

St Aidan's RC Primary School



Safe To Learn Policy (Anti-Bullying)

All members of our community are given equal opportunities in line with the Disability Equality Scheme (D.E.S.)

ORIGIN: North Tyneside Roman Catholic Family of Schools

ADOPTED BY FULL GOVERNING BODY: November 2017

Reviewed: November 2024



ST AIDAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Safe To Learn Policy

Mission Statement

Our mission at St Aidan's School is to create a joyful learning environment that nurtures children's self-confidence and self-esteem, which empowers them to reach their personal, spiritual and educational potential through praying, worshipping, learning and playing together.

Vision Statement

Children and young people have a right to be protected from harm and discrimination. They should be able to live in an environment in which they are free from harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Aims

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils play, learn and socialise in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision is a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. It replaces the three previous public sector equality duties for race, disability and gender, and covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways. It may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Types of Bullying

Non-verbal: kicking, hitting, damaging or taking belongings

Verbal: name calling, taunting

Indirect: spreading rumours, excluding

Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones. Separate advice on teachers' powers to search (including statutory guidance on dealing with electronic devices) is available – see below for a link to this document. For more information on how to respond to cyber-bullying and how pupils can keep themselves safe, please refer to the Childnet International link under 'further resources'.

Homophobic - occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people.

Racist - behaviour or language that makes a pupil feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, religion or national origin.

Sexual - such as making lewd comments or non-consensual sexual touching

(LGB&T) pupils; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

Social/Environmental – this is where young people are targeted due to an inequality of wealth.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

Criminal Law

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff (*this legislation does not apply to independent schools*). This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The head teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

Signs of Bullying

Young people who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. All staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

Consultation

This policy has been written in consultation with all stakeholders including young people, parents and carers. We have carried out a questionnaire and analysed the results with the School Council and implemented strategies to prevent bullying.

We believe listening to young people and acting upon what they say, is key to preventing bullying.

Reporting and Recording

All bullying incidents will be recorded using the DFE definition and classified according to type of bullying.

Prevention

St Aidan's endeavours to create a climate where children feel safe, we have developed an approach in which school staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This has involved talking to pupils about issues of difference, in lessons, through dedicated events, projects, and through assemblies.

St Aidan's we tackle bullying through creating an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

Intervention

At St Aidan's we apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying will be given an intervention programme.

At St Aidan's we:

- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Parents feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child, and they reinforce the value of good behaviour at home
- Involve pupils. All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders
- Regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers
- Implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities. We also teach children that using any prejudice based language is unacceptable
- Use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems. We draw on the experience and expertise of anti-bullying organisations with a proven track record and/or specialised expertise in dealing with certain forms of bullying. We have an Anti-Bullying Quality Mark from North Tyneside Council.
- Provide effective staff training. We have training to help staff understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) pupils
- Work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been

committed. We also work with other agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside school

- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. We make pupils feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying
- Create an inclusive environment. We create a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination
- Celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue

Responding

Our aim is to develop a culture to ensure young people are safe at all times however if incidences do occur this is how we will respond:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- reassuring the pupil
- offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the young person
- Giving appropriate sanctions
- Intervention work if required

Working With Parents and Carers

Parents and carers know who to go to and what will happen if they report bullying. They have been informed when and how they will be contacted if their child is involved in a bullying incident.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher will oversee and keep records of incidents of bullying. However all adults and children have a responsibility to be vigilant and look out for signs of bullying behaviour.

All staff will :

- a) Ensure that all incidents of bullying are responded to promptly
- b) Record incidents
- c) Inform other bystanders, adults, parents and carers
- d) Follow up and monitor incidents

Further sources of information

Other departmental advice and guidance you may be interested in:

DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance

Legislative links

Schools' duty to promote good behaviour: Section 89 Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 Power to tackle poor behaviour outside school The Equality Act 2010

Specialist organisations

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

BeatBullying: A bullying prevention charity with an emphasis on working directly with children and young people. In addition to lesson plans and resources for parents, BeatBullying have developed a peer support programme for young people affected by bullying. Kidscape: Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.

The Diana Award: Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme to empower young people to take responsibility for changing the attitudes and behaviour of their peers towards bullying. It will achieve this by identifying, training and supporting school anti-bullying ambassadors.

The BIG Award: The Bullying Intervention Group (BIG) offer a national scheme and award for schools to tackle bullying effectively.

Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

Cyber-bullying

ChildNet International: Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves

Think U Know: resources provided by Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

Digizen: provides online safety information for educators, parents, carers and young people.

LGBT

EACH: A training agency for employers and organisations seeking to tackle discrimination on the grounds of gender and sexual orientation. Schools Out: Offers practical advice, resources (including lesson plans) and training to schools on LGBT equality in education.

Stonewall: An LGB equality organisation with considerable expertise in LGB bullying in schools, a dedicated youth site, resources for schools, and specialist training for teachers.

SEND

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

Changing Faces: Provide online resources and training to schools on bullying because of physical difference.

Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: Advice provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance on developing effective anti-bullying practice.

Racism

Show Racism the Red Card: Provide resources and workshops for schools to educate young people, often using the high profile of football, about racism.

Kick it Out: Uses the appeal of football to educate young people about racism and provide education packs for schools.

Anne Frank Trust: Runs a schools project to teach young people about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, the consequences of unchecked prejudice and discrimination, and cultural diversity.

Transgender

Cornwall Council Equality & Diversity <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=1958>

Citizens Advice Bureau
(Change of name advice) http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/england/your_family/family_index_ew/change_of_name.htm

Useful DVD list (Wikipedia) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_transgender_characters_in_film_and_television

Useful Book List (Wikipedia) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_books_featuring_transgender_persons

Government Advice for School Leaders <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00062-2011>

Maintaining, Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

The policy is updated every three years in consultation with all stakeholders.