

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**INTRODUCTION**

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those other children who are in the vicinity, and less aggressive/assertive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out. It is clear that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available at the School.

WHY IS AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY NECESSARY?

The School believes that its pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. The School also has a clear guidelines on the promotion of good behaviour/citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour. It is inherently **WRONG** and will not be tolerated.

It is important therefore that the School has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where both pupils and parents/guardians are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

Ø PHYSICAL.

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at etc.

Ø VERBAL.

Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling and extreme, persistent teasing. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, p physical/social disability, or personality etc.

Ø EXCLUSION.

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.

Ø DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT.

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats, though rare may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.

AS A CHILD WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon!

- Ø Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that it is WRONG!
- Ø Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Ø Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear. Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Ø Be assertive - Ask the bully to stop. Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- Ø Do not fight back. Fighting back may make things worse and is discouraged.
- Ø Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support. Teachers will take your complaint seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:

- Ø TAKE ACTION! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- Ø If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Ø Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

AS A PARENT:

- Ø Look for unusual behaviour in your children. For example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their normal standard.
- Ø Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, how lunch time was spent etc.
- Ø If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the School IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- Ø It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Ø Tell your own son or daughter there is nothing wrong with him or her. It is not his or her fault that they are being bullied.
- Ø Make sure your child is fully aware of the School policy concerning bullying, and that they will not be afraid to ask for help.

WHAT WILL WE DO AS A SCHOOL?

- Ø Organise the community in order to minimise opportunities for bullying, e.g. provide increased supervision at problem times.
- Ø Use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other, e.g. the PSHE programme, Thoughtful Times and through our Assembly program
- Ø Deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
- Ø Regularly review the School Policy and its degree of success.
- Ø The School Staff will continue to have a firm but fair discipline structure. The rules should be few, simple and easy to understand.
- Ø Not use teaching materials or equipment which give a bad or negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, sex, etc.
- Ø Encourage pupils to discuss how they get on with other people and to form positive attitudes towards other people. This includes a discussion of what friendship really is.
- Ø Encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
- Ø We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our School.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN BULLYING IS SUSPECTED.

If bullying is suspected we will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies:

We WILL support the victims in the following ways:

- Ø by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher if they choose.
- Ø by informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- Ø by offering continued support when they feel they need it.
- Ø In extreme cases and if appropriate/necessary arrange for them to be escorted to and from the School premises.

- Ø by taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

We will also discipline, yet try to help the bullies in the following ways:

- Ø by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved. Informing the bully's parents/guardians.
- Ø by continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible.
- Ø by taking one or more of the seven disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

DISCIPLINARY STEPS:

- Ø They will be warned officially to stop offending.
- Ø Informing the bully's parents/guardians/Carers.
- Ø They may be excluded from the School playground at break and/or lunch times.
- Ø In extreme circumstances we may arrange for them to be escorted to and from the playground.
- Ø If they do not stop bullying they will be suspended 'in house' for a minor fixed period (one or two days).
- Ø If they then carry on they will be recommended for 'in house' suspension for a major fixed period (up to five days) or an indefinite period.
- Ø If they will not end such behaviour, discussions will take place and they may be recommended for permanent exclusion.

We believe that every child has the right:

- Ø not to have to fight
- Ø not to be made fun of
- Ø not to be scared generally
- Ø not to be scared of children or staff
- Ø not to be scared to come to school
- Ø to feel safe
- Ø to have friends of their own choice
- Ø not be subjected to any forms of violence or intimidation

Ø to expect all people to be kind and considerate towards them

The anti - bullying policy is based upon the principles stated above and in the behaviour policy. However, it is first necessary to define bullying so as not to confuse it with other forms of anti social behaviour.

Holy Trinity therefore defines bullying as:

a form of aggressive behaviour which is usually hurtful and deliberate, often persistent, sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years, and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

It may not be bullying when two or more children of roughly the same strength have an argument, disagreement, falling out or fight.

Action Plan

Should a case of alleged bullying occur, the Headteacher or a Senior Member of staff will be informed immediately and a thorough investigation will take place. This will be to establish the facts and to decide if **actual bullying** has taken place. If not the incident will be dealt with according to our normal behaviour policy.

If what has happened proves to be **actual bullying** the bully will be spoken/listened to and steps taken/put into place to ensure the behaviour does not continue. Parents of the bully will also be informed and invited to come into school to discuss the situation.

The Headteacher or a Senior Member of Staff will make it clear to them that bullying will not be tolerated and that any further incidents could result in the seven disciplinary steps being taken and ultimately in exclusion. The child in question will then be carefully monitored for a period of time and a review meeting with his/ her parents will be arranged at the end of it.

The subject of bullying is frequently discussed in the course of normal school activities but particularly in PSHE work, school assemblies and Religious Education. If a bullying incident affects a particular class of children the class teacher will overtly ensure that some anti-bullying work is undertaken.

With a clear and consistent whole school approach, where good behaviour and respect are championed, it is hoped that bullying will be kept to a minimum. If however incidents do occur the clear guidelines that the school will follow will enable children to feel fully supported and ultimately result in a happy resolution.

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