



St. Matthew's Little Lever

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Aims

- To develop a common understanding of what is meant by bullying
- To outline our whole school approach to bullying
- To define bullying behaviours including those specific to cyberbullying
- To outline the school's responsibilities in dealing with bullying
- To set out the guidance for School, Teachers, Parents and Children on how to deal with bullying
- To set out clearly the process for managing an allegation of bullying.
- To explain how the school will share the information in this policy with parents and children
- To give details of where further help and information can be found

Every member of staff and member of the Governing Board is committed to ensuring that all children feel safe in school and it is reflected in our Christian ethos. Tackling the issue of bullying forms a key part of this work.

Staff in school also work to help children develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe beyond the school gates, both now and in the future.

This policy has been written to provide information and guidance on how St. Matthew's School will prevent and tackle bullying.

The school has full regard for the following documents which provide advice and guidance for headteachers, staff and governing bodies in matters relating to bullying.

DfE: Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying March 2018

DfE: Preventing and tackling bullying updated July 2017

DfE : Searching , screening and confiscation

DfE (in association with Childnet International) Cyberbullying- A whole-school and community issue.

Gov.Uk Education for a Connected World

What can be defined as bullying behaviour ?

Bullying behaviour is almost always persistent. It can involve the use of power in order to control or hurt others. It can be an individual or a group of children who demonstrate these behaviours. It shows itself in different ways:

- Name calling, ridicule, humiliation
- Hate Crime , which may include behaviours outlined below
- Racist taunts, gestures
- Intimidation, teasing & tormenting
- Stealing or breaking someone's things.
- Pushing, hitting or other acts of physical aggression.
- Frightening someone into doing things they don't want to do.
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments of a sexual nature, including homophobic comments or actions.

Cyberbullying is the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature. With online technologies accessible 24 hours a day, cyberbullying can be relentless. It can also intrude on spaces that were previously personal, for example at home; it can feel that there is no escape from it. It is really important that parents and school work together to support children in this area.

Whilst Cyberbullying may happen outside of school, we will work with our families to tackle the issue just as we would with other instances of bullying.

On-line issues are constantly changing and emerging. Staff in school take time to develop their knowledge of new technologies, on line platforms and related issues.

Bullying or Falling Out ?

There are many occasions where children fall out and argue. Children are encouraged to solve problems, to make friends and work together. The school's pastoral support and curriculum both support the children in developing the skills they need to deal with these issues.

It is important for school and families to help children to recognise the difference between a falling out with a friend and bullying so that bullying can be dealt with properly. If the word bullying is used for all disagreements then it is harder for children to identify when bullying is taking place.

The Leadership team and staff are very aware that incidents of bullying can (& do) take place. These are usually quite complex incidents and require close and long-term pastoral input and support.

It is fair to say that all parents are concerned about the effect of bullying on their own children, however, they are less likely to envisage their child as the bully.

At St. Matthew's we provide help and support for both the victim and the bully.

What our children say about bullying

We regularly ask our children about bullying in school.

They tell us that there are relatively few instances of bullying in school, but when it does occur it is usually dealt with very well. Children also tell us that they feel safe in our school

Prevention of bullying.

- At St Matthew's we make it very clear that bullying is always unacceptable and that is always taken seriously. This is reinforced in whole school, class and group situations. It is given high priority by the Headteacher and all staff.
- We use our PSHE curriculum to provide a systematic framework in which to address bullying issues including Hate Crime.
- We make good use of national 'Anti-bullying' weeks.
- We keep anti-bullying messages high profile through displaying posters and regular discussions in class or worship.
- We teach the children specifically about being a good Digital Citizen and the effects of cyberbullying through the computing curriculum as part of an overall e-safety strand. We use 'Education for a Connected World' as a basis for our teaching.
- We provide information and training for our parents on understanding On-line Bullying.
- We make every effort to reinforce the important message 'if you feel you are being bullied you need to TELL someone', and we work to ensure all children have strategies to do so.
- We teach children that those who witness bullying should speak out. They have a part to play in prevention.
- We LISTEN and RESPOND to concerns.

What is the school's responsibility to deal with bullying – including cyberbullying that happens outside the school premises ?

The Department for Education say that : Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The head teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. It is within this remit that we will deal with cyberbullying incidents if they are brought to the attention of the school.

Giving advice and supporting those involved.

School will provide the following information for parents and children who may be involved in bullying – either as a victim or the bully.

Advice for a parent who thinks their child is being bullied.

- Reassure and talk to your child.
- Gather as much information as possible. Write down what the child has said. Keep it factual.
- Make an appointment and speak to someone in school as soon as possible. Explain briefly - try to stay calm.
- Agree a plan with the school and give the school time to investigate the allegation in full. This will be done immediately, but can take up to a day.
- Meet with the teacher or Headteacher to discuss the outcome and find out what measures have been taken and what further preventative measures will be put in place.
- In instances of Cyberbullying:
 - 1) Make sure that your child does not retaliate or return any messages
 - 2) Try to keep relevant evidence – it may help with the investigation
 - 3) Take steps to prevent re-occurrence. See the section below ‘finding more information.’

Experience tells us that making direct contact with the alleged bully or the family of the alleged bully rarely solves the problem. In fact it often makes matters more difficult.

