaluating the policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually using guidance from the Department of Education document 'Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for Head Teachers, staff and governing bodies'. New members of staff will be given full training in the procedures explained in this policy.