St Aidan's
Church in Wales
VA
School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Anti-Bullying / Safeguarding Policy

This school believes that bullying is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. All members of the school community share a collective responsibility for tackling bullying should it occur and in working together to promote positive behaviour.

Aims of the policy: Our Policy is essential to support our whole school ethos which is to ensure that children feel safe, secure confident and happy. It is designed to prevent bullying behaviour wherever possible, to respond consistently in line with agreed procedures should it occur and to provide support to those involved as appropriate. Our children's health and well-being is of paramount importance and everybody's business.

Prevention includes sending out a clear message that negative behaviour is anti-social, unacceptable and will not be tolerated here. **This school policy is based on the Welsh Government initiative and Guidance** *"Respecting Others: Anti-Bullying Guidance". It* **can be accessed from** www.wales.gov.uk/respectingothers

What is Bullying behaviour?
"Bullying is when someone hurts, threatens or frightens you regularly" *Definition used by SCPO Police Liaison Officers in Workshops in schools in Pembrokeshire.*

Bullying is deliberately hurtful and designed to cause distress. It is usually repeated over a period of time and is difficult for the person being bullied to defend themselves against. It involves an imbalance and abuse of power and is not age dependent. It may have a racist or discriminatory motivation and can focus on ethnicity, culture, class, religion, learning difficulties, gender, sexuality, long term health conditions and disability. It may be based on small differences between children which are not always clear to us and may shift and develop as relationships change. Bullying behaviour may be shown by individuals or groups. It may not always be clear who is manipulating the behaviour we see. Some children can be 'provocative victims' *e.g.* by behaving in a tiresome way which eventually triggers a response which may then be seen to be bullying.

Bullying is not falling out with friends, choosing not to play with someone, disliking someone, one off aggressive behaviour such as a fight between children who disagree, accidental physical contact, or the normal rough and tumble of playground life.

Our agreed school definition of bullying

Welsh Government Definition of bullying.

There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:
- deliberately hurtful (including aggression);
- repeated often over a period of time, while recognising that even a one-off incident can leave a learner traumatised and nervous of future recurrence; and
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Individual learners' perspectives on what constitutes bullying are also a key element to take into account. Bullying can take many forms, but the three main types are:
- physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings, sexual harassment or aggression;
- verbal – name-calling, insulting, making offensive remarks; and

- indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e-mails or text messages on mobile phones.'

Bullying can also includes:

- bullying around race, religion and culture
- bullying involving learners with special educational needs and disabilities
- homophobic bullying
- sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying.
- Cyberbullying.

There are also specific types of bullying relating to protected characteristic that is part of these existing strategies.
Our school provides additional support when devising preventative and responsive measures to different types of bullying related to protected characteristics.

These specific types of bullying are tackled by the school using the guidance materials on the Welsh Government's website at: www.wales.gov.uk/respectingothers

Our whole school approach to preventing bullying includes:

- Developing a positive ethos which includes knowing bullying is unacceptable here;
- Expecting positive behaviour which helps and supports learning and development;
- Promoting co-operation and expecting socially responsible behaviour;
- Encouraging those who witness bullying to act positively by alerting staff and exerting collective peer pressure to deter the bullies;
- Valuing and celebrating everyone's differences, skills and talents;
- Supporting the development of emotional literacy, self esteem and resilience through assemblies, Circle Time, PSE, the Healthy Schools programme, skills development, teaching pupils personal coping strategies, School Council involvement, Buddy schemes and Peer Mentoring;
- Active involvement of our designated Police SCPO in the delivery of the all Wales School Liaison Core Programme;
- Showing respect for others and always challenge and educate about inappropriate language that is;
  - Racist
  - Homophobic
  - Sexist
  - Religiously biased, disability driven, or would be deemed offensive or derogatory by any protected groups named in the Equality Act 2010.
  - Making the information in this policy available to all stakeholders;
  - Involving all members of the school community in designing /implementing policy.
  - All staff should model by example the appropriate positive behaviours.

Why should we be concerned?
Someone who is experiencing bullying will be upset and distressed and find it hard to concentrate on work or learning. There may be signs such as poor attendance, truancy, being late, being off school sick, becoming withdrawn and anxious, losing possessions and money, having mood swings, and showing untypical behaviour.

Encouraging reporting of incidents if bullying occurs:

- Pupils in this school can be assured that their concerns will be responded to with sensitivity. **All reports will be taken seriously and investigated**;
- Confidentiality for anyone who shares information will be respected;
- Opportunities for children to communicate concerns include a problem box, access to any member of staff, representation on the School Council and buddies/mentors who will pass on concerns;
- This school takes into account the guidance given in the All Wales Police "School Beat" guidance document.