Actions by the school if an incident of Bullying is seen or reported

- Take all incidents - or reports of incidents - seriously: act immediately.
- If incidents are initially reported to a class teacher or member of the support staff they will make a Senior Leader aware as soon as possible
- Senior Leader will:
 - investigate fully: listen to the victim, speak to the alleged bully, relevant staff and other children, if appropriate.
 - determine if the incident is to be dealt with as bullying.
 - Inform victim's parents of outcome of investigation
 - Work with parents and child to agree course of action whatever the outcome.
 - For incidents of bullying the Senior Leader will appoint a lead adult.

Role of the Lead Adult

The lead adult will be an adult best placed to observe and support the victim and maintain contact with parents.

- Reassure the victim that every effort will be made to stop the bullying.
- Ensure the victim has strategies for reporting any further incidents immediately.
- Reassure the victim that they have done the right thing and that bullying is not tolerated in school.
- Observe and work with the victim and the bully carefully for at least two weeks. If the incident appears to be resolved review again after ½ term.
- Ensure this work is logged on CPOMS and discussed with headteacher
- Agree a further meeting with the parents to decide if the incident can be closed or needs further action.

Whilst there is no statutory requirement to record bullying incidents it is important to keep clear and factual records to that staff, parents and children can be assured that events are recalled clearly. Accurate recording is also beneficial in revisiting incidents at a later date, should this be required. CPOMS is used to keep all details and knows in a clear order. The headteacher will inform the chair of the Curriculum and Inclusion Committee if there have been any incidents of bullying reported and recorded. This information will be shared anonymously.

Advice for parents and children who are supporting a victim of bullying

- Provide lots of reassurance and tell them that the bullying is not their fault.
- Tell the victim that you will make every effort to stop the bullying.
- Work on activities which will increase the child's confidence and self-esteem.
- Practise "assertive" role play activities e.g. how to say "no", how to walk away etc
- Encourage the child to consider all the things they are good at and can do well.
- School and parents to agree a plan for 'checking in' with the victim regularly to provide reassurance that everyone is working together to keep them safe.

Advice for a child who realises they are bullying.

- Children bully for lots of different reasons and sometimes when children realise that they are doing it they do not know how to stop.
- If a child finds themselves in this situation then the most important thing to do is to ask for help from an adult.
- This adult will then talk to them about what is happening and support them to stop.

- Bullying is never OK in school, but if someone is trying to do the right thing then someone will always help .

The next section tells you how the school will do this.

Advice for a child who knows someone is being bullied.

- Always tell an adult. They can help.
- Explain clearly what they know.
- Explain they are an important part in stopping bullying. Children are taught that if they know something then you must tell.

How the school will work with the victim

- Work closely with the child and family
- Keep them informed of the action taken and the level of support to be made available in school.
- A senior member of staff will be tasked with 'checking in' an agreed number of times each day for a two week period.
- Review after this time and agree following plan.
- Speak to friends or class if this is something the family feel would be appropriate.
- Ensure plenty of opportunities for the child to be successful and take part in school life.

How the school will work with the bully.

- Involve parents at early stages.
- Explain to the bully the sanctions, which are to be imposed, and the reasons.
- Recognise that any damage caused is the responsibility of the bully and take steps to ensure any damage is put right.
- Recognise good behaviour shown by the bully
- Work within the school's curriculum to focus on these issues of social and personal development. e.g. Circle time, PSHE, class discussions, assemblies, RE, Drama etc

We aim to work with the child to change the behaviour and find the reasons behind it.

Advice for parents whose child has been a victim of bullying.

- give plenty of reassurance to the child that the incident is not their fault
- contact school as soon as possible to share concerns if your child does not feel confident enough to do this themselves.
- remind him/her to inform you and the teacher of any worries /concerns in the future
- build up his/her self-esteem and confidence by praising the things done well.
- give plenty of responsibility & opportunities to do well
- teach him /her how to be assertive (not aggressive) in certain situations i.e. how to use a simple response, how to walk away, how to diffuse a situation
- work with school and monitor over a period of time
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Advice for a parent whose child has been bullying.

- find out whether the child understands the actions were unacceptable & understands the impact of these actions on the other child.
- Work with the school to agree appropriate consequences.
- try to find out why the child has been bullying and what he/she thinks might stop the bullying in the future
- discuss with the child ways of putting right the damage which has been done. Carry through the agreed actions . .
- reassure the child that they are still loved, give lots of praise for good behaviour
- show them how to play and join in with others
- ensure all adults in the family set a good example in their own behaviour
- work with the teachers to ensure all adults are working positively with the child to modify his /her behaviour

Guidance for parents who feel that the school has not acted appropriately or the incident is not resolved ?

In the first instance parents should discuss their concerns with the headteacher. If concerns remain then parents should refer to the Complaints Policy. A copy is available on the website and printed copies are available from the school office.

Sharing the advice within this policy.

The Anti Bullying policy is available on the school website.

Copies are available in the school entrance

The contents will be shared with children as part of the Anti- Bullying Week.

Further information

Thinkuknow is an excellent website with resources specifically focused on e-safety and cyberbullying <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Antibullying Alliance provides information for parents and children. <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19. You can contact a ChildLine counsellor about anything -no problem is too big or too small.

The telephone number is 0800 111. Calls are free

Childline can be found online and they can be contacted by e-mail

Policy Review

We will review this policy January 2021 and will make any necessary changes to strengthen our work in this area.