



Anti-bullying Policy

Most recent review	November 2024	Next review due	November 2025
Governor committee responsible	Full Governing Body	Written by	Kate McCarter (RSE/ PSHE Lead Teacher)

STATEMENT OF INTENT

At Soho Parish Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all of our pupils 'experience life in all its fullness and grow to be the best that we can be'. 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. Our school is guided by the Church of England's document: Valuing All God's Children (updated 2019) which states: "Bullying of any kind can have devastating effects on the personal wellbeing, identity formation and self-esteem of any child or young person. This can have an impact on socialisation and academic achievements".

We recognise the serious nature of bullying in all its forms and the negative impact it can have of the lives of pupils. At Soho Parish, we are committed to preventing and tackling bullying behaviour. If bullying does occur, it is everyone's responsibility to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Bullying, including on- line bullying, bullying behaviours and child on child abuse will not tolerated. Any incidents will be taken very seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To create a positive and inclusive school culture and ethos that is welcoming of difference and diversity.
- To challenge bullying and bullying behaviours in any form effectively in order to provide a safe, caring and happy environment for pupils to learn and grow.
- For pupils to have high esteem of themselves.
- To encourage children to speak out about bullying in a safe and supportive environment.
- To provide guidelines for staff and parents on how to deal with incidents of bullying.
- To provide support for the victims of bullying.
- To provide support for bullies in developing more appropriate patterns of behaviour.

- To encourage parents and carers to work in partnership with the school in addressing the issue of bullying.
- To reduce the likelihood of bullying in any form.
- To promote respectful relationships across the school community.
- To ensure that we are fulfilling our duty under Equality Act 2010. W

2. DEFINITION - WHAT IS BULLYING?

The Department for Education defines bullying as: "Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

This definition highlights key aspects:

- **Intentional harm:** The behaviour is deliberate.
- **Repetition:** It occurs more than once.
- **Power imbalance:** It often involves a power dynamic where the victim struggles to defend themselves.

Bullying can take on many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Bullying is recognised as a form of child on child abuse. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Bullying can be:

- **Physical**
This includes hitting, kicking, scratching or any other form of violence and it can include the taking or deliberate damaging of property.
- **Verbal**
This includes name calling, insulting or discriminatory remarks (racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic), teasing, threats, hurtful sarcasm and extortion or sending nasty notes. This also includes cyber bullying including bullying via text messages, emails and social media platforms.
- **Indirect or Emotional**
This includes ostracising or the spreading of nasty stories about someone and social exclusion of an individual.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying;
- online-bullying;
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying or racist bullying;
- bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

In the context of this policy, placing a one-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Other negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy

3. WHAT DOES BULLYING LOOK LIKE?

Bullying can include:

- Name calling;
- Taunting and/or mocking;
- Making offensive comments;
- Physical assault;
- Taking or damaging belongings;
- Online bullying – inappropriate and hurtful text messages, sending offensive images and/or content via phones or the internet;
- Gossiping and spreading hurtful rumours;
- Excluding people from groups.

Bullying can include a number of these behaviours, or be restricted to one area.

4. WHY IS IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY?

Bullying hurts and can have lifelong repercussions for the victims. Children who are bullying, also need support and to learn different, appropriate ways of behaving or expressing their feelings. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying to safeguard all children involved, victims, bystanders and persecutors.

5. STRATEGIES FOR IDENTIFYING BULLYING

Bullying can be difficult to identify because it is often subtle, covert and rarely witnessed by adults. However, some of the warning signs are listed below.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- 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
- Regularly complains of feeling ill in the morning or during the school day
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money

- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when an email or text message is received
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Adults and children should be made aware of these signs as it is the responsibility of all to notice incidents of bullying and report them.

There may also be whole school signs that incidents of bullying are occurring. These include:

- Graffiti
- Frequent name calling
- Poor attendance
- Pupils appearing to be afraid
- Many cases of social exclusion
- Pupils being alone at break times
- Pupils not willing to approach adults

6. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING:

At Soho Parish Primary School, we do not tolerate bullying in any form. All reported bullying will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All of those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will support all children involved whilst the allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

Procedures

The following procedures are to be followed:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
- Staff must report incidents of bullying as soon as possible to the DSL/DDSL
- The DSL will insure that all allegations of bullying are fully investigated, this may be delegated to a member of staff who is best placed to investigate (for example, the class teacher)
- The DSL will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate so that they can give any feedback and monitor the situation
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.

- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- The DSL will ensure the victim receives support if appropriate
- Action will be planned to help the bully (or bullies) change their behaviour using Restorative Practices
- Relationships between the children involved will, from that point on, be carefully monitored and all parties involved will be checked in with regularly
- If appropriate, Restorative Practices will be used to repair the relationship and re integrate the bully or bullies back into the community
- If appropriate, external support may be brought in to address deeper issues underlying the bullying. This support will be bespoke to the identified needs and may involve:
 - Staff training
 - Parent workshops
 - Whole class PSHE lessons
 - Small group work
 - Individual work

Reporting

- Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident on CPOMs our school recording system.
- The information we hold will be used to ensure individual incidents are followed up.
- The outcome of how this is dealt with will be recorded and kept on CPOMs.
- This information will also be used to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and development of the policy.
- Individual incidents of unkind behaviour that are not deemed bullying, must also be recorded on CPOMS. Where repetitive incidents occur, this will be treated as bullying and the procedures above followed.

7. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

At Soho Parish we believe in the importance of working in partnership with parents. As such, we ensure that our staff understand the value in meeting and communicating with parents regularly to discuss any concerns. Parents should make contact with the class teacher initially whenever they have any concerns. The class teacher may decide to involve colleagues in any discussions depending on the nature of the concerns, e.g. Attendance and Welfare Lead or SENCO. When responding to parents, it is important to listen to and record concerns raised on CPOMS. In order to prevent a misunderstanding, staff are encouraged to read back any concerns as they understand them. Parents should be reassured and explained to that an investigation will take place. Under no circumstances should a parent be informed of an outcome prior to the member of staff investigating the incident(s) further with the DSL/DDSL.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

8.1 The Head of School

The Head of School has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies and alongside the PSHE coordinator who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

Their responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that this policy is implemented in school and shared with all stakeholders.
- Implement, monitor and assess the effectiveness of this policy in practice
- Ensure evaluation takes place and that this informs policy review;
- Develop and review this policy (at least bi-annually) involving pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and relevant local agencies;
- Manage incidents of bullying
- Manage the reporting and recording of bullying incidents, including reporting any incidents or issues that are relevant to the governors when necessary
- Ensure any parents of children involved in incidents of bullying are made fully aware of any instances and the follow up to them
- Support members of staff in dealing with bullying incidents and meet with parents as necessary to support the actions of staff members
- Assess and coordinate training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate as well as coordinate strategies for preventing bullying behaviour
- Promote anti-bullying and friendship in various ways and make sure other members of staff are doing the same

8.2 Governors

The Governing body as a whole will:

- Support the Head Teacher and staff in all attempts to prevent and eliminate bullying from Soho Parish
- Monitor the incidents of bullying that do occur and review the effectiveness of this policy regularly
- Require the Head of School to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategies. This information will be presented to the governors in an anonymous format as part of the annual report.

8.3 Staff

It is the collective responsibility of all members of staff including all teaching and non-teaching members to:

- Report any concerns around incidents which negatively affect the health or wellbeing of any child in school to the DSL/DDSL immediately
- Watch for early signs of distress in pupils;
- Encourage and promote anti-bullying and friendship through our core values: Love, Courage, Individuality and Community
- Model appropriate behaviours towards other staff, parents and children
- Listen to any child or parent who has concerns related to bullying and take these concerns seriously following the principle of "Listen, assess, act."

- Encourage use of other forms of communication (such as written notes) if they feel they cannot speak about their problem
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy when dealing with any suspected incidents of bullying

Teaching staff have the additional responsibilities of:

- Teaching the PSHE sessions, participate in Anti-Bullying Week and explicitly teach online safety as part of Computing curriculum;
- Establish Playground Friends or similar as a child's first contact point, if they feel they cannot talk to an adult.

8.4 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers have an important part to play in our anti bullying policy.

We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their usual standard;
- Always take an active role in your child's education, enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent time with etc;
- Talk to your child about what they have been doing on line, including who they have been speaking to in a virtual world;
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform your child's class teacher;
- Allow the school to deal with the concern/incident and not to deal directly with other parents or children;
- It is important that you do not advise your child to fight back or to repeat the bullying behaviour (this will only make the situation worse);
- Recognise that there is often another side to the story and to allow the school to find out all the facts before reaching conclusions;
- Reinforce the school policy on anti-bullying and ensure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- Promote and support the anti-bullying and friendship work that the school does by sharing in conversations about it at home
- Model appropriate behaviours when interacting with children, other parents and school staff.

8.5 Children

The children at Soho Parish will:

- Treat others with love, compassion and respect in line with our school's values
- Not bully another person or be a bystander to pulling
- Report any possible incidents of bullying to a member of staff straight away
- Talk to an adult if they themselves are feeling bullied
- Accept and celebrate the differences in others in line with our values of Individuality and Community

9. STRATEGIES FOR THE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF BULLYING

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These include:

- Regular PSHE teaching following the agreed scheme of work;
- Regular teaching of online safety including work with parents;
- Taking part in national anti-bullying week;
- Awareness through anti bullying assemblies;
- Regular reminders about what to do and who to tell if they are someone else is being bullied. This is supported by regular signposting to NSPCC.
- Circle time;
- Drama/role play activities;
- Implementation of the Friendship/Buddy Groups including Young Sports Leaders;
- Playground buddies for children who are experiencing difficulties settling into school;
- The following of the whole school behaviour policy, which includes using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour;
- Staff to remain vigilant to acts of unkindness and be proactive with dealing with incidents that occur
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another.

10. MONITORING OF POLICY:

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and through staff meetings and will be reviewed bi-annually. Following a review, suggestions for amendments will be presented to the Well Being Committee.