



St Thomas More RC Primary
Anti- Bullying Policy
January 2022

Mission Statement

As Servants of God, we follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Through His love, we guide each member of our family on their own spiritual and learning journey to achieve and grow.

We Love, We Learn, We Live with Christ.

Statement of Intent

St Thomas More RC Primary School provides 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 experience it offers to all of its pupils.

The DfE assumes that bullying takes place and expects schools to tackle it. In line with the Mission Statement, St Thomas More RC Primary School accepts this responsibility and sees itself as a caring school where teachers listen to children's and parent's concerns and children have the confidence in their teachers to tell them if they feel they are being bullied.

Our school's anti bullying policy is designed to support the way in which all members of our school can live and work together in a supportive way. It therefore aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure. Our policy is designed to promote good behaviour, rather than merely deter inappropriate behaviour. We aim to promote good relationships so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn.

We believe that:

- Everyone has the right to enjoy and achieve in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- Bullying, including cyber bullying, is undesirable and unacceptable.
- Bullying, including cyber bullying, is a problem to which solutions can be found.
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness.
- Children and young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.
- Children and young people should be involved in decision-making about matters that concern them.
- We tackle bullying, including cyber bullying, best by encouraging an environment where individuality is celebrated and individuals can develop without fear.
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse.

All aspects of bullying are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Aims and Objectives

Aims

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a Christian, caring community, with Gospel values of mutual trust and respect for all. We want our pupils to:

- Grow spiritually
- Grow socially
- Grow personally
- Grow academically

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We aim to:

- Create an ethos in school which ensures that St Thomas More RC Primary School is a positive experience for all members of our community.
- Make it clear that all forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, are unacceptable at St Thomas More RC Primary School.
- Enable everyone to feel safe while at St Thomas More RC Primary School and encourage pupils/children/young people to report incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying.

- Deal with each incident of bullying, including cyber bullying, as effectively as possible, taking into consideration the needs of all parties and of our community, and, as a result, to reduce the incidents of bullying.
- Support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to.
- Help and support children/young people displaying bullying behaviour to change their attitudes and understand why it needs to change.
- Liaise with parents and other appropriate members of our community.
- Ensure all members of our community feel responsible for helping to reduce bullying.

Objectives

As a result of our aims we as a school community have agreed on the following objectives:

- To maintain and develop effective listening systems for children, young people and staff within St Thomas More RC Primary School.
- To ensure all staff deal with incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, effectively and promptly.
- To equip all staff with the skills and information necessary to deal with incidents of bullying.
- To involve the wider school/setting community (e.g. midday supervisors, part-time staff/volunteers, partners) in dealing effectively with, and if necessary referring, bullying, including cyber bullying, incidents.
- To communicate with parents and the wider school/setting community effectively on the subject of bullying.
- To acknowledge the key role of every staff member in dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To ensure that all incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, are recorded and appropriate use is made of the information, where appropriate sharing it with relevant organisations.
- To promote emotional health and wellbeing across the whole school/setting and for all members of our community to role-model this in all situations.

What is bullying?

Bullying, including cyber bullying, is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying, including cyber bullying, is an abuse of power – that is, a more powerful person or group will be intentionally causing harm, physically, emotionally or psychologically, to a less powerful person or group. It is generally agreed that a single incident of verbal or physical aggression is not necessarily considered to be bullying– there needs to be evidence of persistent victimisation over a period of time. Similarly, it is not bullying when two children / young people of approximately the same age and strength have the occasional fight or quarrel.

Examples of bullying include:

- Physical (such as violent acts or non-consensual touching),
- Verbal (such as name calling),
- Non-verbal (such as glaring at someone),
- Sexual (such as making homophobic/lewd comments or non-consensual sexual touching),
- Social (such as excluding someone from social groups),
- Technological (such as cyber bullying or sending hateful text messages or emails).

All bullying is aggression, physical, verbal or psychological but not all aggression is necessarily bullying. All children fall out, argue and fight but this is not always bullying. It is important to know the difference.

