

# St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy



Love One Another as I have Loved you  
John 13:34

## Anti-Bullying policy

Policy Date:	September 2022	Charlotte Crosse
Policy Review Date:	September 2024	Headteacher
Ratified by Governing Body:		
Bernard Attard		

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**(to be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy)**

Our School states that **bullying** in whatever form will not be tolerated. We aim to create a caring, happy, listening environment where everybody will respect each other and accept differences. We encourage all who come to our school to feel good about themselves. All people are equal in the sight of God, unique and created in God's own image and loved by God. The school shall make no discrimination or differentiation on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic background and shall treat every person with equality and esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.

### **Equality and Diversity Statement**

As a matter of course, St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy staff are reminded about the compliance and importance of the Equality Act 2010 and the recent government guidance 'Written with Reference to Preventing and Tackling Bullying, DFE, March 2014' and ensure that all work undertaken complies and promotes equality of access and participation for all.

Our school takes a proactive and transparent approach to eliminate discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

We are all mutually responsible for the wellbeing of each other and ultimately it is the responsibility of the whole school community to eradicate bullying by ensuring the development of a caring and supportive ethos. Bullying can cause a great deal of unhappiness; the only efficient way to deal with bullying is to bring it out in the open.

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

- Bullying hurts
- Bullying frightens
- Bullying threatens
- Bullying is not a one off

**Bullying is the persistent use of any kind of behaviour with the intention of hurting another person, and which results in pain and distress to the victim. There are many definitions of bullying, but most consider it to be:**

- **Deliberately hurtful (including aggression)**
- **Repeated often over a period of time**
- **Difficult for victims to defend themselves**

**(The Children's Act 2004)**

**STOP: Several Times On Purpose**

**ALL** Staff, governors, pupils and parents should have an understanding of bullying and clear procedures for reporting bullying should be understood and followed. Incidents of bullying will always be dealt with.

A copy of the anti-bullying policy is also available in:

- The Headteacher's Office
- The Foyer
- Teaching and Learning folders
- School Website

This ensure that the scheme is readily available to visiting teachers, support staff and parents.

The school will be proactive in respect of unacceptable conduct which occurs outside the school that is connected to the school, including issues that occur on the way to and from school and outside school hours. Issues involving texting, emailing and social networking sites will also be dealt with in the same way.

At Saint Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy we respect every child's need for, and rights to, an environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. Our anti-bullying policy ensures that all our children can learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell 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, parents or a trusted adult.

Our aims are:-

- To promote the well-being of all pupils.
- To prevent, reduce and eradicate all forms of bullying.
- To offer an environment free from all forms of abuse.
- To have a consistent approach for dealing with incidents of bullying.
- To promote a whole school approach, where signals and signs of bullying are identified and swift and effective action is taken.
- To ensure that all pupils and staff and parents are aware of this policy and their obligations.

# S. T. O. P

Bullying is if someone does something unkind to you

**Several  
Times  
On  
Purpose**

If someone does bully you, you must –

**Start  
Telling  
Other  
People**

**TYPES OF BULLYING**

<b>Physical</b>	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
<b>Verbal</b>	Threatening, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
<b>Emotional</b>	Ignoring or excluding from groups, tormenting (i.e. hiding books, Threatening gestures), being unfriendly.
<b>Racist</b>	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
<b>Sexist</b>	Sexist remarks, offensive stereotyping or belittling of a person's sex.
<b>Sexual</b>	Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
<b>Disability</b>	Physical, verbal, emotional abuse of a person because of their disability.
<b>Cyber bullying</b>	All areas of the internet such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and phone call, misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.
<b>Homophobic</b>	Offensive remarks made to and about individuals' sexual orientation.
<b>Faith or Religion</b>	Offensive remarks made to or about an individual's faith or religion.

It also includes material bullying which includes damage to belongings and extortion.

Bullying can also take place through third person involvement i.e. another person being encouraged to take part in any of the behaviours above.

All staff should also be aware of the possibility of a member of staff bullying a child. Should anyone suspect that this is taking place this should be reported immediately to the Headteacher. This also includes any incidents of adult bullying by staff or parents.

If the Headteacher is suspected of bullying, the matter should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

**Bullying is not:-**

It is important to understand that bullying is not odd occasion falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional 'joke' is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of a child's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

## **BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES**

Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside local shops or in the town centre, on school trips, journeys to and from school, cyber bullying including adults (parents/carers) such as trolling, texting about staff etc.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour co-ordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

## **PREVENTION**

We aim to help children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, children may:-

- Be involved in discussion about writing school rules.
- Write and sign class rules at the start of each year.
- Sign a behaviour contract.
- Write stories or poems or draw pictures about bullying.
- Read stories about bullying or have them read to a class or assembly.
- Use role play and 'hot-seating' to help create feelings of empathy.
- Have discussions about bullying and why it should not happen.

