

# St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

## Anti-Bullying Policy



### **Our Mission - A Statement of Values and Principles**

At St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School staff, parents and children work together to live out Catholic mission,

*“to ensure a safe learning environment where we celebrate the dignity and worth of all who work in and for the school. As a Christian community we recognise that in loving others we love Jesus and so help each other to reach our full potential.”*

Therefore the full implementation of our Anti-Bullying Policy is instrumental in enabling us to strive towards achieving this mission for all the children in our care. This policy states the roles of the different members of our school community and the strategies which we can employ to achieve our mission.

### **School Definition of Bullying Behaviour**

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

#### **Bullying is:**

- **Deliberately hurtful**
- **Repeated over a period of time**
- **Difficult for victims to defend themselves against.**

Bullying involves an imbalance of power.

#### **Pupil Definitions**

- Being teased or called names
- Being hit kicked or pushed
- Having money or other things taken from them
- Being ignored or left out
- Being picked on because of their religion, colour or where they are from

Persistent school bullying can result in:

- depression
- low self esteem
- shyness
- poor academic achievement
- isolation

Unchecked bullying also damages the bully who gets away with violence, aggression, threats, etc and learns that this behaviour gets them all they want.

### **It is NOT bullying when:**

- There is no intention to hurt or harm ie behaviour is thoughtless or accidental
- There is a one off argument/fight between pupils of equal stature or strength
- There is good reason why others cannot be included in a group activity
- A pupil is called a nickname with which they are happy.

**Bullying behaviour, verbal, physical or indirect, will not be tolerated.** It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Consequently, the governors have approved this policy.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

### **Strategies for dealing with bullying**

There is no one strategy that will prevent bullying behaviour. The more strategies the school has the more likely bullying behaviour will be reduced.

#### **Interview with the victim**

- When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened, s/he starts by talking to the victim about his/her feelings and may wish to write these down. The pupil should be questioned about the incidents and the pupils involved.

#### **Interview the 'bully/bullies'**

- The pupil(s) who have been involved in bullying are interviewed.
- They are encouraged to be honest about what has been happening and asked to explain why they think that the 'victim' is unhappy at school.

#### **Convene a meeting with the people involved**

The group of pupils who have been involved then meet after the following actions have taken place:

- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Headteacher
- Discussions with the bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at St Bernadette's School.

The meeting will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying.

#### **Explain the problem**

- The group are told about how the victim feels.

#### **Share responsibility**

- The teacher informs the group that they are responsible and can do something about it.

#### **Ask the group for their ideas**

- Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. If necessary the teacher may impose an appropriate sanction (see below).
- The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. S/he arranges to meet with them again the following day/week to see how things are going. It should be made clear to the victim, that if any other instances occur before then, s/he should report it immediately.

### **Meet with the group again**

- About a day/week later, the teacher meets with the group to discuss how things are going. The teacher may need to ask the victim on an individual basis how things are in the interim. This allows the teacher to monitor the situation and keeps the young people involved in the process.
- If necessary record in the Incident Book and Serious Incident Book available in the Secretary's room.

### **Sanctions**

- A. One-off "minor" incidents may only require a reprimand and an apology (verbal or written)
- B. More serious or persistent bullying will require action, e.g. a record in the **Incident Book** and/or **Racist Incident Register** (*situated in the Secretary's room*)  
an apology from bully/bullies to victim  
sanctions against bully/bullies (eg detained at playtime to do some work)

### **Serious or Persistent Bullying**

Inform the parents of bully/bullies and ask for their support.  
Provide support during school hours for victim, eg partner with a buddy, during the day and at playtimes.  
Encourage bully to change behaviour and monitor behaviour.  
If appropriate to encourage school watch i.e. monitors to shadow bully and/or victim & report to the key teacher on findings.  
Adult Mentoring by key teacher eg class teacher or headteacher  
Lessons/class discussions re: bullying eg Circle Time and/or talk to the children at Assembly - re: bullying.  
Meet victim's family to review and report on progress.  
Inform members of staff – vigilance!  
Keep a written record of incident, interviews and action taken.  
( ie in the school **Incident Book** or in the **Racist Book** in the Secretary's Room)).

