

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Main School, EYFS & Wrap Around

### St Teresa's School

#### Mission Statement

Inspiring and achieving together, using our unique gifts given to us by God.

#### Available from:

This policy is available on the school website, or a copy can be requested from the School Office.

Reviewed: July 2019

Next Review: July 2020

#### Introduction

No form of bullying is acceptable in any area of St Teresa's School as it immediately negates our aim for equality which is based on our belief and understanding that we are all precious in the eyes of God, and we, as Christians, should apply this attitude to all mankind. Every pupil and member of staff has the right to feel safe and happy in school and to be protected when feeling vulnerable. All staff are expected to be role models to our pupils.

#### Aim of the Policy

The aim of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to inform all stakeholders in our school community that St Teresa's School does not tolerate any form of bullying and will act on any bullying in the manner laid out in this policy. This policy sets out to define different types of bullying and to inform all within the school community, of the procedures to be followed in any case of bullying or suspected bullying and to highlight any physical or emotional indicators of bullying. We aim to help staff and pupils deal with bullying and more importantly to prevent it.

#### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is behaviour which may be repeated over time and intentionally hurts another pupil or group physically or emotionally and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs or disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer. It may occur directly or through cyber-technology e.g. social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs or email.

Bullying is taken extremely seriously, in both physical and emotional forms and it is acknowledged that either forms may cause harm. There are different sorts of bullying, but the main types are:

**Disability:** Excluding, name calling, insulting, initiation ceremonies intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation etc will be regarded as bullying.

**Emotional:** Being deliberately and systematically unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and spreading rumours.

**Physical:** Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking or hiding belongings including money, any form of violence or threats.

**Racial and Religious:** Racist, religious or cultural taunts, graffiti, gestures.

**Sexual/Sexist/Homophobic:** Unwanted physical contact or abusive or homophobic comments.

**Verbal:** Name calling, teasing, insulting.

**'Virtual' or 'cyber' bullying:** Being sent abusive or threatening messages, posting abusive comments, using mobile phones to record threatening behaviour. Please see 'Acceptable use of internet' policy for further details.)

Children do not use ICT equipment without a member of staff present and no child is permitted to bring a mobile phone into school except under exceptional circumstances. If this is necessary, the phone would be kept in the School Office during the school day. During the school day staff are only permitted to use mobile phones in the staff room or outside school.

## **E-Safety**

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) brings together law enforcement officers, specialists from children's charities and industry to tackle online child sexual abuse. CEOP provides a dedicated 24-hour online facility for reporting instances of online child sexual abuse. The main concern for teachers is the safe and effective supervision of pupils using the internet in school. However, many pupils now use the internet at home for homework and socialising, therefore the staff will need to help the parents understand the positive ways in which the internet can be used but also some of the associated risks.

## **Cyber-Bullying**

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself. We recognise that the advent of cyber-bullying adds a new and additional dimension to the problem of bullying as there is no safe haven for the person being bullied. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyber-bullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours. Cyber-bullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed and can often remain unidentifiable and unseen. ICT may be used to send threatening pictures or messages to others. Seven categories of cyber-bullying have been identified:

- **Text message bullying** involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort;
- **Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras** is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.
- **Phone call bullying via mobile phone** uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.
- **Email bullying** uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.
- **Online grooming, chat room and social networking site abuse** involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people.
- **Bullying through instant messaging (IM)** is an internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online.
- **Bullying via websites** includes the use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber-bullying.

Because of the anonymity that new communications technologies offer, anyone with a mobile phone or internet connection can be a target for cyber-bullying. Furthermore, bullies can reach much larger numbers within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on a website, for instance, can be seen by a large audience, as can video clips that have been sent by mobile phone.

Most cyber-bullying is done by children in the same class or year group. Although it leaves no visible scars, cyber-bullying of all types can be extremely destructive. We will offer parents information sessions on the dangers of cyber-bullying and on-line child protection issues at regular intervals.

### **Possible signs of bullying**

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as nervousness, avoiding the playground, feigning illness, clinging to adults (e.g. being slow to leave the classroom or over-keen to do jobs during break times). They may show changes to work patterns, lack concentration or truancy.

### **Encouragement to tell**

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where pupils who are being bullied or those who know about it, know that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be sensitive and effective. If everyone has a right to feel safe, then we all have a responsibility to ensure the safety of others. We speak to pupils from time to time on the appropriate action they should take, should they witness any instances of bullying. Any pupil who is subjected to a sustained level of unpleasantness, which includes any of the behaviours listed above, should report the incidents as bullying to their class teacher or to any adult within the school that they feel comfortable to confide in. We also have a bag outside the office under the stairs, in which children can leave a note saying they would like to speak to someone. We are aware that bullying can cause psychological damage and even suicide (although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour).

### **Procedures**

We offer a 'no blame' approach in the first instance. It is important to make it clear to the victim that revenge is inappropriate and to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable and has caused distress. Once a bullying incident is reported, a member of staff will talk to the pupil, ideally on that same day, and will go through a statement if one has been made at home or will take a statement. It is vital that everything that happens is carefully recorded in a clear factual way and the Joint Head Teachers should be informed. Reference to the incident is kept on a register in the Joint Head Teacher's office. This will enable patterns to be identified and monitored. An investigation will take place. This will usually mean talking separately to the bully/bullies and to any witnesses.

Every effort is made to resolve the problem through counselling of both parties. The focus should be on how the situation can be resolved, rather than who did what and when. The incident will be logged, and the class teacher will be informed. If the bullying behaviour continues, and counselling has not worked, then sanctions follow. It is important that counselling is maintained for both parties, even when sanctions have been applied.

