



# St Matthew's Primary School Anti-bullying Policy

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This is our Anti-bullying Policy. The children of the school have made their own version through the School Council. This is in all of our classrooms and on our school website.

## A Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a subjective experience that can take many forms. Various national and international definitions of bullying exist and most of these definitions have three things in common which reflect children's experience of bullying and evidence gained from extensive research in this area. The three common aspects in most definitions of bullying are that:

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

## Forms of Bullying

Bullying behaviour across all types of bullying can represent itself in a number of different forms. Children can be bullied in ways that are:

- Physical – by being punched, pushed or hurt; made to give up money or belongings; having property, clothes or belongings damaged; being forced to do something they don't want to do.
- Verbal – by being teased in a nasty way; called gay (whether or not it's true); insulted about their race, religion or culture; called names in other ways or having offensive comments directed at them.
- Indirect – by having nasty stories told about them; being left out, ignored or excluded from groups.
- Electronic / 'cyberbullying' – via text message; via instant messenger services and social network sites; via email; and via images or videos posted on the internet or spread via mobile phones.

## Specific Types of Bullying

The school recognises that although anyone can be bullied for almost any reason or difference, some children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others. Research has identified various different types of bullying experienced by particular vulnerable groups of children. These include:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities
- Bullying related to being gifted or talented
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual or transphobic bullying.

The school recognises that bullying is a complex type of behaviour occurring between individuals and groups. Different roles within bullying situations can be identified and include:

- The ring-leader, who through their position of power can direct bullying activity

- Assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader)
- Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to those who are bullying, perhaps by smiling or laughing
- Outsiders/bystanders, who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour
- Defenders, who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort pupils who experience bullying.

### **Reporting bullying...**

- Children may be aware of bullying as a target, a witness or as a bully
- Children will be encouraged to tell any trusted adult if they think bullying is taking place – this may be a member of staff or family member
- We ask parents to talk to the child's class teacher in the first instance, but if they feel unable to do this, to report it to the head teacher or assistant head teachers
- Any reported incident of bullying will be recorded on the record sheet
- If an incident is reported to another member of staff, the incident will be referred to the class teacher
- The class teacher will investigate to establish if the incident(s) meet our definition of bullying
- If it does not meet the definition of bullying, any incident will be dealt with according to our usual behaviour management procedures
- If it does, what is outlined below will take place as appropriate...

The school uses the school's definition of bullying to assess situations as they arise and judge whether or not bullying has occurred or where a pattern of potential bullying behaviour may be developing.

Making sure the person being bullied is safe and feels safe. When a child reports being bullied, the school will acknowledge their concerns and the incident will be taken seriously. Incidents of bullying reported by witnesses are treated in the same manner and will always lead to a conversation with the targeted child.

Establishing and recording what happened by listening to the targeted child. After listening to the views and feelings of the targeted child and their account of what has happened to them, the school will record any alleged incident of bullying by completing the Bullying Incident Report.

When an incident a Prejudice Related Incident will also be completed and dealt with in accordance to the Prejudice Related Incident Policy.

When an incident of bullying that meets the definition outlined above is reported, the school will record this in writing within 24 hours of the incident occurring. Written records are factual and where opinions are offered these will be based on factual evidence. Recording incidents helps to build a picture of behaviour patterns in school e.g. who, when, how, what action taken. It enables the school to manage individual cases effectively and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies.

Note: In Cambridgeshire, schools regularly report prejudice-related incidents to the local authority.

### **A Restorative Approach**

Where appropriate and in most cases of bullying the school will initially consider the use of a Restorative Approach to resolve the situation. A Restorative Approach involves perpetrators of bullying, focusing on their unacceptable behaviour in an emotionally intelligent way and ensures children causing harm are held to account for their behaviour by enabling them to:

- Accept responsibility for the harm caused to the individual being bullied;
- Accept responsibility for the harm caused to others (for example staff, friends or family);
- Recognise the need to take action to begin to repair the harm caused;
- Agree a range of helpful actions to repair the harm caused, which will be monitored over an agreed period of time on the Anti-bullying Form.

