



**St. Andrew's C of E (VA)
Primary School**

Anti-bullying Policy

February 2026

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| Approved by: | St Andrew's Board of Governors |
| Reviewed on: | 26.02.26 |
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‘Bullying has no place in our schools. Every child deserves to learn in an environment where they are loved, supported, and respected.’

(Flourishing For All: C of E Anti-bullying guidance Sep 2024)

Introduction

Jesus said: ‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full’. John 10.10.

At St Andrew’s Church of England Primary School, our school vision is centred on Jesus’ promise of ‘life in all its fullness’. We want every single member of our school community to feel they are valued and that they belong. We genuinely see ourselves as a school family and are passionate about supporting everyone to thrive in every way. We want all children to flourish, to live life to the full knowing they are safe, loved, supported and championed, irrespective of physical appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, academic ability, disability, age or sexual orientation.

At the heart of a deeply Christian vision for schools is an upholding of the worth of each person: all are made in the image of God – and are thus innately worthy of dignity and honour. As a Church of England school, we prioritise creating an inclusive culture that promotes dignity and respect for all individuals. Childhood is precious. At St Andrew’s, we aim to create a school environment that reflects the Church of England’s vision, as outlined in ‘*Our Hope for a Flourishing Schools System*’; ‘All children deserve to love their childhood, finding space for play, exploration, imagination and creativity. They should be surrounded by loving relationships, structures and systems which release and enable life in all its fullness.’

Society is changing and the real and virtual world in which our children grow up has also transformed at an incredible rate. Extraordinary advances in technology have brought with them particular challenges in the area of bullying, especially with the widespread use of smartphones. Young people now grow up in a world that is increasingly dominated by (often) unregulated online influences and social media, where cyberbullying is having an alarming impact on the mental health of children and young people.

With children’s wellbeing an absolute priority, there is no place for bullying at St Andrew’s. It causes harm to individuals, damages relationships and fills communities with fear. Research tells us that ‘an unsafe environment can raise anxiety and lead to class avoidance and/or disengagement.’ We have a responsibility to ensure that every pupil and adult is protected from harm, and to prioritise those most at risk of bullying.

This policy will outline our commitment and approach to preventing, identifying and responding to bullying at St Andrew’s C of E Primary School.

Legislation

All Church of England schools and academies are subject to English law and are required to ensure their compliance with legal duties and statutory documentation. This requirement underpin our approach to tackling bullying, particularly bullying towards those with protected characteristics.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination (both direct and indirect), harassment and victimisation based upon an actual or perceived protected characteristic. The nine protected characteristics under the Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Under the Equalities Act, it is also unlawful for the responsible body of a maintained school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in various respects, including:

- in relation to admissions.
- in the way it provides education for pupils.
- in the way it affords pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- by excluding a pupil.
- by subjecting a pupil to any other detriment.

Public Sector Equality Duty

A key provision of the Act is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which places a general duty on public authorities (including schools) to be proactive in addressing inequalities. There is a clear expectation that schools and other establishments must address bullying and prejudice related incidents based on a protected characteristic, such as racism or homophobic bullying. The expectation in law is not only for schools and establishments to respond when an incident occurs but also to take steps to try and prevent those incidents from occurring or escalating.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education Act 2006 sets out schools' obligations in relation to preventing bullying. It states that all schools must have a Behaviour Policy which is shared with all pupils, staff and parents.

It provides that every school must have measures to encourage good behaviour and respect for others and to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. It also gives headteachers the ability to ensure that pupils behave when they are not on school premises or under the lawful control of school staff.

Criminal Law

Bullying is not a specific criminal offence, but some bullying behaviours could be a criminal offence. These include harassing or threatening behaviour and communications. Therefore, the school has a duty to seek advice from the police e.g. police liaison officer if they believe any bullying behaviours could be a criminal offence.

Children's Act 1989

Under the Children's Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, staff should report their concerns to the DSL using the school's safeguarding system and decide if there needs to be a referral made to their local authority children's social care.

Schools are specifically expected to make every effort to prevent child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse can look like:

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying)
- Hate incidents or hate crimes (including online)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking hair pulling, or threats of physical harm
- Racism (including verbal abuse or physical attacks)
- Sexual harassment or violence (such as sexual assault)
- Coercive sexual behaviour
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos
- Upskirting
- Initiation or hazing violence or rituals
- Misogyny (prejudice towards girls and women) or misandry (prejudice towards boys and men)

What is Bullying?

The Department for Education defines bullying as ‘behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation’

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, background or family context or having caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying may take many forms, and can occur in one or more of the following contexts.

| Context | Bullying behaviours that might occur |
|----------------------------------|--|
| In-school bullying | <p>Bullying actions on the school site might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of discriminatory or offensive language, name-calling • Physical harm, including threats of physical harm • Coercive and harmful sexual behaviour • Damage to property or stealing • Repeated exclusion from groups, games and other activities • Intentional ignoring to cause hurt • Sharing of untrue or private information without permission |
| Off-site bullying | <p>Bullying actions (such as those above) which occur off the school site. This includes bullying which takes place on the journey to and from school. Schools retain powers to tackle these behaviours, even if they occur off-site.</p> |
| Online bullying (cyber-bullying) | <p>Bullying actions which occur online, such as through social media or messaging apps. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of discriminatory or offensive language, name-calling • Threats of physical harm • Attempts to coerce another into unwanted sexual activities • Repeated exclusion from groups, games and other activities • Intentional ignoring to cause hurt • Sharing of untrue or private information without permission • Creation and sharing of images intended to denigrate or shame another person • Inappropriate or unkind commenting on social media posts |

With the constant rise of the online world, children and young people are often unable to escape bullying which can follow them wherever they are. Bullying prevents belonging and inclusion for those being bullied, hinders academic and vocational progress, diminishes the ability or desire to participate in school life and disconnects them from others. In the most extreme cases, bullying can lead to self-harm or, long-term, to suicidal ideation.

