

Anti – Bullying Policy



**St. Thomas of Canterbury RC Primary School
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Reviewed in September 2022

Purpose:

Our aim is quite simply to establish an agreed and consistent approach to effectively tackling bullying.

This purpose should be seen within the wider Catholic ethos of the school, where each and every child is valued as unique and possessing an innate dignity. Our faith places a particular duty on us to care for and protect the most vulnerable within our Catholic Christian school community

Defintion:

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident, which casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

The school recognises that some of the range of bullying behaviours outlined in the above paragraph can be carried out remotely, via for example, threatening text messaging and/or via social media accessed through the internet such as Facebook

At St. Thomas of Canterbury RC Primary School we work together to create a happy, caring, learning environment. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Consequently, the governors have a responsibility to read and approve (with amendments as may prove necessary) this policy.

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people.

**What signs should we as parents/staff look for if a child is being bullied?
These signs may include the following:**

1. The child may become shy and withdrawn and lacking in confidence.
2. The child may develop sudden outbursts of temper or start having nightmares.
3. The child arrives at home or in school with unexplained cuts or bruises or with clothes ripped or missing.
4. The child starts to truant or states that they do not want to go to school.
5. The child is frightened of walking to school or changes their normal routes.
6. The child's school work deteriorates.
7. The child becomes isolated and there is a desire to remain with adults.

Our aims are:

1. To establish a whole school policy.
2. To inform governors, parents, staff and especially children of this policy.
3. To emphasise prevention rather than have to deal with outcomes

4. To relate our policy to the personal and social education of the children.

What can we do?

- Re-emphasise the caring and co-operative ethos of the school in our own attitudes and through the curriculum.
- Re-emphasise the need for constant supervision and vigilance, especially in identified areas.
- Look for early signs of distress in a child.
- Listen carefully and sympathetically to the child and record all incidents.
- Deal effectively and promptly with parental concerns.
- Offer the victim immediate support by putting the school's procedures into operation.
- Identify bully/bullies and advise the headteacher.
- Discuss with the bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at St.Thomas of Canterbury Primary School.

Ensure the bully is dealt with fairly by:

- Describing the reasons for your meeting with them (at the same time, do protect the victim and the identity of any witnesses).
- Remaining calm and non-judgemental in order to ensure that the child feels that they are listened to.
- Assuring the child that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously and that, regardless of the reasons, you disapprove of all acts of bullying.
- Explaining how: they will be supported
The incident will be dealt with.
- If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts.
- Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim. We need to outline procedures for speaking to the bully, pointing out the distress caused to the victim, to help prevent repetition of the behaviour. The bully will be put on daily report as a way of monitoring the bully's future behaviour and ensuring liaison between home and school.
- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of playtimes, exclusion from school during lunchtimes, exclusion from school, depending on the severity of the incident(s).
- As the behaviour of the bully hopefully improves, then favoured activities etc. can be reinstated and the child should be praised for good behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at St. Thomas of Canterbury RC Primary School we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

1. All staff watch for signs of early distress.
2. All staff listen, believe, act.
3. Where a first instance is reported by a child the teacher deals with it. In the second instance the incident is reported to the headteacher and a record of the incident is completed and kept on file for future reference. Serious incidents of bullying may be referred directly to the headteacher and an incident report form filled in for a first occurrence.
4. The record of the incident should include relevant names, account of the incident, who dealt with it and what action was taken. Record whether it is an isolated incident.
5. If any parents report incidents of bullying or any complaint this should be reported to the headteacher immediately. It is important that the headteacher is informed, if deemed necessary by the teacher.

Children/Victims

When someone is being bullied, take action. Watching and doing nothing helps the bully:

All children will be encouraged to:

- Inform their teacher immediately and ask for help.
- Inform their parents immediately and ask for help
- ensuring that the child feels that they is listened to
- feel that all incidents of bullying are taken seriously
- feel that they will be supported and understand how the incident will be dealt with

The Teacher/School's Role

The victim should ideally also be supported by the member of staff they has confided in. The disclosure will usually have occurred as a result of the child identifying someone who cares or can help. You should respond to this trust and confidence.

- Victim and parents to speak to teacher and headteacher.
- Provide support and reassurance for victim and parents.
- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with the victim to ensure no repetition.
- Ensure protection, if necessary, for victim.

Attempt to help both the bully and the victim to:

- see the situation from another perspective
- explore the causes and effects of the incident
- identify how the situation could have been avoided or resolved
- see how they can resolve the present conflict
- meet, if appropriate, in the presence of the headteacher, to explain how they feel.
- to reflect on their behaviour and the factors which may have influenced the behaviour of others. When appropriate, encourage empathy.
- Encourage the children to identify how they can resolve current difficulties and avoid the problems from recurring.

Recording /logging incidents

- School will record all incidents of bullying. From September 2017 this will be recorded on a commercially bought in electronic recording system called CPOMs. This will ensure all Child Protection, behaviour, bullying, medical, attendance concerns and any other home issues can all be recorded in one comprehensive, chronological document. This information will be held securely and confidentially with access controlled by the schools' senior leadership team. Analysis of patterns of behaviour will be completed at least termly using this software.

Parents:

1. Look for early signs of distress in your child.
2. Inform the school immediately if you think your child is being bullied.
3. Discuss with school ways of helping your child so we can provide support both inside and outside school.

School:

1. The school will make its policy known to governors, staff, children and parents.
2. The school will continue to promote a caring and co-operative ethos through its curriculum.
3. The school will record all incidents of bullying and these will be kept on file by the Headteacher which will:
 - set clear and consistent procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying
 - monitor the progress of individual pupils
 - monitor and review it's Anti Bullying Policy
4. Specific plans for action will be drawn up to deal with those who continue to bully. This eventually could lead to exclusion from school.

5. Constantly encourage and promote good behavior and an anti- bullying message at all assemblies and during class discussion so children know explicitly where to go for help should it be needed.

Conclusion

We feel that St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School is a happy school and promotes a caring ethos built on respect for individuals. We wish to prevent bullying happening in this school. In producing this policy we are asking for the help of parents, children, staff and governors in maintaining the positive image we have within the local community.

REMEMBER PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE!

Reviewed September 2023