



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Purpose

St Gilbert's Church of England is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. Bullying is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. As such, everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all pupils and all staff have a duty of care to ensure our pupils are protected from harm, and this includes bullying. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child be best able to benefit from the opportunities available at the school.

Principles

We will:

- Have a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur.
- Raise awareness of bullying and promote positive relationships based on mutual respect.
- Seek to involve all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Promote positive action to prevent bullying through our PSHE and pastoral programme, related activities and through curriculum opportunities.
- Provide support for all members of the school community that may be involved in dealing with an incident of bullying.
- Provide appropriate training for both staff and pupils to support the implementation of the policy across the school.
- Ensure fair treatment for all, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or sexuality, and encourage understanding and tolerance of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds.

Definition of bullying

There may sometimes be misunderstanding about the meaning of the term 'bullying'. One-off incidents, whilst they may be very serious and must always be dealt with, do not fall within the definition of 'bullying'.

We define bullying as persistent or repeated, deliberate attempts to hurt or humiliate someone.

There are various types of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- It is repeated over time.
- There is an imbalance of power, which makes it hard for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racist	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic	because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
Cyber	All areas of internet such as email, social media and internet misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology; i.e. camera and video facilities

Bullying must be challenged in order to safeguard:

The safety and happiness of children

When children are bullied their lives are made miserable. They may be reluctant to attend school. Over time they are likely to develop low self-esteem. There is a danger that they blame themselves for 'inviting the bullying behaviour'.

Educational achievement

The concentration and learning of the victims of bullying is likely to be adversely affected.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying. The school will ensure there are a variety of opportunities taken to educate children about bullying during the academic year e.g Anti Bullying Awareness week.

The Headteacher is ultimately responsible for the well-being of all pupils and staff. All staff, pupils, parents and governors should be made aware of the policy alongside awareness being raised of the issues associated with bullying in the school.

Staff

All staff will:

- Treat each other respectfully.
- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act immediately to support and protect them.
- Record and report suspected cases of bullying to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or the Headteacher.
- Attend appropriate training.

Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring unpopularity.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances. Witnessing bullying and intentionally not reporting it will be regarded as offering tacit support for the bully and effectively joining in with the bullying in the role of bystander. Pupils will be able to anonymously communicate their concerns through a worry box in class.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullying behaviour should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.
- Not use bullying tactics themselves as retaliation.

Parents

We ask our parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Taking appropriate responsibility for the use and misuse of technology, including social media.
- Advising their children to report any bullying to a member of staff and explaining the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
- Advising their children not to retaliate verbally or physically to any forms of bullying.
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken, whilst helping to foster confidence, assertiveness and negotiation skills to deal with unkind behaviour.

- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved
- Co-operating with the school if their children are accused of bullying and trying to ascertain the truth.
- Speaking respectfully when talking to all members of school staff .

Should a parent wish to complain about how a matter of alleged bullying has been dealt with by members of school staff, they should refer to the Complaints Policy which is on the school website.

Action to be taken when bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected the Headteacher or another member of the Senior Leadership Team will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses.

The incident will be recorded and information gathered and collated objectively. In all situations we will value the self-esteem of all involved and safeguard the health and well-being of all pupils.

The alleged bully and victim(s) will be given the opportunity to explain their version of events without being interrupted. It may also be necessary to listen to children who witness an alleged incident.

If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken: -

We support the victim in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher and Headteacher.
- informing the victim's parents.
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- by taking steps described below to prevent more bullying.
- Involving external agencies if appropriate.

We also discipline, yet try to help those who have bullied in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened to discover why they became involved.
- informing the child's parents.
- by continuing to work with the child/children in order to correct their bullying activities and attitudes.
- by taking disciplinary steps appropriate to the age of the children and nature of the incident to prevent more bullying. This will be in line with our school behaviour policy.
- Involving external agencies if appropriate and consider whether, in light of the seriousness of the incident, surrounding circumstances and any past history, it is necessary to involve the police.

The school will keep confidential records of all incidents and their outcomes.

Monitoring

The school will continue to monitor the behaviour of all children involved after the school has taken action in order to

- Judge whether incidents are isolated or not
- See if there are any patterns of behaviour
- Consider where and when bullying is happening
- Consider the form that bullying is taking
- Determine the action that is taken as a result of bullying

As a result of this monitoring the school may revise its strategy until the bullying is eradicated.

Policy Links

Complaints, Policy, Equality Policy, Behaviour Policy, Racial Incidents Policy, Cyber Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy