

St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre

Bullying Policy



2014

Introduction

The governors and staff of St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre fully recognise the contribution explicit anti-bullying work makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

This policy is written for adults and should be read in conjunction with our equality, anti-bullying, PSHE, Child Protection, Acceptable User for IT and teaching and learning policy.

Values and ethos

All staff and governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

All governors and staff agree that bullying will not be tolerated in any form and is defined as the;

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.

Aims of the policy

- To promote a climate of trust and openness that allows a child, parent or member of staff to have the confidence to report any incidents of bullying.
- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard bullied children, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of this form of abuse in line with Local and National procedures and guidance.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm from bullying.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be bullies and support a change in their beliefs and thoughts.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.

- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected bullying abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Social Services.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability, and make them aware that bullying has no place in or out of school.

Policy into procedure

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Children Services Authority (CSA) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. We will ensure that:

- We have designated members of staff for Child Protection who undertake regular training, where bullying is identified as abuse in its own right. The named persons are **Mrs Kate Clark, Miss Tracey Cartwright, Mrs Rebecca Wilson and Miss Vicky Talbott**
- All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of bullying and its direct abuse.
- All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses bullying.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures.
- Our procedures are regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- All new members of staff are given a copy of our anti bullying policy as part of their induction into the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Persons are responsible for:

- Adhering to the LSCB, CSA and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible bullying abuse.

- Keeping written records of bullying and concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral for action.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to Children's Social Services.

Supporting Children who are being bullied

- We recognise that a child who has intermittent or persistent abuse by bullying may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self blame.
- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. Contrary to that, we recognise that this stability could be compromised if bullying is not taken seriously. This will be addressed as soon as it is known or signs of it prevalent.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our school will support all pupils by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school and promoting respect between others in and out of school.
- Delivering explicit and implicit anti bullying messages across the curriculum and throughout the school day.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children; including, wherever possible, the school in thematic Local and National anti bullying campaigns.
- Notifying Children's Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.

- Providing continuing support to a pupil about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the school, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school.
- Offer Peer Support through Team Safeguarding Voice.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to bullying and general Child Protection are confidential. The Designated Person will disclose any bullying information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share bullying information with other agencies in order to safeguard children**. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets, but a child's concerns must be sensitively handled in the case of those perpetrators of the bullying, where cessation is the key outcome and re assurance for the victim paramount.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm from bullying, or appears to be likely to suffer harm from bullying may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support as appropriate.

Bullying of Staff

- Bullying of staff by other staff, pupils or parents will not be tolerated.
- Staff should report any such incidents to the Headteacher immediately. If the allegation is against the Headteacher, this should be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors.

Allegations of bullying against staff

- We understand that a pupil may make an allegation of bullying against a member of staff. This will be treated like any other form of abuse.
- If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Principal Officer Child Protection for Schools & Early Years, or in their absence the Safeguarding Advisory Service.
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the Designated Person will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the Principal Officer for Schools & Early Years.

- The school has adopted policies for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school.
- If such an allegation is made, the member of staff subject to the allegation will be assigned a designated HR contact to support them through the process.
- Soon after the allegation is made, a decision will be taken as to whether a Joint strategy Meeting needs to be convened to discuss the matter further.
- If it is decided at that meeting that an investigation should commence, this may be initially led by the Police and Social Services, prior to it being referred back to the Local Authority to investigate under agreed disciplinary procedures.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Racist Incidents relating to race, religion or culture

Racist bullying does not only affect young people with different coloured skin. Anyone who is perceived as having a different race, religion or belonging to a different culture can become a target of racist bullying. Like any other form of bullying, racist bullying can be distressing for a child and can affect their confidence and well-being. An important aspect of our role is making sure every child - regardless of their race, religion or culture – has someone to turn to if they are being bullied and that they feel included and valued – at home and at school. This will not be tolerated and parents will be informed immediately, making it clear that the incident will be reported to the LA and should the matter persist, the child could be excluded from school.

Homophobic Bullying

Homophobic bullying does not only affect lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) young people. Anyone who is perceived as different can become a target of homophobic bullying. Like any other form of bullying, homophobic bullying can be distressing for a child and can affect their confidence and well-being. An important aspect of our role is making sure every child - regardless of their sexual orientation – has someone to turn to if they are being bullied and that they feel included and valued – at home and at school. This will not be tolerated and parents will be informed immediately, making it clear that should the matter persist, the child could be excluded from school.

Special Educational Needs Bullying as a result of an adult or child having any form of SEN will not be tolerated. This may take the form of abuse toward another adult or child as a result of sensory, physical, cognitive or social, emotional and behavioural needs. This will not be tolerated and parents will be informed immediately, making it clear that should the matter persist, the child could be excluded from school.

Vulnerable Pupils

Vulnerable pupils within the school setting may become the target of bullying. It may relate to how they are dressed, whether or not they live with both parents, have agency involvement or may be in care. This will not be tolerated and parents will be informed immediately, making it clear that should the matter persist, the child could be excluded from school.

Cyberbullying

We recognise that bullying increasingly takes place in “cyber” environments, such as on the Internet and through the use of mobile phones. In whatever form, we will take action to prevent phones and computers that have been used for this purpose being allowed on the school premises and parents will be informed of that ruling. As such these incidents will be treated as a Child Protection issue.

Upon any incident where “cyber” bullying has taken place in or out of school and made known to us, we will take matters seriously and action will be taken to reduce any further incidents. This will done with The Designated Person for Child Protection and the Headteacher, and if appropriate, outside agencies.

We recognise and will act in accordance with guidelines set down by the DCFS on cyberbullying as specified on www.dcfs.gov.uk/bullying.

Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

Physical Intervention

- We have adopted a policy on Physical Intervention and understand that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- We recognise that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.
- This policy is in line has been adopted in line with the local authority Policy on Physical Intervention.

The curriculum and Anti-bullying related activities and events

As a school we will ensure that we:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk about bullying and are always listened to, whether they are the victim or the perpetrator.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in or out of the school setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty in regards to bullying as a specific issue. Access Helpline numbers will be displayed and encouraged.
- Include in the curriculum on a weekly basis, PSHE, which equips children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.
- Explicitly teach about similarity and difference, challenging stereotypical views of all pupils and adults, including parents.
- Teach discretely about racism, homophobia, sexism, domestic and other forms of abuse, so that pupils understand that these are forms of bullying.
- Ensure that if there are any incidents of bullying in particular classes or year groups that these are dealt with swiftly, involving the perpetrator and victim and their parents.
- Work with Theatre Groups and other professionals working within the Child Protection arena to equip young people to stay safe.