

ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

St Edmund's Catholic Primary School recognises its foundation in the Catholic Church and aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils. The Catholic ethos is evident through the actions of all in the school community.

At St. Edmund's we believe that everyone in the school community has the right to be happy, safe and respected in a friendly, stimulating and accessible environment.

Aims

The School Community (pupils, staff, parents, governors) should work in co-operation towards building and maintaining an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

Pupils and adults should realise that bullying behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Pupils and adults need to be 'standing by' and not 'bystanders'.

Pupils and adults should feel willing to report bullying behaviour, confident that they will be listened to and action taken to remedy the situation.

Purpose

This policy is intended to:

- Raise the awareness of the school community about the school's stance towards bullying behaviour.
- Provide strategies for preventing and dealing with bullying promptly and consistently.
- Provide understanding and support for bullied pupils and for the bully.
- Help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

What is bullying?

Behaviour by an individual or group [usually] repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or groups either physically or emotionally."

(Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies DfE July 2017)

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

"The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face to-face or through cyberspace."

A child friendly 'definition' of bullying is any unkind action or comment that occurs towards one individual or group several times on purpose.

SEVERAL TIMES ON PURPOSE (S.T.O.P)

The main types of bullying are:

- **Physical** – pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching, any form of violence, threats
- **Verbal** – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- **Emotional** – tormenting, threatening, ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities
- **Online bullying** – inappropriate text messaging, emailing or blogging, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet or creating false personas to mock or humiliate others.

Pupils are bullied for a variety of reasons. Specific types of bullying include:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to SEN or disabilities
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers, looked after children, or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist or sexual bullying

There is no “hierarchy” of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods.

Identifying Bullying

The relationships we build with each child should lead them to feel confident to approach us with any concerns they may have.

Regular messages about bullying are given at assemblies and every teacher should remind pupils at the beginning of each new term about how we treat others. St Edmund’s school has ‘core values’ that pupils and staff know and abide by. These are Respect, Consideration, Care and Courtesy.

Children reporting any form of bullying must be listened to and EVERY case of bullying must be reported without delay to the Headteacher.

However children who are being bullied may not always be prepared to tell someone. It is important therefore that members of staff, parents and others who deal with the children are observant and alert for signs of bullying.

These might include:

- Unwillingness to come to school
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour
- Complaining about missing possessions
- Refusal to talk about the problem
- Being easily distressed
- Damaged or incomplete work

(Further guidance can be found on the DFE website)

Procedure

When a disclosure is made, it should always be treated seriously, with appropriate discretion and carefully investigated. The procedure for dealing with bullying is set out in Appendix A, together with a copy of the incident form (Appendix B).

When bullying is deemed to have taken place, the Headteacher will decide on the appropriate sanctions. The school supports all involved by:

- Supporting the person who has been bullied to express their feelings
- Supporting the person displaying the bullying behaviour to express their feelings
- Discussing which rule/s have been broken
- Discussing strategies for making amends
- Support for individuals from outside agencies e.g. Twinkle House, Elmtree Outreach Service

For most types of bullying, the children involved will be interviewed and appropriate measures/sanctions (depending upon first/second occurrence among other factors) put in place to help ensure there is no re-occurrence of the behaviour. For example

- Time away from an activity
- Meeting with staff, parent and child
- Missing off site activity
- Time out from the classroom
- Pastoral support plan
- Internal exclusion
- Fixed term exclusion

For persistent bullying consideration will be given by the Headteacher and Governing Body for permanent exclusion.

Preventing Bullying

- Members of the school community must be alert to signs of bullying and act firmly and promptly against it in line with the guidance appended to this policy
- The school will promote anti-bullying strategies through assemblies, RE, PSHE, circle time, Anti-bullying week and other appropriate lessons such as through drama
- Pupils should be encouraged to tell someone if they are being bullied or observe bullying. The school nurse visits the school regularly and is available for anyone to chat to if they wish. Parents should inform the school if they believe their child is being bullied.
- A safe environment is created in the playground by careful supervision, a 'Peer Mediator' system operates whereby children can talk to an older pupil in Year 5 or 6 if they have a problem and need help sorting it out.

Promoting an anti-bullying ethos in the school

Members of staff regularly use RE, PSHE lessons, assemblies or circle time to explore issues such as the causes of bullying, the effects of being bullied or being a bully, and how to stop bullying. Pupils will be given advice on what to do if they are being bullied or if they observe someone being bullied. The school endeavors to create an environment in which bullying is not able to develop e.g. trained peer mediators, a friendship bench and school council.

Online Bullying

Online bullying is any bullying behaviour that takes place 'virtually' via mobile devices like phones and tablets, through online social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and is also common on gaming sites.

Cyber bullying can happen in or outside school – whenever and wherever children have access to phones or the internet.

Students committing an act of cyber bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the Online safety, Anti Bullying and Behaviour Policies and Procedures and each individual will be dealt with according to the circumstances.

St Edmund's School will endeavour to promote, actively seek out and provide advice, strategies and guidance for staff, students and parents in understanding what constitutes Online bullying, where to seek help and what behaviour is expected.

The Role of the Governing Body

- The governing body supports the Head Teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly.
- The governors require the Head Teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors every term about the effectiveness of school's anti-bullying policy.
- If parent is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident, they should follow the school complaints procedure by initially contacting the class teacher.
- If the concern remains, they should contact the Head Teacher.
- If they are still concerned, they should write to the Chair of Governors.

The Role of the Headteacher

- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school Anti-bullying Policy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.
- The Headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
- The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including Lunchtime Welfare Assistants, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- The Headteacher leads the school in making our vision a reality, where all members of the learning community treat each other with consideration, care and courtesy.

The Role of all Staff

- All forms of bullying are taken seriously, and proactive measures are taken to prevent it from taking place.
- All adults to deal with situations quickly to prevent situations escalating.
- All adults to follow up what they have said e.g. keeping an eye, follow up discussion etc.
- Teachers are responsible for recording of all incidents of bullying behaviour that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If a child is being bullied or is bullying others, the class teacher will inform the child's parents and the Headteacher.
- There is an anti-bullying proforma in which staff record all incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class. Adults who witness an act of bullying should record it in the log. This will be kept in the Headteacher's office.
- When any bullying taking place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately, in accordance with St. Edmund's procedure, including counselling and support for both the victim and perpetrator of the bullying.
- All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.
- A range of methods are used to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all.

The Role of Parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in your children – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or not complete work to their usual standard.
- Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- If a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child or their parents on the playground or involve an older child to deal with the bully. Please inform school immediately and we will deal with it following the school procedures.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.
- Remember incidents are confidential, do not discuss them with other parents on the playground. Always speak to school staff if you have concerns.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

If a parent is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident, they should follow the school complaints procedure by initially contacting the class teacher. If the concern remains, they should contact the Head Teacher. If they are still concerned, they should write to the Chair of the Governing Body.

The Role of Children

What Can Children Do If They Are Being Bullied?

When incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce the following strategies:

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong. Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset or scared. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be strong inside – say, "No!". Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- If you are getting emails, texts or messages that make you feel uncomfortable please save them and show them to an adult. Do not respond to them.
- Fighting back may make things worse – don't do it.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.

START TELLING OTHER PEOPLE (S.T.O.P)

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

What do you do if You Know Someone Is Being Bullied?

- Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own. Don't be a bystander.
- Tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not take direct action yourself.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Head Teacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying logbook, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups.

This policy was agreed by the Governors in February 2018 and will be reviewed in Spring term 2019, or earlier if necessary.