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Anti-Bullying Policy

Weston St Mary
CE Primary School

Reviewed by:	Date:	Changes made:
LGB	March 25	Policy redrafted
AC	12.12.23	No amendments
LB	17-11/2021	No amendments
LB	March 2021	New front cover

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

'So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.' Matthew 7:12

This policy is based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and "Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges" guidance. The setting has also read Childnet's "Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools".

At Weston St Mary Church of England Primary School, we firmly believe that every child in our care has the right to feel safe, secure and happy in school or in off-site activities. We recognise the seriousness of all forms of bullying and the impact it can have on those involved. The ethos of our school fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour. We recognise the value of talking about bullying and of equipping students with strategies for dealing with bullying should they encounter it.

Aims and Objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individuals. At Weston St Mary, therefore, we do all we can to prevent it by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. Our Positive Behaviour Policy and the school's values and ethos underpin our commitment to ensure that every child understands what behaviours are expected of them.

The school aims to provide a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. Through specific curriculum work such as Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) we teach children about socially acceptable behaviour and about how to deal with unacceptable behaviour. Through these we aim to reduce the likelihood of bullying and have 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 regarding the eradication of bullying in our school community.

All members of the Governing Body, staff, children and parents should have a joint understanding of what bullying is and what the school's procedures are for responding to bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is "Behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally." (DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying,
2017)

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.

Weston St Mary C of E Primary School recognise that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.

Bullying is recognised by Weston St Mary C of E Primary School 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.

What is bullying?

Bullying is **"Behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."** (DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2017

- Bullying is behaviour that deliberately makes another person feel uncomfortable, distressed or threatened.
- Bullying is constantly repeated over time.
- Bullying makes those being bullied feel powerless to defend themselves.
- Bullying does not follow our Christian Values of Compassion, Respect or Hope.

Bullying behaviour is deliberately hurtful and ongoing. (It is not the same as random unprovoked aggressive acts.) It is unequal and difficult to counteract by the person being bullied as it involves a power imbalance. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways:

- physical - size of people involved, number of people involved
- psychological – knowing what upsets someone and deliberately doing it
- socially – deliberately isolating someone

It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low level disruption, offensive language, banter and horseplay will be challenged. Where this occurs clear expectations of behaviour will be set to prevent negative behaviours escalating.

An act, or acts, of bullying can take place at any time in or outside school premises or hours. This policy will apply at any point whilst a child is a registered pupil at our school. All staff are trained to be vigilant about all forms of bullying and/or peer abuse.

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 o Emotional bullying o 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

Why are we against bullying?

- Everyone has the right to feel welcome, safe, secure, comfortable and happy
- Everyone should be valued
- We should treat everyone with respect – which also leads into our Christian Values
- Bullying is against the law

How can we prevent Bullying?

Weston St Mary C of E Primary School community recognises 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.

We are a TELLING school. We encourage and support all members of our school community to report bullying. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied due to their age, level of special educational need or vulnerability. It is the responsibility of the school community to be vigilant and ensure that all our children feel and are safe.

Our school fosters a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is not acceptable. This is done by:

- Developing an effective anti-bullying policy and practice. The school will then become a safer and happier environment, with consequent improvements in attitudes, behaviour, and relationships and with a positive impact on learning and achievement.
- Regular praise of positive and supportive behaviour by all staff.
- Work in school to develop empathy and emotional intelligence and anti-prejudice.
- Any incidents are treated seriously and dealt with immediately.
- Provide age-appropriate information (posters, leaflets) in school about bullying
- Be a good role model to others.

What are the signs and symptoms of bullying?

A child may indicate by signs or behaviours that they are being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if the child;

- Is frightened of walking to or from school or changes route
- Doesn't want to go on the school / taxi
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Becomes aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Starts stammering
- Threatens or attempts self-harm or worse
- Threatens or attempts to run away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning on a regular basis
- Performance in school work begins to drop
- Comes home with clothes torn, property damaged or 'missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money

- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home 'starving'
- Bullying others
- Changes in eating habits
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Nervous or jumpy when a cyber message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for their behaviour.
- Bedwetting

Responding to Bullying Concerns

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

- 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 Head of School, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another appropriate member of leadership staff 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 and child protection 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 Children's Social Care 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, our Online Safety Policy and the school behaviour policy. If required, the DSL will collaborate with DSLs at other settings.

Supporting Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
- 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 Integrated Children Services or support through the Children and Young
- People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

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.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service
- provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include:
    - official warnings
    - internal seclusions
    - removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns)
    - in extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term suspension 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 referrals to Children's Social Care, Early Help or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of Staff

Teachers are trained to use a range of methods to help prevent bullying such as drama, role-play, stories, circle time etc. within the formal curriculum; to establish a climate of trust and respect for all, helping pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour.

Teachers teach children about bullying through our PSHE curriculum. We also work with the children doing activities during anti bullying focus days and weeks.

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place.

- If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will initially investigate it themselves.
- They will log this behaviour as they do any other behaviour using the school's reporting system and notify the Head of School

If bullying is reported to a member of staff they will record the details as presented to them and pass these on to the Head of School.

Where an incident involves sexual violence or sexual harassment refer to Child Protection procedures in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

During the investigations care must be promoted for the child who perceives themselves as being bullied as well as the alleged child showing bullying behaviour.

The Role of the Head of School

It is the responsibility of the Head of School to implement and ensure all staff are aware of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Head of School also reports to the Board of Governors about the effectiveness of the policy.

The Head of School ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. This is delivered through Collective Worship, our PSHE curriculum, national

anti- bullying week and specific localised work if an incident occurs.

The Head of School ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Role of Parents/Carers
Parents/carers 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 should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms that they have observed and any suspicions they have about those carrying out the bullying.

Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves is likely to make the matter worse.

Parent/carers have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

Parents/carers will be expected to work with the school if their child is the perpetrator of bullying. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Head of School. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school website.

The Role of Pupils
Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. They are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in pupil questionnaires, class worry boxes, School Council or to our Mental Health champion.

Children who witness bullying or an incident which they feel may be bullying must also tell a trusted adult.

The Role of Governors
The Governing Board supports the Head of School in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Governing Board will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Governing Board require the school to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to them about incidents of bullying and the impact of measures to combat this.

Equal Opportunities
In implementing this policy all members of staff must consider the school's Equal Opportunities policy. Staff must ensure that no child is involved in any incident of bullying is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

Monitoring and Review
The Head of School monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. The Head of School also reports to the Local Council on the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, makes recommendations for further improvements.