

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Voluntary Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Voluntary Academy we encourage, in all members of the community, a shared sense of awe and wonder as we grow closer to God.

We foster creativity and inquiring minds, learning through collaboration and interdependence to become motivated lifelong learners.

(Mission statement)

All our children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Voluntary Academy School, we are committed to providing a caring, nurturing and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse.

Objectives Of This Policy

This policy first and foremost is to protect victims of bullying behaviour and identify those who carry it out. Furthermore, its aims are to ensure that:

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying behaviour is
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying behaviour, and follow it when bullying behaviour is reported
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying behaviour, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As a school we take bullying behaviour seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying behaviour is reported
- Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated

1. This policy contains clear statements about procedures to follow in instances of bullying and some strategies to help both the person who is a victim of bullying and the person who has bullied someone else.

2. This policy is linked to the Behaviour Policy that operates in school.

3. All staff are expected to follow the procedures outlined.

4. Parents are asked to have due regard to the advice offered and shared with them.

5. The policy has been written within the spirit of the school's Mission Statement and Aims as above.

Signs And Symptoms Of Bullying

Many children and young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- 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
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens self harm or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- uses excuses to miss school (headache, stomach ache etc)
- begins to suffer academically
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats)
- goes to bed earlier than usual
- is unable to sleep
- wets the bed
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

6. Bullying can take many forms and could be:

- 6.1. Physical (pushing, kicking, pinching and other forms of violence, including threats)
- 6.2. Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing)
- 6.3. Emotional (excluding, tormenting, e.g. hiding possessions, ridicule and humiliation)
- 6.4. Status Bullying (concerned with ranking, leadership)
- 6.5. Racial Bullying (ethnic origin, language or accents, skin colour)
- 6.6 Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance
- 6.7 Face to Face (in direct contact) or Remote (e.g. through cyber-bullying, written communication) or Indirect (e.g. by talking about others, posting messages that they can see,)

It is necessary to draw a clear distinction between acts of bullying and everyday social contact that involves minor fallouts and disagreement. Children need to be prepared for this aspect of life by learning how to deal with minor matters themselves. Bossiness/assertiveness should not be confused with bullying, or being quiet with being a victim of bullying. Minor instances often arise out of misunderstandings, games and disagreements, rather than a deliberate targeting of an individual. We as a school endeavour to model and support children to deal with any of these situations sensitively, maturely and with respect and consideration for the other children and adults involved.

8. When distinguishing between these minor incidents and bullying a judgment needs to be made about:

- 8.1 The level of distress of the person affected
- 8.2 The severity of the act
- 8.3 Whether similar actions have occurred before
- 8.4 Whether there is a deliberate motive to cause distress and malicious intent by the perpetrator
- 8.5 The context in which the dispute took place
- 8.6 Whether the child's perception is accurate

9 Staff Responsibilities - Incidents reported in School by other Staff or Children

- 9.1 To take bullying seriously
- 9.2 To build a caring and co-operative ethos through the promotion, celebration and modelling of positive behaviour (See behaviour policy), *including reference to the Secrets of Success*
- 9.3 To acknowledge and celebrate caring behaviour
- 9.4 To be an example of a caring person
- 9.5 To be vigilant - both in the classroom, playground and school
- 9.6 To investigate incidents and record findings clearly
- 9.7 To interview those being 'bullied' or 'bullying' separately
- 9.8 To interview any witnesses
- 9.9 To hold lessons/class discussions/assemblies about bullying
- 9.10 To include a reference to not tolerating bullying within class charters/contract (SEE BEHAVIOUR POLICY)

Please see procedure for handling a complaint made by a parent/carer about bullying.

- 10.1 Actions to be taken against proven bullying (dependent on the seriousness and frequency of behaviours)
- 10.2 Obtain an apology from the perpetrator to the bullied pupil.

10.3 Impose sanction - based upon the escalation flow chart for behaviour management within school (See appendix) the class teacher and Key Stage Leader will formally invite the child who has bullied to discuss findings and sanctions (see Behaviour Policy)

10.4 Insist that any possessions are returned or that the perpetrator replaces them

10.5 Inform parents of the pupil who has bullied (See 10 onwards)

10.6 Make the consequences of repeated behaviour clear (see 9.2)

10.7 Work with the perpetrator and parents to change his/her behaviour (See 9.2) with the support of the learning mentor.

11 Actions to be taken to support the person who has been bullied

A range of strategies can be used, (see Staff resources on Bullying). In any instances of bullying the following procedures should apply.

11.1 Give the person who has been bullied the opportunity to talk to a member of staff in private.

11.2 Ensure that the appropriate member of staff has been informed- Usually Key Stage leader, and class teacher.

11.3 Record incident and actions taken (class teacher or headmaster)

11.4 Discuss with the child and parents, if appropriate, a plan for them to follow if any such incidents re-occur (class teacher or headmaster)

11.5 Check after specified item that the situation had not re-occurred (class teacher or headmaster)

11.76 Incident recorded in yellow class file to be monitored and allow flow of information between teacher

12 Governing Body Responsibilities

12.1 To ensure that the policy is being applied across the school.

12.2 To monitor: All staff, pupils and curriculum committee, safeguarding member of governing board.

12.3 The frequency and types of incidents. The Headmaster's report will contain details of this.

12.4 The re-occurrence rate of bullying behaviour

12.5 The actions being taken in school to remedy and correct bullying behaviour and its implications

12.6 (The above will be included in the Headmaster's report to Governors.)

12.7 To follow laid down procedures for dealing with complaints or exclusions

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Last reviewed and updated September 2013