

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Introduction

This policy is in agreement with the governing body of our school.

The subject is led by the Personal, social, health and moral education (PSHME) subject leader.

## Statement of Intent

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at St Bernadette School. If bullying does occur, all pupils know who to tell and that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that *anyone who* knows that bullying is happening is expected to let someone know so that the bullying will stop.

At St Bernadette we are vigilant for signs of bullying and respond promptly and effectively. We believe that prevention is crucial, so we will use the curriculum wherever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying type of behaviour.

The school makes every effort to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and conflict.

At St Bernadette we believe that no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

## Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHME [Personal, Social, Health and Moral Education] lessons, circle time etc) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

## **Definition of Bullying**

The Anti-Bullying Alliance and the DFE define 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 short-term or continuous over a long period.

***Bullying can take the form of:***

- Physical - threats and physical violence, pushing, spitting or any other form of violence, taking or hiding someone's things, damage to property
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, teasing, ridicule, threats, making rude remarks, making fun of someone
- Racist- taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Emotional - deliberately leaving pupils out of social activities spreading rumours
- Homophobic - because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Online/cyber - upsetting telephone, mobile phone, text messages or email messages, misuse of associated technology, i.e camera and video facilities.
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs

***To a child bullying is:***

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated
- Difficult to counteract by the victim
- Different from random acts
- Characterised by an 'imbalance of power' eg. A more powerful person or person intentionally hurting a less powerful person or persons.

## **Bullies and Victims**

A child who 'bullies' is not regarded as a 'bad' person, but the behaviours they exhibit are not acceptable.

***A bully is usually a person who:***

- Is uncaring and lacking in empathy
- Often aggressive, easily resorting to violence
- Is poor in communication and co-operative skills
- Is insecure, possibly due to problems at home or at school
- Feel a need to gain control or power
- Will lie and be deceitful
- Need to impress and gain attention
- Have a poor sense of responsibility
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***A victim is usually a person who:***

- Is timid and non-assertive
- Is introverted and shy

- Have low self-esteem
- Physically weak
- Is different in some obvious respect (SEN, colour, wears glasses, is overweight etc.)
- Has difficulty dealing with conflict at any level

### **Reasons why children bully:**

A child may display 'bullying' behaviour if:

- They feel that they don't fit in
- They need to be seen as tough
- They think that it is okay to hurt others
- Repeat behaviour shown to them out of school,
- Not liking themselves or jealous of another person
- Low self-esteem
- Are being bullied themselves

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

A child may indicate, by different signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and investigate further if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school doesn't want to go on the school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to under perform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

### **Procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of bullying**

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations. Incidents of bullying will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have

the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

As a parent of a child whom you suspect is being bullied:

- Report all bullying allegations and incidents to class teacher or other staff members
- The incidents will be recorded by staff and the headteacher notified.
- In all cases parents would be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

Do not:

- Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be the bully or by speaking to their parents.
- Encourage your child to respond by becoming a bully.

**Outcomes**

- All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by the class teacher or by a senior member of staff.
- Parents of the victim may also be questioned about the incident or about their general concerns..
- In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bullying. In most cases the school counsellor will be consulted.
- In serious cases, temporary or permanent exclusion will be considered.
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- If necessary and appropriate, the Child Protection Officer in school, Social Services or police will be consulted.

**Skills /knowledge/understanding**

Children will be taught procedures to deal with bullying:

- Tell a friend
- Tell your School Council rep
- Tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust
- Talk to the Peer Mediators
- Talk to a school counsellor
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your Circle Time
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given

**Inclusion/SEN**

All pupils will take full part in the Anti-Bullying programme, subject to differentiation according to their individual needs and in accordance with the SEN policy. Differentiation of task is the responsibility of the class teacher and will reflect the needs of the class.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Standards Committee

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Review date: November 2017