Persistent bullying is regarded as very serious and if the situation recurs either with the same 'victim' or with others, then the school's Behaviour Management Policy will be implemented and parents informed.

### **Preventative Measures**

#### **The ethos of the school**

St Bernadette's is a Catholic Primary School and everything we do is within the framework of our Catholic faith. Our Christian mission is emphasised and encouraged in all aspects of school life, not just in Religious Education lessons and collective worship. Staff and children are committed to maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect for each other. We encourage children to develop as individuals and to enjoy all aspects of school life, to care for one another and be friendly.

#### **The curriculum approach to anti-bullying**

The school ethos is supported with planned curriculum opportunities to introduce the subject of bullying behaviour. Inclusion in the curriculum for each year group acts as a reminder to pupils about the expectations of the school and also provides opportunities for staff to support pupils through the teaching of personal and social skills and address any safety concerns pupils may have.

### **Other preventative strategies**

Training for teaching staff, support staff, welfare staff, governors, pupils and parents is acknowledged as an important preventative measure. A range of issues can be addressed both in-house and through LEA training.

### **Intervention Strategies**

**Circle time** is part of the planned PSHE curriculum. Teachers and pupils sit together in a circle once a week for discussion, games and enjoyable activities. This creates a safe place to explore issues and concerns. It encourages effective communication and improves self-esteem.

**Co-operative group work** takes place regularly in all classes. Pupils work together on shared tasks, co-operation and accountability, trust building. Pupils learn to work together, to manage conflict within a group and share common goals. A Rainbows group meets regularly to support vulnerable children.

**Circle of friends** builds relationships around a vulnerable pupil. Pupils are helped to make friends; this improves inclusion and acceptance in a group.

**Meetings with the welfare staff** provides them with the knowledge and skills to make lunchtimes happy for children. Welfare assistants train KS2 buddies annually in order to make the longest unstructured part of the day more structured.

### **Implementation of the Policy**

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the headteacher. Everyone involved with the school shares the policy and all are aware of their responsibility to report observed incidents of bullying. This includes parents and pupils. The policy and advice is available to parents and is shared with parents of children new to the school along with the school's behaviour management policy.

### **Monitoring the Anti-Bullying Policy Process**

This policy and procedures will be regularly monitored. At key points during the year pupils and staff will be reminded of the policy and procedures.

### **Evaluating the Policy**

Discussion with pupils and sometimes the use of a questionnaire will be carried out with pupils each year so that the school can monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy. The Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher will monitor the situation through regular discussions with staff, pupils and parents.

### **Evidence of success**

1. Staff more vigilant and responsive to bullying.
2. Children willing to report if they are bullied.
3. Incidence of bullying diminishing.
4. More children involved in prevention and support of others being bullied.

## Appendix

### Advice about dealing with alleged bullying

- **Attend** Listen to what is being said and try not to show shock or disbelief. Patience is needed, wait during silences and prompt gently
- **Accept** Keep an open mind. You never know whether what you are told is true or not
- **Allay** fears. Reassure the pupil that they were right to tell. However do not promise confidentiality
- **Annotate** Note what is said
- **Assuage** There may be guilt. Reassure the pupil that it was not their fault that they were being bullied; that they are not the only person to have suffered; if the bully gets into trouble it is their fault and nothing to do with the pupil who told.

### RESPONDING

- Try not to ask leading questions i.e. 'What did \_\_\_\_\_ do next?'
- Ask open questions like 'Anything else to tell me?'
- Use prompts like 'yes' and 'and'
- Try not to criticise in personal terms (naughty child) the behaviour is what needs the attention (**Bullying is not acceptable**).
- Reconciliation is what you are aiming at
- Explain your next steps
- Support and offer help either from a pupil or adult in the future
- Try to see the matter through yourself. Keep in contact with the pupil

### NOTING

- Make brief notes and write them up as soon as possible in the Incident Record Book.
- Record date, time, place, non-verbal behaviour, words used by the pupil
- Record statements, observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions. Parents may wish to see your notes.