Bullying, including cyber bullying, can be motivated by many reasons and can be targeted at a variety of aspects of a person's character. We can be bullied because of:

- Our appearance
- Our lack of confidence
- Our family situation
- Our disability
- Our ability
- Our size
- Our gender
- Our religion
- Our sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation
- Our economic status

- Our racial group
- Where we come from
- Our special needs

If an individual considers him or herself to have been bullied, this may have a negative impact on emotional wellbeing, which can perpetuate the fear of a further perceived or real incident. Any reported incident must be taken seriously.

Practice and procedures

Everyone involved in the life of St Thomas More RC Primary School takes responsibility for promoting our anti-bullying approach.

To prevent bullying we will:

- Be supportive of each other.
- Convey a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour.
- Be fully involved in the development of the anti-bullying policy and support anti-bullying practice.
- Support each other in the implementation of this policy.
- Provide children with a framework of behaviour including rules which support the whole school policy.
- Provide staff training and induction relating to bullying and promoting positive relationships.
- Behave in a respectful and caring manner to children and colleagues, to set a good example and help create a positive atmosphere.
- Raise awareness of bullying through the curriculum including activities, stories, role-play, discussion, peer support, school council website pages for children and parents etc.
- Record and investigate allegations of bullying using agreed school procedures (CPOMs).
- Address incidents of bullying using agreed school procedures (CPOMs and appropriate sanctions from the Behaviour Policy).
- CPD on relevant training i.e. Anti-Bullying, Radicalisation and Extremism, Anti-cyber bullying (see separate policies.)

All members of the school community are expected to report incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will:

- Monitor the implementation of the policy.
- Monitor reported incidents of bullying and the responses to these.
- Report to the governing body on the implementation of the policy.
- Liaise with parents / carers to promote the welfare of children who have been bullied.
- Liaise with parents and carers of children who bully others in order to work together to address the child's bullying behaviour.
- Use the prevent strategy to educate staff in the dangers of Radicalisation and Extremism

Through the development and implementation of this policy, St Thomas More RC Primary School trusts that all children, young people, parents/carers and staff will:

- Feel confident that everything is being done to make St Thomas More RC Primary School a safe and secure environment.
- Know who can be contacted if they have any concerns about bullying, including cyber bullying.
- Feel supported in reporting incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- Be reassured that action regarding bullying, including cyber bullying, will take place.

Dealing with an incident:

Whenever a bullying incident is discovered, the school will go through a number of steps. The exact nature of each step will be adapted to suit the nature and severity of the incident, and the response of those involved.

Measures will be in line with the school's anti bullying policy and behaviour policy, and may include:

- Investigating the incident by talking to the children involved.
- Explanation of why the inappropriate behaviour is unacceptable.
- Reparation of damaged relationships.
- Missing a break time (following our Behaviour Policy)

- Informing parents of what has happened and how it has been dealt with.
- Meetings with staff/parents and child.

Safeguarding procedures will be followed if child protection concerns arise.

Recording

Staff will take into account the definition of bullying when deciding whether an incident of name calling or fighting between children should be regarded as bullying, i.e. usually bullying is persistent or over time. All incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who is first aware of the incident. Any allegations of bullying brought to school's attention by parents or children are recorded on CPOMs whilst being investigated. Even if no bullying is found to have taken place, a record is kept of the initial concern and the follow up which took place.

A senior member of staff will take responsibility for ensuring that any alleged incident of bullying is properly recorded and that parents of all children involved will be informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with, in line with the school's behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy.

Safeguarding procedures will be followed when child protection concerns arise
EHASH team and Channel will be contacted if Safeguarding issue or Radicalisation or Extremist bullying is evident.

What action should a teacher take if an incident considered as 'bullying' is reported to them?