If bullying occurs we will implement the following procedures, as appropriate, in line with the Welsh Government "Respecting Others" guidance:

- We will take all incidents seriously and record their occurrence on a Bullying Log.
  A designated person will monitor and collate information on victims and potential bullies. An electronic system, available to all staff, facilitates this process;
- Investigate the incident / establish facts by independently talking to all involved;
- Use appropriate **Restorative** intervention techniques to manage difficulties between bullies & victims; encourage reconciliation where this is possible / feasible;
- Where bullying behaviour has been established, implement agreed sanctions consistently and fairly as necessary to prevent further incidents;
- Involve parents as early as possible where incidents merit it;
- Apply guidelines from the all Wales Police "School Beat" partnership working document to determine whether official police involvement is needed; as indicated in these guidelines, deal with incidents internally wherever possible;
- Keep accurate, factual records of all reported incidents and the school's response.
- Always follow-up incidents after they have been dealt with and review outcomes to ensure bullying behaviour has ceased;
- Provide on-going support for those involved where necessary;

Depending on the type of incident, if sanctions are used, these may include:
- Withdrawing privileges/free time; preventing access to parts of school; detention; lunchtime exclusion; short term exclusion; involving parents as / when necessary; involving appropriate outside agencies; including details on the bully's school record; exclusion. The school will always offer a Restorative Approach and look to repair harm.

Strategies and preventative measures to reduce the likelihood of bullying in this school:

- We will ensure there is a whole-school anti bullying approach involving everyone (staff, students, parents & governors) in developing and implementing this policy;
- Restorative Practice (RP) will be a key strand of the authorities / school and anti-bullying and wellbeing approach.
- RP will be used to deal with specific incidents and conflict, such as bullying or truancy.
- RP will be used to repair relationships and develop community and develop emotional literacy. An ethos of personal responsibility will be encouraged where students are encouraged to tell if they experience bullying themselves or see others being bullied – knowing that not taking action condones the behaviour.
- Having a system in place for students to inform staff in confidence when bullying occurs; ensuring staff are appropriately trained and supported to respond to this.

- Developing our understanding of collective responsibility through Support Groups, regular restorative circles and circle time, school council, peer mentoring/ restorative mentor training, appropriate curricular work (*eg* PSE and our Healthy Schools initiative and sessions with School Community Police Officers);
- Having clearly understood and implemented Playground Rules.
- Having a clear, explicit link with the school's Behaviour and Child Protection & Safeguarding Policies.
- Include bullying in our home-school agreement.
- Providing clear information and guidance on dealing with bullying and the help which is available for students, parents and staff including the role of restorative approaches.
  The school follows the recommendations set out in the ESTYN report, *Action on bullying. A review of the effectiveness of action taken by schools to address bullying on the grounds of pupils' protected characteristics (June 2014)*

  As a school we will:-
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act.

2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Raise awareness of bullying on the grounds of **protected characteristics** with pupils, parents, staff, and governors and take a more proactive approach to preventing and mitigating its effects.
- **Undertake when appropriate, anti-bullying audits and surveys.**
  (See appendix for a recommended audit checklist.)
- Consult pupils, parents, and others, to identify the extent and nature of bullying in the school and to agree when necessary the contents of strategic equality plans.
- Plan age-appropriate opportunities in the curriculum to discuss issues related to the protected characteristics and to build pupils' resilience to bullying;
- Ensure staff have a clear understanding of the extent and nature of bullying that may take place in school, including cyber bullying.
- Make sure that staff know how to deal with and record incidents of bullying;
- Record and monitor incidents of bullying in relation to the protected characteristics and use this information to review / include in strategic equality objectives;
- Make sure all policies and procedures meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- **We will work with the Local authority and regional consortia in order to:**
- Provide training and support for school staff to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications;
- Provide training and support for school governors to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities to monitor strategic equality plans and objectives;
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of schools' strategic equality plans more closely.

Reviewing the policy
The final details of this policy have been drawn up in consultation with pupils, parents, staff and members of the school community.

It will be discussed, reviewed and revised annually.

Reference documents and useful links:

- *The Equality Act 2010.*

- *A Survey into the Prevalence and Incidence of School Bullying in Wales. Main Report: People and Work Unit, 2010*

- *Equal Opportunities and Diversity in Schools: Estyn, 2005*

- *No Place for Bullying: Ofsted, 2012*

- *Prevention and response to identity-based bullying among local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales: Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010*

- *Promoting Disability Equality in Schools: Welsh Assembly Government, 2007*

- *Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Overview: Welsh Government, 2011*

- *Respecting Others: Bullying around race, religion and culture: Welsh Government, 2011*

- *Respecting Others: Bullying around special educational needs and disabilities: Welsh Government, 2011*

- *Respecting Others: Cyberbullying: Welsh Government, 2011*

- *Respecting Others: Homophobic bullying: Welsh Government, 2011*

- *Respecting Others: Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying: Welsh Government, 2011*

- *Review of Disability Equality Schemes and practice in schools and pupil referral units: Estyn, 2011*

- *Tackling bullying in schools: Estyn, 2005*

- *The impact of schools' race equality policies: Estyn, 2009*

- *The nature and extent of pupil bullying in schools in the north of Ireland: RSM McClure Watters, 2011*

- *The School Report: Stonewall, 2012.*

- *Action on bullying. A review of the effectiveness of action taken by schools to address bullying on the grounds of pupils' protected characteristics (ESTYN June 2014)*

- *ERW Safeguarding Children policy.*