## Sanctions

Sanctions will be applied fairly and proportionately in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that children may have and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children. Bullying by children with disabilities or SEN is no more acceptable than bullying by other children. However, for a sanction to be reasonable and lawful the school will take account of the nature of the children's disability or SEN and the extent to which they understand and are in control of what they are doing. Disciplinary sanctions are intended to:

- Impress on the perpetrator that what he/she has done is unacceptable
- Deter him/her from repeating that behaviour
- Signal to other Children that the behaviour is unacceptable and deter them from doing it.

The school will draw upon the school's Behaviour Management Policy and follow the system for sanctions, which includes:

- Involving children in developing appropriate 'fair punishments' for those who have been involved in bullying;
- Removing/ separating children from other individuals or groups of children;
- Removing/excluding children from certain whole school activities or key points in the day e.g. break times/ lunchtimes;
- Withdrawing privileges;
- Confiscating personal property in accordance with the school's agreed criteria, particularly where the item is being used to cause harm to others e.g. mobile phone.

## Working with Parents/Carers

Where the school has become aware of a bullying situation, parents/carers of the child/young person who is being bullied will be invited to the school to discuss their child's situation. The school takes parents/carers reporting bullying seriously. Parents/carers are initially encouraged to refer their concerns to the class teacher. Senior members of staff such as Assistant Heads, SENCOs and the Head Teacher will be involved where appropriate.

## Following Up / Supporting and Monitoring

After following the school's procedures for responding to an incident of bullying (see section Responding to Incidents of Bullying), the school will consider employing further longer term measures/strategies to minimise the risk of bullying occurring in the future and to ensure that children feel safe. Strategies include longer-term support for all parties including the person being bullied, bystanders and the person who has perpetrated the bullying. Further support strategies may include:

- Regular opportunity to talk to an identified adult;

- Support from Lunchtime Buddies;
- Further empowerment of witnesses, e.g. to report further incidents of bullying;
- Child and family to be aware of the Childline number – 08001111;
- The school's usual procedures for supporting children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### Ongoing Monitoring

- A designated adult will check with all those involved, as part of an agreed plan, to ensure that further instances of bullying are not occurring.

### Prevention

We have a range of strategies in place to create an ethos and environment which helps to prevent incidents of bullying from occurring:

- Implementing an effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos;
- Adopting positive behaviour management strategies as part of the school's Behaviour Management Policy
- Implementing a whole school approach to the teaching of PSHE and Citizenship and the implementation of the PDP (Personal Development Planner);
- Implementing a Personal Safety Programme as identified in the Cambridgeshire Personal Development Programme;
- Ensuring that the school's anti-bullying statement is actively promoted in assemblies and other formal occasions, as well as displayed around the school;
- Providing training on behaviour management and anti-bullying for all relevant staff including midday supervisors;
- Providing a school council enabling children to talk about their feelings and concerns in a safe environment and to enable them to share concerns about bullying;
- Providing peer support systems such as playground buddies/Friendship Benches, peer mediators and peer mentors;
- Participating in the annual national Anti-Bullying Week and supporting learning on bullying through whole school activities, projects and campaigns;
- Reviewing the development and supervision of the school inside and outside including the outdoor areas and playground to ensure provision is safe, inclusive and supports children's emotional wellbeing;
- Providing confidential communication systems such as Listening/Bully Boxes, Bubble Time and counselling services, and working with children to identify key individuals with whom they can confide;
- Providing social skills groups for vulnerable individuals and groups;
- Providing information on support agencies such as Childline, including telephone numbers for help lines and addresses for supportive websites;
- Working in partnership with other schools/local authority services on anti-bullying initiatives.