A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is a reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. (See Safeguarding policy for further details).

Any issues of bullying are raised in staff weekly meetings in which minutes are taken. This enables patterns of behaviour to be noted and subsequently acted upon.

### **Consequences**

There will be consequences for bullying behaviour. The consequences will vary according to the severity of the incident, but all incidents of bullying will be treated seriously.

Typical consequences include:

- Informing the parents of the bully, who may be called into school to discuss their child's behaviour
- The bully may write a letter of apology to those involved.
- The bully will be made aware of his/her behaviour and its effect upon others.
- The bully may be segregated from other pupils during break and/or lunch time for one or more days.
- In very serious situations the bully may be excluded from other areas of school or exceptionally, excluded from school for a fixed period.
- The bully will be given counselling and help to improve his/her behaviour.
- The Joint Head Teachers will become directly involved when offences are repeated and/or very serious.
- Very serious incidents of bullying can ultimately result in exclusion, with the approval of the Chair of Governors.
- Parents will be kept informed and the situation will be monitored to ensure all conflicts have been resolved.

### **Curriculum**

Our curriculum enhances this policy:

- by dealing with the topic of bullying in ways which explore why it happens and suggests alternative ways of behaving and dealing with difficulties
- by using teaching methods which encourage co-operative work and a variety of groupings, so that pupils extend their relationships beyond a small group of friends
- by discussion of differences between people and the importance of avoiding prejudice
- through assemblies, projects, drama, stories, discussions of differences between people and PSHME

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

It is our aim to provide an environment of co-operation, respect for self and others and the total rejection of any form of aggression.

To achieve this:

- children are given opportunities to work and play co-operatively
- all staff in EYFS provide a role model of how to build a relationship based on mutual respect
- a clear distinction is made between acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour and 'rules' and expectations are applied fairly and consistently
- children are involved in developing rules and expectations of behaviour so that they understand their role in the school community, and can take responsibility for their own behaviour
- appropriate positive behaviour in the EYFS is recognised with labelled praise and celebration

In the EYFS if a problem arises children can be seen by the Head of EYFS, who has overall responsibility for behaviour in EYFS. If there is a serious or persistent problem the Joint Head Teachers should be consulted.

### **Staff awareness**

Staff awareness of bullying is raised regularly in staff meetings and training sessions. Action is taken in various ways to actively reduce bullying in the school. Clear expectations as to appropriate behaviour of pupils in all areas of the school, for example in the playground, are given.

### **Guidelines for staff**

- Take action at all times to prevent bullying
- Be particularly aware of areas where bullying may take place e.g. changing rooms/toilets
- Do not let the victim suffer in silence
- Do not ignore or play down the information/allegation
- Record the incident
- Inform Class Teacher/Key Stage Leader/Joint Head Teachers as appropriate
- Alert other staff at the weekly briefing
- Tell the victim that the school will support him/her
- Assure the victim that she/he is not a "tell-tale" and that she/he should not feel guilty
- Tell the bully that their conduct is unacceptable, use one or more of the recommended strategies and issue a warning
- Monitor the situation.

### **Bullying information for pupils**

If you are being bullied:

- Do not suffer in silence
- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away
- If you think it will be repeated, try to get some names of witnesses
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you
- Keep on speaking up until someone listens.

When you are talking about bullying with an adult, be clear about:

- What has happened to you
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Who saw what was happening
- Where it happened
- What have you done about it already.

Some strategies you can try:

- Do not blame yourself, tell yourself you are important
- Try to ignore comments made to you; nothing stops a bully quicker than if the one being bullied does not react
- TRY to laugh and make a joke about the bully's comments
- TRY to get support from your friends
- TRY not to look like a victim; walk tall!

If you are being bullied outside school:

- Try to avoid the trouble spot
- Always go with a friend
- Tell your parents or a member of school staff.

### **Bullying information for parents**

- Reassure your child that there is nothing wrong with them
- Advise your child not to retaliate
- Advise your child to inform their class teacher or any member of staff whenever afraid
- Advise your child to inform their class teacher immediately so that action may be taken
- Help your child to recruit friends
- Take positive steps to raise your child's self-esteem.

### **Bullying by a member of staff**

- Occasionally a parent, pupil, or member of staff might bring a claim of bullying against a member of staff
- The complaint must be handled in the strictest confidence and the following procedures adopted
- The complaint must be investigated by the Joint Head Teachers
- Anyone bringing or passing on a complaint must be advised to keep material confidential
- One of the Joint Head Teachers must immediately question the child to establish the facts. Depending on the degree and nature of the bullying, the child should be counselled and advised. (Sometimes these complaints are exaggerated and start from a 'picking on me' syndrome. The child might realise that they have over-reacted and the matter need not go any further.) However, it is always prudent to advise the member of staff concerned so that a better understanding and working relationship between child and staff is achieved.

### **Bullying of a member of staff by a parent**

See also: Whistleblowing procedure within Safeguarding Policy. This should be handled in the strictest confidence by the Joint Head Teachers.

### **Bullying of a member of staff by another member of staff (or by one of the Joint Head Teachers)**

See also: Staff Code of Conduct.

The definitions of bullying herein apply here also.

It is important that:

- Professional behaviour is observed at all times
- Individuals think before they speak or act
- Staff treat others as they would expect to be treated themselves
- In the first instance, matters should be resolved on a one to one basis as close to the incident's occurrence as possible
- The matter be kept confidential to protect all involved
- Use is made of the School's Lay Chaplain who may act as an intermediary or support.

### **Help organisations**

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

020 7730 3300

Childline  
0800 1111

NSPCC  
Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
0808 800 5000 (If you are worried about a child)

Bullying UK  
[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)  
0808 800 2222