St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Objectives

At St Matthew's, we recognise that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.

By effectively preventing and tackling bullying our school can help to create a safe environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential. At St Matthew's we:

- Understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.
- Monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Support staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
- Recognise that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensure our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Require all members of our school community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Recognise the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- Deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying
- Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

Definition of Bullying

- Bullying can be defined as 'behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally'. DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying
- Bullying can include physical and emotional abuse such as name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, peer isolation (e.g. excluding people from groups) and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- The same unacceptable behaviours can be expressed online; this is sometimes called online bullying or cyberbullying. Specifically, this can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- St Matthew's Church of England Primary School recognises that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.
- Bullying is recognised as being a form of child on child abuse; children can abuse other children.
- Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/harassment

- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
- Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
- Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
- Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying

What is Cyberbullying?

Online bullying (often referred to as cyberbullying) is any form of bullying that is carried out through the use of electronic media devices, such as computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles.

How is online bullying different to 'traditional' bullying?

- The nature of online activity means you can be in contact at any time.
- There is the potential for a wider audience and bullying incidents can stay online, for example: a photo that you can't remove
- A lot of online bullying incidents allow those experiencing it to keep evidence - for example, take a screen shot - to show to school staff or police if needed.
- It is possible to hide your identity online which can make online bullying incidents very scary
- People who cyberbully often don't see the reaction of those experiencing it so it can sometimes be harder for them to see the impact of their actions

Possible signs of bullying

A child may indicate through their behaviour that they are being bullied. The child may:

- begin truanting or be unwilling to go to school
- feel ill on a regular basis
- begin to struggle academically
- become withdrawn, start stammering or lose confidence
- become distressed and anxious or stop eating
- have possessions that go missing
- begin stealing money or lose money (to pay the bully)
- refuse to say what is wrong (too frightened)
- begin to bully other children or siblings
- become aggressive and unreasonable
- give improbable excuses to explain any of the above

Persistent bullying can result in:

- Depression
- Low self esteem
- A child becoming withdrawn
- Poor academic achievement
- Isolation
- Threatened or attempted suicide

What do we do?

At St Matthew's we are proactive in dealing with bullying and have a zero-tolerance approach. However, we also acknowledge that the problem may not be completely eradicated and in order to prevent any such problem from escalating, we have put the following in place:

- Children are encouraged to talk about their concerns and are encouraged to use: **STOP**

- **STOP** is our strategy for dealing with bullying. **STOP**: Several Times On Purpose? **STOP**: Start Telling Other People
- Children are constantly reminded to tell an adult in school if they are being bullied
- All incidents are investigated and the child is believed.
- If staff cannot deal with it themselves, then they report the incident to a more senior member of staff
- If children feel that the issue is continuing, they are encouraged to go back to their class teacher or another adult within school.
- Parents are informed if their child is either the bully or the victim
- Staff model good relationships for the children
- All staff doing lunchtime, or playtime supervision are aware of areas of the school where bullying might take place, e.g. the toilet areas etc.
- If children seem withdrawn or unhappy then staff must try to find out why.

Responding to Bullying Concerns

The following steps will be taken when dealing with any incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying concerns, especially where there may be safeguarding issues.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher or another appropriate member of the leadership team will interview all parties involved.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentially policies.
- Appropriate sanctions and support, for example as identified within the school behaviour policy will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed, or Early Help if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy. If required (and able to do so) the DSL will collaborate with DSLs at other settings.

Responding to Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied, and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:

  - looking at use of the school systems
  - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses
  - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:

- Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
- Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (We will access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully).
- Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.

- Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help or support they may need.
- Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:

  - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
  - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
  - helping those involved to consider and manage any private information they may have in the public domain.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- Giving them the opportunity to discuss strategies in the classroom particularly at the beginning of a new school year.
- Encouraging them to support each other and tell their teacher if they are worried about someone else being bullied.
- Encouraging them to talk to someone if they are experiencing any emotional problem that is worrying them or causing some anxiety.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to any further concerns.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Mental Health Services

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour policy. This may include:

  - official warnings
  - detentions/internal exclusions
  - removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns)
  - in extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term or permanent exclusions.

- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or Early Help

Racism

Racism will not be tolerated and where it occurs it is dealt with seriously. All serious incidents of racism, whether by children or parents, are reported to the Headteacher, logged and dealt with in line with the LA policy on reporting Racial Harassment.

The school's work on ensuring all staff are aware of the PREVENT strategy and our work to promote fundamental British Values, supports this policy and practice of zero tolerance of racism.

The school values the contributions made by the diverse ethnic groups and by all the religious and cultural influences, which we share within our local, national and international communities**.**

Preventing Bullying

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children
- Recognise the potential for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to be disproportionally impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
- Recognise that bullying may be affected and influenced by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
- Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Support for Staff

- Ensure all staff are able to identify all forms of bullying and are confident to take appropriate action
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, the school/student council, etc.
- Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building self-esteem.

Involvement of Pupils

We will:

- Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
- Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.

- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil led education and support
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

Involvement and Liaison with Parents and Carers

We will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers in develop policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Provide a range of approaches for parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
- Make sure that key information about prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

Monitoring and Review: Putting Policy into Practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably
- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: https://reportharmfulcontent.com/
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/at-risk-groups/sen-disability

Race, Religion and Nationality

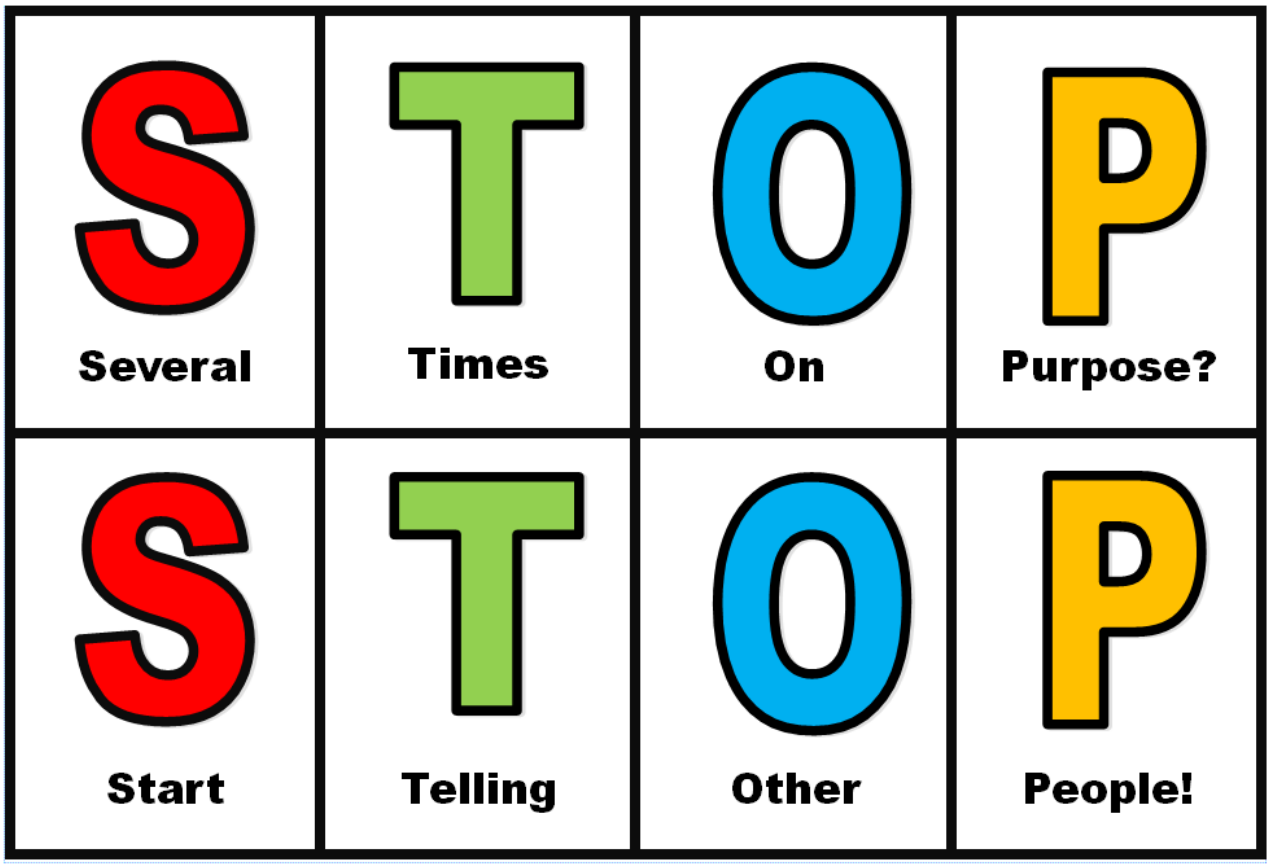
- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBTQ+

- Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying

• NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk
• Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
• Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
• Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying
• Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying/investigating-and-responding-sexual

Our Approach

At St Matthew's, bullying is when someone hurts or is unkind to the same person several times and on purpose. If this happens it needs to stop and the person being bullied needs to start telling other people.