St Vincent De Paul Catholic Primary School, Knutsford

Part of Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Academy Trust

Mission Statement:

'Believe, Trust and Be Ready

"That they may have life, and to the full" John 10:10



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy Date: October 2026 Review Date: October 2027

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Vision

The Gospel teachings are at the centre of all that happens in our School Community - this is what truly sets us apart as a Catholic School. Our school exists to educate our children through the teachings of Christ. We continually strive to develop the full potential of all the children in our care; always remembering how precious each child is in the sight of God. Our School is special because it has Christ at the centre of it and because of the importance we place on the Eucharist - central to the Gospel teachings is, of course, the concept of forgiveness. We have high expectations of our children and ourselves, but we always remember that on the occasions when we, or they fail to live up to such expectations, that we can try again.

Our School aims to help all involved in it to reach their full potential and to establish even greater links with the Parish and community, enabling our children, as they reach maturity, to take a full and active role in it.

We Aim:

- To ensure that the whole school is inspired by Gospel values and the living tradition of the Catholic faith;
- To create a safe and nurturing environment, which is stimulating, provides love, security and a warm welcome for everyone;
- To develop and build upon the skills and concepts that the child brings to school;
- To extend knowledge and understanding, and inspire fulfillment and enjoyment of the whole curriculum;
- To provide a stable and relaxed environment where children are motivated to learn, can work co-operatively, develop a sensible independence and achieve their personal best;
- To help children to enjoy their particular stage of development and to prepare them for the next stage of their school education;
- To facilitate the training and development of all members of staff and governors, to enable them to make an increasingly valuable contribution to the school;
- To work in partnership with our families, the parish and the wider community;
- To promote and uphold the values of equal opportunities, to ensure that all members feel valued, have self-esteem and mutual respect for one another;
- To recognise that each child is a unique gift from God, and that it is our privilege and responsibility to support their life journey.
- To enable our children to become aware of the world that God has given them and to recognise their vocation and responsibilities within it.

General Philosophy:
St Vincent's Catholic Primary School is committed to creating an environment where exemplary behaviour is at the heart of productive learning. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same. It echoes our mission statement, vision and aims with a heavy emphasis on respectful behaviour, a partnership approach to managing poor conduct and dynamic interventions that support staff and learners. As a Catholic School we believe wholeheartedly in the development of the whole child and in teaching our children to recognise right and wrong and apply this to all areas of their lives. Ultimately, we want all our children to have a well-developed sense of self-discipline.

Our 5 Golden School Rules:

- Love, care and forgive each other
- Be polite and respectful to others
- Listen and learn
- Always try your best and be proud of everyone's achievements
- Move around school quietly

We define bullying as:
Bullying is the repeated hurting or intimidating of others, physically or emotionally.

What Is Bullying?
Bullying is the deliberate desire to inflict hurt, to threaten or to frighten someone. It is usually persistent, conscious and wilful and consists of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person(s).
A victim is an individual or group who suffers pain or distress as a direct result of intentional and persistent harassment. Victims commonly find it difficult to counteract bullying behaviour or to report their experiences.
Bullying can take different forms. It can be:

- Emotional - child on child abuse, adult on child abuse, being unfriendly, excluding (e.g. from activities or friendship groups), tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, child on child abuse;
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures. It may be perpetrated against individuals on the basis of their race, colour, disability, nationality, culture, language or religion;
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, up-skirting;
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation;
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- Cyber – the misuse of all areas of the internet, such as email, social media platforms and online gaming, and the misuse of personal messaging devices together with their associated technology (threats/unkindness by text messaging, misuse of camera or video technology).

Bullying is not:

- It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling or arguments. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose - **STOP**, (remember STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose)
- Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is NOT classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships. (See also Behaviour Policy)

Aims and objectives of the Anti-Bullying policy:

- Bullying is wrong and damages individuals. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. Everyone at our school is equal and treats each other with respect and kindness.
- We actively promote values of respect and equality and work to ensure that difference and diversity is celebrated across the whole school community.
- This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

Developing a whole school approach:

At St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School we work closely with members of the schools' community to ensure the involvement and participation of children , parents, staff, governors and the wider community on supporting a positive ethos within the school.

The role of Governors:

The governing body supports the Head Teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy. The governors require the Head Teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to them termly via the Head Teachers report.

The role of the Head Teacher:

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy via Head Teachers report to Governors.

The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Head Teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head Teacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong.

The Head Teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of the Teacher:
Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. These incidents are recorded on CPOMS. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Head Teacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.
If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, child on child abuse, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and support/intervention for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Head Teacher and the SENCo. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Head Teacher may contact external support agencies such as social services. All incidents should be reported on CPOMS by all staff members.
Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying. (also see our Behaviour Policy.)

The role of Parents:
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.

The role of Pupils:
Pupils discuss their role in supporting the School's Anti-bullying Policy through the School Council, class discussion and through pupil questionnaires. Pupils are encouraged to develop a positive self-image and respect for others and to behave online as though they were face to face. They should understand that they can talk to any adult in school who wears a green lanyard and that their concerns will be taken seriously.
We believe that:

- All bullying is unacceptable irrespective of how it happens and/or what excuses are given in an attempt to justify it.
- We must investigate all incidents of bullying and take action where necessary, supporting both the bully and the victim at all times.
- Children who bully must be held to account for their wrongdoing, but may need support to change their attitudes and behaviour.
- Accountability will be sought in all incidents of bullying, seeking identification of wrongdoing and supporting repairing of harm done through a solution based approach.
- All inappropriate language that perpetuates attitudes underpinning bullying behaviour must be challenged at all times.
- Everyone in our school has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to all instances of bullying.
- We must communicate with Parents/Carers regarding any concerns about bullying and deal promptly with complaints.
- All our children must feel safe and be confident that any reported incidents will be dealt with effectively by all responsible adults.

- It is important to focus upon preventing bullying behaviours in school.

Signs and Symptoms:

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school;
- changes their usual routine;
- is unwilling to go to school;
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;
- begins to underperform in school work;
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber- message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated. These behaviours need to be reported on CPOMs for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents:

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School. They 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:

1. Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
3. Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
4. Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
5. The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
6. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
7. Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
8. The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
9. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.

10. An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
11. Incidents will be recorded by staff on CPOMS.
12. Parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
13. After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
14. Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.
15. If necessary and appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school, Social Services or police will be consulted.

The following sanctions may be used:
The children in the School Council discuss this annually and some of the sanctions they suggested are included in the list below:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing;
- Lose privileges;
- Lose playtimes (stay with class teacher or do extra work);
- Spend playtimes/lunchtimes with an adult;
- Parents will be invited into school;
- Be removed from class and work in isolation;
- Report to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head or another member of staff;
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visit, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum;
- Fixed term suspension;
- Permanent exclusion.

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying:
Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. The School Council developed ideas about how positive behaviour can be promoted. These can include:

- Undertaking questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy;
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules;
- Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies;
- RSHE and RE scheme of work from Reception to Year 6 used to support this policy;
- Discussions on bullying issues;
- Children being read and discussing stories about bullying;
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situation;
- Confidential 'worry' boxes where children and can write and post their concerns and ideas;
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour;
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another;
- Intervention/nurture groups for children when needed.

Monitoring and review:
This policy is monitored regularly by the Head Teacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy termly via the Head Teacher report.

Reference Documents:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition

https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion