



Reviewed March 2023

## St Bertelina's Church of England Primary School

### Anti-Bullying Policy

At St Bertelina's, staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring Christian learning environment in which children feel valued, can feel safe and can achieve. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

This policy describes our interpretation of bullying behaviour and sets out the very high expectations we have of our pupils and staff and the methods we employ to modify behaviour if necessary. Our aim is to always reward good positive behaviour and to show zero tolerance of bullying as defined below. We feel however that in each case of bullying it is the **behaviour** and not the **child** that meets with our disapproval.

#### Bullying

Bullying is a subjective experience which takes many forms. It is deliberately hurtful and repeated making victims feel hurt, scared and upset.

The staff and governors of St Bertelina's accept the definition of bullying as:

| Type of bullying | Definition                                                                                                           |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Emotional        | Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridicule                                                                    |
| Physical         | Hitting, kicking, pushing, pinching, scratching, taking another's belongings, any other forms of violence or threats |
| Racial           | Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures                                                                                    |

|                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sexual                                       | Sexually harmful behaviour including: inappropriate touching, sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, up-skirting                                                             |
| Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying | Prejudiced comments or actions against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or non-binary (LGBTQI) people                                                                                                 |
| Direct or indirect verbal                    | Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing                                                                                                                                                  |
| Cyber-bullying                               | Misuse of technology, e.g., video and camera facilities; misuse of the internet; mobile phone threats by text message and calls, e.g., via social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites |

The use of intimidating or defamatory messages/images both inside and outside of the school will not be tolerated. In order to combat cyber bullying, school will work with both the police and mobile network/internet service providers where appropriate.

**In gaining an understanding of bullying, staff attention is drawn to the following information:**

- Bullying behaviour is often very subtle and when a group of pupils have established a bullying relationship with another pupil or group of pupils, they may only have to look threateningly to reinforce fearfulness.
- Research shows that name-calling, being physically hit and being threatened are the most frequent direct forms of bullying. Being isolated or deliberately left out of friendship groups is the most common form of indirect bullying.
- National surveys indicate that most bullying occurs in and around school, the playground being the most common location. At St Berteline's we also need to be aware that bullying may also occur in non-classroom areas. In primary schools, three-quarters of all pupils who are bullied are bullied during break or lunchtimes. The small group of persistently bullied pupils report that they are not only bullied in school but also on their way to and from school.
- It is acknowledged that everybody has the potential to be involved in bullying behaviour, either on the giving or receiving end.

## **The effects of bullying**

Staff should carefully monitor the symptoms and effects of bullying. Any bullying behaviour should be reported to the Headteacher.

Staff must be aware that if bullying is left unchallenged, other pupils can learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Bullying can pervade the relationships of children and become accepted as normal, this must not be allowed to happen.

### **Bullying can affect pupils in a number of ways. For example:**

- They may complain that their possessions are being stolen.
- They may become sad, miserable and tearful.
- They may suffer injury,
- They may be unhappy about coming to school.
- They may lose self-confidence and self-esteem, and blame themselves for inviting bullying behaviour.
- They may lose concentration and enjoyment in learning.
- They may experience stress-related illness such as stomach aches, headaches, nightmares, or anxiety attacks.

### **The aim of the school with regard to bullying**

- As a Christian school, co-operation and care for others is fostered, and the school aims to provide a happy and caring environment in which all pupils and staff are valued and can thrive.
- St Berteline's will combat and challenge bullying behaviour in all its forms and encourage co-operative behaviour at all times.
- All staff employed at the school will recognise and respond to bullying behaviour whenever and wherever it is encountered.
- We will show zero tolerance of any form of bullying, whenever identified.

### **Action to prevent and deal with incidents of bullying**

Our Behaviour Policy describes the importance for pupils to be given praise and recognition for co-operative behaviour. Teaching staff should use the school curriculum as a vehicle to deliver and reinforce our anti-bullying policy; assemblies, informal chats, role play and drama, literature, discussion-based activities, circle time and creative writing all provide opportunities for this.

The way our lunchtimes and playtimes are organised and the opportunities given to the pupils for constructive play are an important factor in the fight against bullying. We train play leaders to look after our younger children during playtimes thus reinforcing the caring Christian ethos of our school.