### Children and Young People's Consultation and Participation

The school considers listening to the voices of children and actively seeking their views and opinions regarding bullying as an important part of our preventative work. The school regularly audits the way in which bullying is being addressed which includes, listening to children and ensuring they are given the opportunity to speak out, and have their voices heard on their experiences of bullying. Children are actively encouraged to participate in identifying both the problems and solutions to bullying; reviewing and developing the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and practice and engaging in initiatives to support an anti-bullying ethos in school. Children actively participate in:

- Identifying when and where the bullying happens;
- Identifying new forms of bullying e.g. types of cyberbullying;
- Making decisions about how to address and tackle bullying;
- Reviewing the development and delivery of the taught curriculum focusing on aspects of bullying and discrimination;
- Learning how to play an active role in challenging bullying such as engaging in peer support schemes such as buddying, mentoring and mediating.

The school adopts a number of democratic methods/systems for promoting pupil consultation including:

- Class and school councils;
- Focus groups and face to face discussions with small groups of children;
- Surveys including questionnaires.

### **Whole Staff Awareness and Training Opportunities**

The school endeavours to ensure that teachers and other adults working with children are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to identify and address all types and forms of bullying effectively and safely. Training will include recognising the signs of bullying in children and how to identify vulnerable children who may be susceptible to being bullied or becoming actively involved in bullying and bullying type behaviour. Training for staff is provided to ensure that they feel competent and confident in appropriately challenging bullying. Training also provides staff with a clear understanding of the school's policy and procedures on preventing and responding to incidents of bullying, including providing short and long term support to those affected by bullying. The school's approach to anti-bullying work is included within induction programmes for new staff (including temporary and supply staff). The views of staff are sought as part of the school's review and evaluation of the Anti-bullying Policy and used to inform developments and enhance the school's anti-bullying ethos and practice.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Anti-bullying Policy**

The school's Anti-bullying Policy and practice is regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness. This process includes reviewing the school's definition of bullying and identifying new types and forms of bullying as they emerge. The policy review is coordinated by the SMT / school anti-bullying strategic leader. It involves monitoring and evaluating anti-bullying preventative and responsive strategies to ensure the school's practice is successful in fostering an ethos that inhibits bullying and promotes inclusion and respect for diversity.

The review process involves collecting data on the prevalence of bullying at the school and gathering the views and different perceptions of the whole school community including staff, governors, children and parents/carers using a range of methods such as:

- Surveys and questionnaires;
- Focus groups and interviews;
- Whole school audit tools.

# A Response to Bullying – A Summary of Our Practice

1. Class teacher will be informed; investigation by appropriate member of staff conducted.
2. If incident meets definition of bullying outlined in this policy, then:
  - An Anti-bullying Form will be completed by the appropriate staff member – this includes a plan for addressing the issue.
  - A copy will be given to the school's anti-bullying co-ordinator. Copies will also be given to the relevant assistant head teacher and a copy will also be given to the head teacher.
3. Parents/carers of the bully and the target of the bullying will be informed as appropriate.
4. The “zero tolerance” of bullying will be made clear to everyone involved.
5. The bully will be encouraged to reflect on their behaviour, perhaps through a “thinking sheet”.
6. There may be an opportunity for the target of bullying and the bully to meet to discuss what is happening, its impact on them both and how to stop it. This will only happen if the target of the bullying is comfortable with it.
7. All relevant staff will be informed so that they are aware of the situation and will inform the designated adult of any further incidents
8. Key periods or areas will be monitored/planned for (e.g. pick up/drop off at school, routes home. This will be done in partnership with parents/carers).
9. The above will be incorporated into a plan. Any plan will include appropriate support for all involved in the incidents.

**The aim will be to complete any initial investigation and have a plan in place within twenty four hours.**

## Bullying Incident Form

This form should be filed and passed onto the next class teacher. A copy of the form should also be given to the anti-bullying coordinator, the Head Teacher and the Assistant Head Teacher(s) for the phases of the children involved within 24 hours of completion.

Name of child being bullied:	Class:
Ethnicity:	SEN: Yes/No
Name(s) and classes of child(ren) allegedly bullying	
Date:	
Name of reporting professional	
Details of incident	
Action taken / Plan (including proposed monitoring)	
Outcomes from monitoring (timescale of monitoring outlined in plan above)	