

St John's Catholic Primary School,

Bridgnorth



Anti-Bullying Policy

"I am the vine you are the branches" – John, 15.

At St John's Catholic Primary School, we work together to create a positive culture in which all members of the community feel safe and confident, and treat each other with respect and courtesy, particularly with regard to individual differences.

As a team, we will:

- Maintain an ethos of respect for all, which discourages bullying and unpleasant behaviour towards other pupils in this school.
- Treat any reports of bullying seriously and investigate them carefully.
- Deal with any incidents in a proactive and sensitive way to avoid increasing any distress felt by bullied pupils.
- Work closely with parents to help to deal with any incidents which arise.
- Develop an ethos where children are confident to tell someone when they, or someone else, are bullied.

At St. John's Catholic Primary School we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school.

This policy should be read and understood in the context of our Behaviour Policy, our Inclusion Policy, and our approach to Personal, Social, Healthcare and Economic Education (PSHE).

Our policy has been written in the context of our responsibilities under The Equality Act 2010. The Act makes it unlawful in England and Wales for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, exclude them or subject them to any other detriment.

A bullying incident should be addressed as a Safeguarding 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, staff will deal with the concern in line with the school Safeguarding Policy.

The support of external services may be accessed to tackle any underlying issues which have contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

We work in partnership with the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA), linked to the National Children's Bureau, which includes access to specialist training of staff to support our best efforts to eradicate bullying in our school.

Bullying involves an imbalance of power which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves. This may be seen or felt physically, online or psychologically, and includes social isolation or intimidation, as well as any threat of violence.

Definition of Bullying

We agree with the ABA definition of bullying as "**the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online**". The acronyms 'STOP' can be a useful way to explain bullying to some children and encourage them what to do if faced with bullying behaviour: **Several Times On Purpose and Start Telling Other People**.

Bullying may take various forms, and is often motivated by prejudice, including:

- Cyber: The use of electronic communications including email, mobile phones, text/multimedia messaging, photographs/video, online profiling, websites, social networks, and instant

messaging; all with the intention to frighten, embarrass or harass. This can happen at any time of day with a potentially wider audience and more accessories as people forward on with a simple click;

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, intimidating, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- Homophobic or Transphobic: because of, or focusing on, the issues of sexuality and/or gender identity;
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence inflicted on another individual;
- Racist/Cultural/Religious: racial, cultural or religious taunts, comments or gestures;
- SEND: bullying related to individual's Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
- Sexual: unwanted sexual contact, inappropriate touching, sexually abusive taunts, comments or gestures; bullying relating to those identifying as LGBTQ+ and
- Verbal: for example, name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, belittling

Other behaviour often associated with bullying:

Baiting - baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonize those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.

Banter - The dictionary describes banter as: 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'.

Bullying is often justified as being just banter. It may start as banter, but some types of banter are bullying and need to be addressed as bullying.

Types of Banter:

Friendly Banter - There's no intention to hurt and everyone knows its limits

Ignorant Banter - crosses the line with no intention to hurt, will often say sorry.

Malicious Banter - Done to humiliate a person -often in public

Occasionally, an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of hate crime related bullying and cyberbullying. If the victim might be in danger then intervention is urgently required.

Bullying Outside of School

Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during the holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of Cyber-bullying, in particular, means

that it can impact on pupils' wellbeing beyond the school day. Staff, parents/carers and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities as outlined in this policy. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Actions will be taken in line with the school's Behaviour Policy should bullying occur inside or outside of school.

Preventing bullying

As part of our commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we at St John's have developed the following strategies to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour:

- Ensure that the school actively promotes the celebration of difference and diversity as part of our core values, including a wide range of assembly themes on diversity and anti-bullying
- Involve the School council to promote Anti-Bullying activities and to gather views from children throughout the school
- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer-on-peer abuse)
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others
- Encourage responsible use of technology, especially mobile phones and social media
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- Work in partnership with the Anti-Bullying Alliance, as part of the All Together Project, and keep up to date with good practice guidelines
- Take part in Anti-Bullying week annually in November and Safer Internet Day in February, as well as learning about Anti-bullying throughout the school year
- Use PSHE lessons and cross curriculum themes to promote anti-bullying
- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as cyber bullying and internet safety
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos, including weekly Good News assemblies
- Promote British Values and challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature

Signs and symptoms which may be noticed:

We are aware of the following signs and symptoms which may indicate that a child is experiencing bullying:

- Change of friendship groups
- Lack of friends
- Unwilling to go to school
- "Illness" at certain times of the day
- Change in standard of work
- Withdrawn/sudden lack of confidence
- Severe cases of depression
- Begins truanting
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Problems sleeping or bed wetting
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Roles and responsibilities

The Responsibilities of Staff

Our staff will:

- foster in our pupils self-confidence, self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- be mindful of the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and the links between mental health and bullying;
- demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils; discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully, and the importance of telling an adult about bullying when it happens;
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
- listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously, record, and act to support and protect them;
- talk with the child accused of bullying to determine nature of bullying;
- report suspected cases of bullying to the Head Teacher, Deputy Head or our Designated person for safeguarding;
- follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;

- deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

The Responsibilities of Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- follow school rules and classroom contract agreements;
- to protect the pupil who is being bullied by fetching a member of staff;
- report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances;
- help create a climate where bullying is not accepted;
- value and respect others;
- help others achieve;
- keep others safe.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

What Pupils Need to Recognise About Bullying.

Pupils need to understand:

- that bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time;
- that they have a right not be bullied at school;
- that they are not to blame if they are bullied;
- that they need to speak out and should trust the teachers to take their concerns seriously and to help them;
- that they are not alone.

The Responsibilities of Parents

We ask parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying;
- Think about the definition of bullying and whether this is what has occurred; "the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online"
- Encouraging their child to talk about it, but be patient as she or he may be distressed. Do not ask leading questions. Let them know that they are not alone and it happens to many people at some time or other;
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;

- Staying calm but showing that you are supportive and working with the school to solve the problem.
- Trying to help him or her to see the difficulty as a problem that can be solved.
- Asking their child if they can see ways of changing things.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to their class teacher and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- Keeping a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Working with the school regarding any bullying that happens within school and not try to take the matter into their own hands;

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying :

- Discuss your concerns with us in the following way: Firstly, make an appointment to speak to you child's teacher. At the meeting outline your concerns. Arrange to meet again in 24 to 48 hours so that the teacher can talk to the child/children involved and then let you know what he/she has found out and is proposing to do.
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be informed and the incident will be recorded onto the school's management information system
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour and a plan for the resolution of conflict will be devised.
- In serious cases parents will be informed and will be asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- If after a few more days you do not think the issue has been resolved, make an appointment to speak to one of our Senior Leadership Team. Explain your concerns; explain what actions have been taken so far and the issues that your child is still experiencing.
- The Senior Leader will look into it and report back to you within 24 to 48 hours. They will inform you of the outcomes of their investigations into the matter.

Outcomes

1. The perpetrators will be asked to apologise and will be given targets for acceptable behaviour with support as appropriate
2. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
3. Other consequences in line with our whole school Behaviour Policy will also be implemented
4. In serious cases, exclusion will be considered
5. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

This policy will be shared with new staff in the Induction meeting.

Links with Other Policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Physical Contact & Handling Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy

This policy has been formulated in consultation with staff, pupils, governors and parents/carers.

This policy is available on the school website and/or via the School Office.

Date for Review: Summer 2024

Anti-Bullying Lead: Miss C. Derwas

10 Key Principles

As part of the [All Together programme](#), ABA has create 10 key principles to preventing and responding to bullying. We worked closely with young people and schools to develop this list. We have also created a charter which includes these principles which schools can sign in the attachments section below.

We have module in our [free CPD Online Training](#) which brings these principles to life.

1. **listens** - all pupils and parents and carers are listened to and influence strategies and approaches to prevent, report and respond to incidents of bullying.
2. **includes us all** - all pupils, including those with SEN/Disability, are included, valued and participate fully in all aspects of school life.
3. **respects** - all school staff are role models to others within the school in how they treat others.
4. **challenges** - all forms of discriminatory language – including disablist language – is challenged taken seriously
5. **celebrates difference** – difference is actively and visibly celebrated and welcome across the whole school.
6. **understands** - all school staff, pupils and parents and carers understand what bullying is and what it isn't.
7. **believes** - all pupils, including disabled children and those with SEN, and their parents and carers are acknowledged, believed and taken seriously when reporting incidents of bullying.
8. **reports bullying** - all pupils within the school and their parents and carers understand how to report incidents of bullying.
9. **takes action** - we respond quickly to all incidents of bullying. Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with SEN, participate fully in decisions made about them and help to formulate appropriate action to respond to incidents of bullying.
10. **has clear policies** - our school's anti-bullying policy reflects these principles and is embedded within other school policies. They are widely and actively promoted to school staff, pupils and their parents and carers.