Midday Assistants are regularly made aware of the importance of their role in supervising and monitoring pupil interactions and in particular, pupils who appear to be isolated from their peers or who show signs of distress. They are also reminded of the need for immediate reporting of disclosures and incidents that they have witnessed. All teaching staff should regularly check with Midday Assistants to ensure that children's behaviour has been acceptable. Staff should advise and update Midday Assistants appropriately when there is a concern about any possible bullying issues or friendship/relationship issues among children.

We run an 'Anti-Bullying' week each year alongside the National Anti-Bullying Week by way of focusing the whole school on these issues. This gives time for teachers to discuss issues at an appropriate level to their class.

As part of our PSHE lessons we encourage children to talk about bullying incidents and help develop an understanding and empathy. Children are made aware of the effects of bullying on their peers and are informed of the sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying behaviour.

**All staff should listen to children and act upon any statements or complaints they make.**

If worried children can place a note in Mrs Moss's post box to ask for help in a confidential way. Pupils are reminded regularly that this is an opportunity to make their feelings known.

Parental involvement is a crucial factor in our fight against bullying. A copy of our Behaviour and Discipline Policy is available for parents from the school office and on the website, as well as a copy of our Anti-bullying Policy. Through our home-school communication links, we hope to promote an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding in support of all our children.

### **Vulnerable pupils**

Staff recognise the following groups as potentially vulnerable with regard to bullying.

- Children in Care.

- Traveller children.
- Children with learning difficulties and/or disability.
- Children with SEN.
- Gifted and talented children.
- Young carers.
- Those with an unclear gender identity.
- Those with an unclear sexual orientation.
- Those of a minority race.

Staff and volunteers need to be aware of those children who may be vulnerable to bullying due to their individual needs and should ensure they are provided with appropriate means of support. Children with special needs and disabilities may not always have the communication skills to report effectively and in detail specific incidents of being bullied and will need specific assistance with this.

### **The school's response to bullying**

- **The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too - that is why they bully. However, Staff must consider the needs of the 'victim' to be paramount and discussions will require patience and understanding. Remember - 'Listen, Believe, Act'.**
- In response to one-off incidents, which do not result in actual physical harm, a reprimand followed by an apology may be sufficient to deter pupils from continuing with unacceptable and potentially bullying behaviour.
- The persistent bully will need help and firm guidance. When dealing with a child who has bullied another, staff should be clear, honest and direct with their response avoiding the use of language that could cause humiliation, sarcasm, aggression, threat or manipulation.
- In the first instance, the response should be immediate or as soon as is possible follow up in the longer term. Obtain witnesses if possible as this may give a clearer picture of what has occurred.
- Children identified as bullying, will be dealt with on an individual basis according to their needs. However, it must be made clear that the behaviour is unacceptable and must not be repeated

- Incidents considered by staff to be serious or persistent must be brought to the attention of the Headteacher
- Racial, physical and sexual abuse must always be reported to the Headteacher.
- Following an incident of bullying, the policy of the school might be to provide the pupils involved with some form of counselling in order to enable the pupils to discuss with one another strategies for resolving the problem and avoiding further conflict.
- Perpetrators' and victims' parents will be informed of bullying at an early stage. The Headteacher will decide how best to approach parents.
- Outside support from specialist agencies will be utilised if necessary.

It is assumed that parents, who choose to send their child to St Berteline's will support and co-operate fully with staff in maintaining high standards of behaviour.

#### Monitoring and evaluation

Incidents of bullying are monitored by the headteacher.

The Headteacher and the governing body monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The headteacher will report bullying incidents to governors along with the schools' response. This will be recorded at Governor meetings.

The Anti-Bullying Policy reflects the intended ethos of the school and should be read in conjunction with the following documents and policies.

- Preventing and Tackling Bullying in Schools July 2017
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- PSHE Policy
- School Mission Statement
- E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use Policy

- Prevention of Radicalisation and Extremism
- Inclusion Policy
- Promoting Anti-Racist Practices (including Racist Incident Reporting)
- Policy for Promoting British Values
- Valuing all God's Children (Guidance for Church of England Schools on challenging homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Mobile Phone, Tablet, Camera and Smart Watch for Pupils