



St. Agnes ACE Academy believes that its policy against bullying must be seen as an integral part of its whole school behavioural aim which is to engender mutual respect and manners amongst all members of the school community. Our approach to bullying is a whole school approach. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at St Agnes ACE Academy. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell someone and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We encourage children's sense of responsibility towards each other, and emphasise that if *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening, they are expected to tell the staff.

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with respect. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying, and to help children who are bullying to learn different ways of behaving. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Our school will:

- support staff to identify and respond to bullying
- make pupils aware that we listen and all bullying issues will be dealt with sensitively and effectively
- work towards creating an anti-bullying culture
- ensure that parents/carers expressing concerns about bullying have them taken seriously
- learn from effective anti-bullying work elsewhere
- discuss, monitor and review incidents of bullying

Our policy recognises that bullying can be:

- physical
- verbal
- mental
- 'cyber-bullying' (text, e-mail and internet)
- based on colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief
- directed to vulnerable groups (children in care, young carers, etc.), or
- any combination of these areas

Our policy is positive rather than punitive and aims to:

- prevent bullying,
- deal promptly with any incident of bullying if, and when, it occurs,
- promote self-esteem amongst all pupils, including the bullied and those who suffer from the need to bully,
- encourage pupils to speak out and TELL if bullying is taking place,

- encourage all pupils to help and protect others within the school.

Our policy is based on trust between pupils and staff and aims to:

- raise awareness throughout the curriculum
- give pupils opportunities to talk about bullying in general (e.g. through Circle Time, assemblies, PSHE lessons and anti-bullying workshops)
- ensure that key areas of the school grounds, buildings etc. are monitored by adults

Our policy will require a consistent approach:

- all pupils and staff are aware of our Golden Rules
- positive values are promoted throughout the school (Golden Rules, assemblies, displays, class and group discussions, circle time)

If a bullying incident occurs:

- Stage 1: Parent, child or staff informs the school of the problem. Class teacher meets with all children involved and explains seriousness of problem and agrees strategies to sort problem, keeping notes. Class teacher feeds back strategies agreed to parents of children involved. Class teacher alerts all staff (especially midday) to the problem and monitors. Class teacher informs appropriate KS leader. After agreed period, teacher meets with children again to discuss progress. A range of strategies will be trialled at this stage with regular feedback. If problem persists:
- Stage 2: Class teacher contacts parents of children involved individually and explains issues and agrees ways forward (with written notes of meetings held). Class teacher meets with children involved and discusses agreed way forward (keeping notes). Previous alerting and monitoring repeated. Progress reported to parents (with records kept). A range of strategies will be used at this stage. If problem persists:
- Stage 3: Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher meet with children and explain seriousness of problem and agree way forward (keeping notes). Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher meet parents of children involved individually and explain issues and agree ways forward. (keeping record of meeting). Previous alerting and monitoring repeated, with records kept. If problem persists:
- Stage 4: Other strategies including exclusion considered.

Our policy will be continually monitored by the whole school community and will be reviewed and updated. It should be read in conjunction with 'Possible Signs of Bullying' and 'Action Guidance Notes' which follow. Please refer also to the academy's Behaviour and Cyberbullying policies.

If you suspect your child is being bullied please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance.

Possible signs of bullying

Observation: Parents and school staff are in ideal positions to be able to observe changes in a pupil's behaviour, which may indicate that they are being subjected to bullying, so look out for:

- Items of clothing, property, school work, etc. that are damaged or lost more often than you would consider to be normal
- Frequent injuries to the child (bruises, cuts, etc)
- Withdrawal, which may lead to low participation in school and other activities, isolation or self-harm
- Those who spend a lot of time in their bedroom, possibly crying, who find it difficult to sleep, wet the bed or have nightmares. Teachers within school may be aware that the pupil always appears tired
- Educational attainment being slowly or suddenly reduced

- A reluctance to go to school.
- Poor self-esteem, which inhibits pupils from forming positive relationships, leads to feelings of worthlessness and betrayal, and causes some to lower their expectations and standards of work
- Anxiety and depression, which can lead to intermittent and long-term absence from school, physical illness or psychosomatic complaints
- Requests to be accompanied going to and from school, or to go by a different route. If this is longer than the previous one, it could well indicate that bullying has been occurring along the previous route.
- Money in the house or school going missing
- Depression in the child. Reluctance to eat or play normally. Child appears generally unhappy, miserable, moody and/or irritable
- The pupil who threatens or attempts to hurt him/herself.

Taken individually, or even collectively, the above may not be due to bullying, but a combination of even some of these signs could be a good reason to suspect it. If a pupil is showing signs of, or is experiencing ANY of the above, it can be an indication that all is not well, the pupil is not happy and therefore, whatever the cause, it should be investigated.

Action guidance notes for teachers and parents when dealing with suspected bullying:

OBSERVE...LISTEN...ACT...REMEMBER. It is the combination of action that will bring about the greatest results.

- OBSERVE ... Look for changes in behaviour, patterned absenteeism, unaccustomed excuses and anything unusual.
- LISTEN ... with empathy and tact. Handle any confidential information with sensitivity and make every pupil feel valued.
- ACT ... do something positive. Provide good role models, safe havens, programmes on conflict resolution, assertiveness training. Keep the pupils involved, get their suggestions. Encourage pupils to accept individual differences and not to put themselves in a position where they might get bullied. Try to get them to ignore jibes and not to respond. Instil in the pupils that it is vitally important to TELL someone if they are experiencing problems.
- REMEMBER ... there is no 'magic wand' to stop bullying. The physical violence or 'baseball bat' approach to bullying does not work in the long term. Quite often, the individual who is experiencing bullying can, perhaps inadvertently, be the cause of the bully's response, because they call out or say things which results in the unwelcome response from the bully. It is also worth remembering that students who experience bullying can often, later, become bullies themselves.

The following contacts can be useful when seeking help;

- Childline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children – www.nspcc.org.uk 0808 800 5000
- Anti-bullying Cornwall - 0800 5875991 or e-mail: abc@vscornwall.org.uk
- Cornwall Anti-racism Project 07881 551320
- Victim Support Cornwall 0845 0567 999 e-mail: support@vscornwall.org.uk
- Child Exploitation & On-line Protection Centre (CEOP): www.ceop.police.uk

This policy was adopted in September 2015 and will be reviewed in Autumn 2017.