1. Be calm, listen and take what is said seriously.
2. Investigate the incident fully to find out exactly what happened and whether the incident is bullying.
 - a) Ask victim about the events.
 - b) Ask the bully for their account.
 - c) Where there is disagreement ask for independent witness.
3. If it is or you have doubts discuss the incident with a member of SLT or Headteacher.
4. Reassure the victim that every effort will be made to stop the bullying.
5. Record the incident on CPOMs and record the outcome.
6. Observe victim/bully over a period of time.

What can parents do?

Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's Anti Bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

If your child is the victim:

- Give plenty of reassurance that they are not at fault.
- Remind them to tell you or their teacher if there are any future problems.
- Give plenty of praise for the things they do well.
- Give him/her guidance on how to be assertive (not aggressive)
- Work with the school.

If your child is the bully:

- Try to find out why your child has been bullying.
- Discuss how to put right any damage done.
- Reassure them and praise good behaviour.
- Show them how to play and join in with others.
- Work with the school to help modify behaviour.

Strategies for dealing with Bullying

- Watching for signs of distress or untypical behaviour (one offs or a pattern.)
- Listening to all incidents and reporting them to a senior member of staff, report on CPOMs
- Ensuring children have our trust and are safe in the knowledge they will be listened to.
- Encouraging children to be confident to talk and providing pastoral opportunities for this such as:
 - One to one opportunities
 - Listening on request or if approached by a child
 - House meetings
 - Circle time etc.
- Discussing bullying issues in role play and PSHE curriculum.

- Ensuring strategies are in place for restoring and supporting a victim's self-esteem and countering feelings of guilt, inferiority etc.
- Avoiding "Bullying the bully", rather helping the bully to explore his/her behaviour and the consequences of it
- Monitoring all areas of the premises where children are or have access and maximising supervision at all times.
- Enforcement of the school Discipline policy.
- Use of the school's reward systems.
- Make use of social peers – buddy systems for the victim or potential victim, and also peer groups to discourage the bully.
- Parental involvement at an early opportunity.
- Liaison with external support and agencies.

How can we help the victim of bullying?

1. Provide lots of reassurance and tell them that the bullying is not their fault.
2. Tell them you will make every effort to stop the bullying.
3. Help them build up self-esteem and confidence and feel better about themselves.
4. Ensure they have someone they can confide in (their choice) and how to gain access to them.
5. Ensure the bullying stops and the child feels happy and safe in school.

How can we help the bully?

1. Keep parents informed
2. Monitor the child to prevent re-occurrence.
3. Ensure that they recognise what they have done is wrong and take responsibility for any damage they have caused.
4. Explain what sanctions are going to be imposed and the reasons why.
5. Try and find the reasons why they behaved as they did and find strategies to change the behaviour.
6. Inform parents and work together to improve/change the bully's behaviour.

Some important definite Do's

Do promote the Gospel message of love, tolerance, support, forgiveness, care etc.

Encourage humour and smiling across the school.

Ensure there are school wide activities to promote self-esteem, and feelings of wellbeing.

Help bullies to understand their actions and the consequences of them.

Be aware of risks and opportunities in the school environment e.g. the toilets at playtimes etc. Reward good behaviour.

Ensure regular training for staff, on spotting the signs of bullying and how to respond to it.

Support initiatives such as: 'Anti bullying week', 'Beat Bullying' campaigns etc.

Involve all pupils so they understand approaches and the part they play in preventing bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.

Wellbeing

Our school does not tolerate bullying. Our SLT and Governors strive to support the emotional health and wellbeing of the staff and children in our school and so we believe that all bullying incidents must be investigated including any incident involving staff, a child and/ or parent.

Concerns and Complaints

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we would ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure with the Governing Body.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked with the following policies: Behaviour; Child Protection and Safeguarding;

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to Governors termly. Governors review its effectiveness annually. Governors monitor the data from the monitoring and recording of incidents. They do this by examining the CPOMS audit, reports at Governing Body meetings and by discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

This policy will be monitored, evaluated, reviewed and updated every 2 years.