



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## Mission Statement

This is our school St Werburgh's and St Columba's

A place to be inspired, be accepted, be yourself and be unique.

Be able to grow spiritually, academically and morally.

Be able to contribute to the community and be a responsible global citizen.

Be able to reach for the stars and fulfil your potential.

A place providing an excellent Catholic education for everyone.

Where we belong, where everyone belongs.

**Action: Spring 2023**

**Review: Autumn 2026**

**Rationale and Definition**

The implementation of this policy is essential to the fulfilment of our Mission Statement. We believe that bullying in any form is not acceptable and that everyone has the right to feel safe. At St Werburgh's and St Columba's we consider bullying to be the deliberate intention to hurt, threaten or frighten someone or a persistent set of actions through which an individual or group exerts undue power over another. The actions result in emotional or physical abuse. This contravenes our Christian values to respect each other and enable all to thrive and reach their full potential. The children understand that verbal bullying is just as serious as physical bullying and this message is reinforced with the children via assemblies, PSHE lessons and class discussion.

### **Objectives of this policy**

All teaching and non teaching staff, governors, parents and carers should have an understanding of what bullying is. All staff, governors, parents and carers are aware of the policy and have a clearly defined understanding of how to report an incident. As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents and carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

### **What is Bullying?**

There are many types of bullying (see below). In order to deal effectively with incidents that arise, there needs to be clarity between normal "falling out" which takes place amongst all children from time to time, and genuine bullying behaviour. Arguments and disagreements, which occur at all ages and amongst all groups of children, is a normal part of growing up and is not bullying. Staff are trained to identify indicators that a child is a victim of bullying. These indicators can include unwillingness to come to school, feigning illness and becoming shy or nervous.

### **Types of Bullying**

The types of bullying fall into the following categories:

- VERBAL – threatening, intimidating behaviour or deliberately invading personal space with consequences, spreading rumours, excluding, calling names, teasing, making sexual, racial, sectarian remarks, picking on physical appearance
- PHYSICAL - kicking, punching, hitting, spitting, biting, tripping, deliberately knocking into people or any other means of inflicting physical pain
- EMOTIONAL –Excluding others, talking behind backs, staring out, writing nasty notes/letters/graffiti
- CYBER BULLYING – Using any form of technology to intimidate or spread rumours. filming people and distributing over the internet or via mobile phones with the purpose of causing emotional harm. This can include sending, receiving or forwarding indecent images or images that may cause distress to the victim.
- All of these types of characteristics can be grouped into the following –
  - Bullying related to race, religion or culture,
  - Bullying related to special educational needs or disabilities,
  - Bullying related to appearance or health conditions,
  - Bullying related to sexual orientation. Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexual or transgender people, or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender can be classed as bullying.
  - Bullying related to home circumstances and
  - Sexist or sexual bullying.

### **Preventative Measures – the duty of the school**

As a school we have a number of preventative measures in place to ensure that all our children feel safe and secure in school:

- Encouraging a “zero-tolerance” approach among children and adults towards bullying.
- Education and promotion of the school’s stance on anti-bullying through assemblies, Religious Education, PSHE and group intervention programmes. This will include ensuring that children understand the difference between bullying and falling out.
- Some times it is better to deal with incidents as a whole class, rather than with individual children – this judgement is made by the professionals involved
- Taking part in Anti-Bullying Week
- Clear classroom rules, routines and behaviour management strategies.
- Adequate supervision during break times and preventative study of areas of the school which could potentially encourage bullying
- Modelling desired behaviour by adults including problem solving, calm communication and conflict resolution.
- Active intervention when bullying occurs with appropriate follow up of each incident.
- Easy access to report acts of bullying via the Anti Bullying Box, class Message Box or teacher.
- Children are not permitted to use mobile phones during the school day. If parents wish children to use mobile phones on the journey to and from school, these should be held by the class teacher during the day, for safekeeping.

### **Procedure for Reporting and Recording Suspected Incidents of Bullying**

Children, parents and carers are encouraged to make immediate contact with a member of staff when they feel an act of bullying has occurred. If the incident is isolated then it will be dealt with immediately by a member of staff and recorded in the anti bullying file. The school policy will be reinforced.

Children can communicate with members of staff by:

- Using the class Message Box
- Using the school Anti-Bullying Box
- Telling an adult they feel comfortable with
- Asking a friend to tell an adult
- Using Toot Toot the online anti bullying messaging service

If the incident is deemed more serious or has happened on more than one occasion then:

- All reported incidents to the Key Stage leader.
- All reported incidents will be communicated to the Deputy or Head Teacher.
- All children involved will be questioned and all children will be listened to. This will be done in a sensitive manner and in a private environment where the children will feel safe and secure when answering questions. Incidents will be recorded in the school’s anti-bullying file.
- The incident will be investigated and a decision considered as to whether an act of bullying has occurred.
- If deemed to be bullying the incident will be logged, parents and carers will receive feedback and the situation monitored. This will be done via an agreed route with both the victim and the bully according to age. At this stage some restorative work will take place, for example, a sorry letter.
- The situation will be monitored by designated staff (usually class teachers, department leaders, learning mentor), by pro-actively discussing the situation with the victim and recording their response over a period of time.
- After monitoring the situation for an agreed period of time a review will be carried out.

If bullying persists, then the Head teacher will normally meet up with parents and carers of both children to draw up an action plan to support the children in school. The child who is using bullying behaviour will receive appropriate sanctions. (See: The Perpetrator below) The power to exclude is available as a last resort.

## **Parental Role**

### **WHAT TO DO AS A PARENT ?**

- Make an appointment to speak to the classteacher or headteacher straight away.
- Encourage your child to speak to an adult in school.
- Your parents will be taken seriously and investigated.
- Any incidents that occur in school should be dealt with through school.
- If the problem persists then procedures identified in this policy will operate.

**.Parents and carers will always be taken seriously and any allegations will be investigated.**

## **The Victim**

There is no doubt that, unfortunately, some children are more vulnerable to bullying behaviour than others. This is recognised by the school and we will do all we can to support and protect these children. This may include working with the child on developing their own assertiveness. Parents and carers can also help with this through role-play with the child at home.

## **The Perpetrator**

If a child has a need to use bullying behaviour, he or she may have emotional issues or low self esteem which need to be addressed. The school will endeavour to provide ways of supporting the child in order to help them change their behaviour.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years