Bullying is therefore unacceptable and completely at odds with our Christian vision.

Prevention

At St Andrew’s, we believe that responding to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. First and foremost, we are proactive in creating a culture and environment where pupils, especially vulnerable pupils, are protected from bullying. We consider all opportunities for addressing bullying including through the curriculum, displays, assemblies, peer support and through the School

Council. We also provide alternative spaces for vulnerable children to use if they are overwhelmed at playtimes, for example, colour and chat club, art clubs, Lego Zone, etc.

In creating an ethos of good behaviour, we actively encourage every child to embrace and live by our Christian values (values chosen by our whole school community). These are; respect, compassion, friendship, truthfulness, courage and perseverance with love at the heart of everything. We draw on the teachings of Jesus to love one another and treat others with kindness and compassion, celebrating active examples of this in worship each week. By fostering these qualities during formative years, we hope that our pupils will be better equipped to thrive in a globalised society – and ultimately contribute towards building a more compassionate and just world.

Equally important is to have systems whereby school staff are proactive and vigilant, gathering information about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict, and developing strategies to overcome them at an early stage. Weekly pastoral discussions allow staff to share information and consider approaches. This might involve talking to pupils about issues of difference through our PSHE curriculum, in collective worship or through dedicated events or projects with external support agencies. Any approach to eliminating bullying needs to go beyond the school to engage families and households, churches, local community groups and other partners involved in pupils' lives.

Finally, we provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience. We seek to empower children to know their worth so they can protect themselves or know how to find the support they need.

Reporting bullying

Unfortunately, despite the best preventative efforts of a school, we recognise that incidents of bullying may still occur. As such, we have clear systems and processes in place to encourage pupils, parents and staff to report bullying when it happens.

- Pupils should inform a trusted adult directly if they feel they are being bullied.
- The Buddy benches on the KS1 and KS2 playgrounds are available for anyone who needs help with finding someone to play with or a peer to talk things through with.
- Worry boxes are used in classes if the child would prefer to write their concerns down rather than approaching someone face to face.
- Mealtime assistants and teaching assistants inform class teachers of any incidents which occur during lunch time/break times if a child is still upset or if a follow-up discussion is needed.
- At afternoon registration, a 'feelings register' is carried out in all classes; the purpose of this is to be aware of any new incidents or repeated patterns of behaviour which may require prompt attention and may lead to bullying.
- If a concerned parent contacts the school about alleged bullying, this will be followed up immediately and relevant staff informed.

Responding to bullying

School staff and leaders are best placed to decide how best to respond to the particular issues that affect our pupils. There is no single solution to bullying, however, our response should include the following:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with as soon as possible by either the class teacher or a senior leader.
- Staff will investigate alleged bullying by consulting the victim(s), showing curiosity, respect and diligence throughout the process. They will try to ascertain whether the incident constitutes bullying or should be addressed as an isolated incident of poor behaviour

- If deemed to be bullying, a senior leader will speak to the pupils involved and proceed accordingly. All incidents will be recorded and monitored through our CPOMs behaviour log.
- Minor matters can sometimes be resolved in school without the need for parental contact. This will then be monitored by the class teacher and, if appropriate, the headteacher.
- In more serious incidents, parents should be informed and this will be carried out by the headteacher. A written copy of events will be kept, and this will be updated until the situation has been resolved. The parents of the perpetrator(s) will also be contacted via telephone or letter and offered a meeting with the headteacher to discuss the incident.
- We will support victims of bullying and monitor their wellbeing and sense of safety over time. They need to feel reassured that the bullying has been addressed appropriately.
- There are clear consequences for pupils who bully in accordance with the school's Behaviour policy. We aim to show clearly that their behaviour is unacceptable and enable them to make positive behaviour choices. Consequences will reflect the severity of an incident and should be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.
- We will also consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case, the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.
- The headteacher will report on serious bullying incidents to the school governors
- If necessary and appropriate, the teacher and governor who have responsibility for safeguarding in the school will be consulted along with Social Services or police

Responsibilities

All members of our school community have a responsibility to contribute to keeping St Andrew's an inclusive and respectful environment where pupils feel safe.

All staff will:

- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others
- 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
- Take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers
- Attend appropriate training

Parents/carers

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 Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy which is on the school website.

Pupils

We expect our pupils to:

- Demonstrate our Christian values and seek to understand and embrace difference.
- 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.
- Communicate their concerns to a trusted adult or 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

Links with other school policies

This Policy links with the following school policies including:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy

Monitoring and Review

We will review the Anti-bullying Policy annually, in line with our Behaviour Policy review. This Policy only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.