

St John's C of E V A Primary School Lemsford



Anti-Bullying Policy

January 2016 (to be reviewed 2019)



Statement

However it manifests itself, bullying will not be tolerated at St John's C of E Primary School Lemsford.

Bullying is rare in this school and this was endorsed by Ofsted in June 2014, 'Inappropriate behaviour is very rare'. However, we do have incidents of hurtful behaviour, particularly when children make mistakes in relationships. It is the ethos of St John's School to give our pupils the resilience, the skills and strategies to manage incidents of hurtful behaviour and to build positive relationships with each other. At all times, we believe that, when a child demonstrates unacceptable behaviour, it is the behaviour which is unacceptable and **not** the child.

Our children feel that pupils at St John's School should be happy to come into school each day and feel safe at all times. They agreed that to create such an environment, all children should:

- act in a kind manner towards each other
- understand and appreciate each other's differences
- welcome and be welcoming to each other when playing games, participating in clubs and in class
- think carefully before we speak or act
- look after each other on the playground and around school
- know that they can speak to a trusted adult if they are uncomfortable or feel unsafe
- take responsibility for silly or unkind behaviour, making sure we make amends

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

Definition

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated regularly over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Non-verbal communication – unkind looks and expressions, hand gestures
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic – because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling – sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber – all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities
- Prejudice – based bullying related to special education need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, social deprivation, gender reassignment or disability.

Aims and Objectives

This policy is designed to ensure that, as a school, we are alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it.

We aim:

- To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through giving our pupils the strategies and skills to cope through effective teaching.
- To show commitment to overcoming bullying by practising zero tolerance.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff, governors and parents are aware of the school's opposition to bullying and that each person is clear of their responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying.
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment.
- To make staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve the above aims.
- To have a consistent approach for dealing with any incidents of bullying that may occur.
- To ensure that all bullying incidents are resolved satisfactorily within the shortest time frame possible.

Role and Responsibilities

Whole School and Individual Staff Responsibilities

Suspected bullying should never be ignored and all forms of bullying should be taken seriously with intervention to prevent incidents from taking place.

Staff will:-

- Foster opportunities for children to learn to care for one another, living out the school's core Christian values.
- Never make premature assumptions.
- Listen carefully to all accounts and investigate as fully as possible.
- Adopt a problem-solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves.
- Talk to the child about any incident and reassure them that telling was the right thing to do.
- Complete the school pro-forma for recording bullying incidents and always report to the Headteacher.
- Follow-up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed.
- Use a range of teaching and learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying.
- Use interventions which are least intrusive and most effective.
- Act as a role model for children in their relationships with adults and children.
- Do all they can to support the child who is being bullied, ensuring that they find time to allow children to talk about any concerns.
- Ensure that children are well supervised at all times.
- Create a classroom climate of trust and respect for all by praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children.
- Ensure that opportunities to develop skills and strategies to cope with unacceptable bullying type behaviour are given to our pupils through PSHE, values materials, anti-bullying assemblies and workshops.

The Headteacher will:

- Establish opportunities for children to learn to care for one another within the framework of a Christian community.
- Implement the anti-bullying strategy and ensure that all staff (teaching and support) are aware of this policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.
- Maintain a record of bullying incidents and report to the governing body in termly reports about the effectiveness of this policy.
- Ensure that every child knows bullying is wrong and that it is totally unacceptable behaviour. This may be done as a planned exercise or when opportunity arises, through assemblies, in PSHE lessons or during anti-bullying week.
- Set a school climate of mutual support and praise for success, thereby making bullying less likely.
- Inform parents if their child has been involved in bullying, whether as a victim or perpetrator and work with parents to support the child.
- Ensure all staff receive regular training on how to identify bullying and appropriate intervention techniques.
- Ensure the curriculum offers regular opportunities for children to understand the implications of bullying and the appropriate action to take.

Governors will:-

- Support the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school.
- Monitor incidents of bullying that occur and review the effectiveness of this policy.
- Require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying.

Parents

When parents raise a concern that their child is being bullied, it is essential that this concern is taken seriously and not dismissed without further enquiries being made.

The bullying incident form can be used as a focus of the discussion with a parent so that there is a clear record of the concern and of immediate action to be taken by school staff.

Parents of a bullied child will:

- Talk to the child about any incident and reassure them that telling was the right thing to do.
- Make a note of what the child says.
- Make clear to the child that, if any further incidents occur, they should tell a teacher or other member of staff straight away.
- Make an appointment to speak to the child's teacher and/or the Headteacher as soon as possible.

Parents who suspect bullying or whose child has been bullied will not take matters into their own hands.

If, after investigation, bullying is confirmed, parents of a child who has been bullying will:-

- Discuss the issue with the child's teacher and agree a course of appropriate actions or sanctions in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- Talk to the child and explain that bullying is wrong and hurts others.
- Regularly discuss with the child how things are going at school.
- Praise and encourage the child when they are being kind and considerate to others.

Pupils:-

Victims and witnesses of bullying should know that it is 'OK to tell'.

Pupils will do their best to:

- Tell an adult (e.g. parents, other relation, Headteacher, teacher, teaching assistant, midday supervisory assistant) or go with a friend to tell an adult if they are a victim of bullying.
- Try to resist being bullied by standing up for their own rights in an assertive but non-violent way.

- Never bully another child in the school.

Peer on peer abuse

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse. When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider:

- Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- Whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways and different gender issues can be prevalent. Severe harm may be caused to children by abusive and bullying behaviour of other children, which may be physical, sexual or emotional and can include gender based violence/ sexual assaults, sexting, teenage relationship abuse, peer-on-peer exploitation, serious youth violence, sexual bullying or harmful sexual behaviour.

Hertfordshire County Council recommends that education settings use The Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool by the Brook Advisory Service to help professionals; assess and respond appropriately to sexualised behaviour. The traffic light tool can be found at www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool.

Guidance on responding to and managing sexting incidents can be found at http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/reference/index.shtml#sex

Procedures and Recording of Bullying

Recording incidents is vital as it allows school staff to identify patterns of behaviour, as often what is perceived initially to be a trivial incident, may be part of a number of incidents which are serious for the individual child.

The following steps will be taken when dealing with any incident:

- All reported incidents will be investigated immediately by the members of staff who has been approached or witnessed the incident. If necessary and appropriate, a referral will be made to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- The child reporting the incident will be listened to and will be assured that they feel that their concerns are being taken seriously.
- When investigating the incident, the story will be listened to from both sides.
- Immediate support will be provided for the victim, with the aim of restoring self-esteem and self-confidence.

- The perpetrator will be talked to about his/her behaviour, making it clear that this kind of behaviour is unacceptable and the child will be helped to see how his/her behaviour must change in the future.
- The incident will be recorded in the Preventing Bullying Log, which is kept in the office.
- A check will be made to establish if there are any previous incidents involving the same child.

If necessary, a thorough investigation of the incident involving all parties will be undertaken and recorded in writing on the referral form.

After the investigation has taken place, a decision should be made as to whether a case of persistent bullying is taking place. If this is the case, the parents of the perpetrator will be invited to discuss the situation with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher where an appropriate course of actions or sanctions in line with the behaviour policy will be implemented.

Parents of the bullied child must be kept informed of the whole process and it is vital that they feel satisfied with the way the incident has been dealt with. If an allegation of bullying is made by a parent, full written details should be taken and referred to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher who will then complete the Bullying Incident Form and investigate thoroughly.

Actions which may be taken

- Establish and carry out an appropriate punishment for the perpetrator(s), including an apology or letter of apology to the victim and, in extreme cases, a period of exclusion.
- Keep all relevant staff fully informed about the incident and about all subsequent action.
- Inform parents of the victim and bully.
- Expect all staff to 'keep an eye' on the bully and victim, especially at break and lunchtimes.
- Monitor the situation regularly, including talking to the victim, to ensure the bullying has stopped.
- Ask parents into school to discuss the situation if their child is repeatedly involved in unacceptable incidents.
- Contact external agencies for advice and support in more extreme cases where the above has proven ineffective.

Support

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Being offered an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff.
- Reassuring the pupil.

- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have been involved in bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change.
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

Within the curriculum, the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHE, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Incidents of bullying outside the school's premises

Our school will investigate any incident of bullying taking place outside school and involving our pupils.

We will:

- Encourage victims 'not to suffer in silence'.

We may:

- Talk to the local police about the problems within the Community.
- Talk to the Headteachers of the schools whose pupils are involved in bullying off the premises.

Bullying can also take place via text messages, MSN and other means of 'cyber communication'. This often happens out of school hours but has implications for the parties involved when they are in school. We would always talk to pupils and parents about these issues and take their concerns seriously.

Children are not allowed to use their own mobile phones in school.

Adult Bullying

From time to time, adults behave inappropriately towards each other. If any parent feels that they are being treated inappropriately within our school community, they must report this to the Headteacher immediately.

On occasions, when a parent suspects another child of inappropriate behaviour towards their own child, they try take matters into their own hands. This can result in:

- Parents approaching other parents in groups.

- Inappropriate verbal exchanges in front of pupils.
- A breakdown in communications.

If children are experiencing problems with other children, parents must not try to take matters into their own hands. Parents confronting other adults or children in the playground, is not acceptable and could be viewed as adult bullying. The school should be informed immediately of any concerns so that we may intervene to resolve the problem, to ensure our school community remains a happy, safe and enjoyable place where everyone wants to be.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of this policy will take place annually as part of the Safeguarding programme. This will include the Headteacher reviewing incident forms on a regular basis and identifying concerns. The Headteacher will report termly to governors and staff about the effectiveness of the policy.

The school's Bullying Incident Form is attached to this policy.