The school has a range of strategies in place to help children work and behave co-operatively in order to minimise the possibility of bullying taking place.

- The school has formed a group of 'Anti-Bullying Champions', made up of House Captains and School Council members, in order for children to take an active, lead role in reducing bullying.
- We take part in the National Anti-Bullying Week in November each year, involving all children in discussions about acceptable behaviours and ensuring all children know what procedures should be followed. Following a special assembly dedicated to this theme, pupils are issued with the Anti-bullying leaflet to take home and share with their parents.
- We have regular school assemblies focused around PSHE themes of bullying, friendship and expected behaviour.
- The school has a clear behaviour policy which is regularly reviewed and that rewards positive behaviour. The school rules are clear and straightforward and focus on positive attitudes.
- The school takes a pro-active stance towards challenging behaviour at lunchtime; we also have a variety lunchtime provision system that involves keeping all children engaged and active at lunchtimes to avoid unwanted behaviour.
- The school works closely with the local police to make sure that any incidents outside school are reported to the school so that children at the school can then be monitored inside school as appropriate.

- Children are encouraged to help perpetrators and victims reflect upon their actions.
- Both children and parents are made aware of how to use the internet safely and of the possibilities of cyber bullying.
- All new families are given a copy of the school rules and the Anti-bullying leaflet.
- Above all, children are encouraged to **'Start Telling Other People'** if they feel they are being bullied or if someone they know is being bullied.

### **HOW DO YOU KNOW IF A CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?**

The person might seem quiet, scared, tearful or upset. The victim might start missing school or might not want to join in with games and activities. Their schoolwork might suffer and bags, sports kit or other possessions might go missing and items may get broken.

### **HOW DO YOU KNOW IF AN ADULT/MEMBER OF STAFF IS BEING BULLIED?**

The person may have a sudden change of behaviour. The victim may be absent from work more frequently. Their work may suffer, they may seem withdrawn and unhappy.

### **HOW DO BULLIES BEHAVE?**

Bullies like to have power over people. Bullies are often loud and bossy. Sometimes they work alone and sometimes in groups. Bullies try to scare people. Often, they are very cowardly and try to persuade others to join in with them. Bullies often spread horrid rumours about people.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED (Pupils)**

**DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE. S.T.O.P – Start Telling Other People**

### **YOUR SILENCE IS THE BULLY'S GREATEST PROTECTION**

1. **Tell** someone you can trust – Parent, grandparent, school buddy, teacher, teaching assistant, dinner lady, friend, brother, sister.
2. **Try** not to show the bully you are upset.
3. **Stay** in a group and avoid areas where bullying can take place.
4. **Be** assertive without being aggressive. (Practise this).
5. **If** you are worried about telling someone that you feel you are being bullied, or any other concern you have use your classroom system (either box or post-it board) to let your teacher know, or tell your class representative on the School Council or a school buddy.



**WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED (Adult/Child)**

1. Tell someone you can trust – family member, colleague, line manager, Headteacher, governor.
2. Try not to appear upset.
3. Avoid situations where the bullying can take place; always take a witness.
4. Be assertive without being aggressive.

**WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED OR IF YOU SEE BULLYING TAKING PLACE**

1. Tell an adult – parent/member of staff, remember: SILENCE IS THE BULLY'S GREATEST PROTECTION. You are not telling tales. In the case of a member of staff/adult being bullied, inform Headteacher, line manager or governor.
2. If possible take action. Show your disapproval. Take responsibility – be a good friend/colleague.
3. Don't stand by – this will be interpreted as support for the bully.

**WHAT PARENTS CAN DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED**

1. Watch for the signs.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. If you are concerned and become aware of any of the following, you may wish to ask your child and/or the school if someone is threatening or bullying your child.

- ❖ Be frightened of walking to or from school
  - ❖ Be unwilling to go to school
  - ❖ Feigning an illness
  - ❖ Unwilling to go into school/classroom (clings to you)
  - ❖ Begin doing poorly in their school work
  - ❖ Come home regularly with clothes or possessions destroyed/broken
  - ❖ Become withdrawn, start stammering
  - ❖ Become distressed, stop eating
  - ❖ Cry themselves to sleep
  - ❖ Have nightmares and even call out 'leave me alone'
  - ❖ Have unexplained bruises and/or scratches
  - ❖ Have their possessions go 'missing'
  - ❖ Ask for money or begin stealing money (to pay the bully)
  - ❖ Refuse to say what's wrong
  - ❖ Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above
2. Encourage open dialogue with your child about school, share mealtimes whenever possible.
  3. **Share your concern with the school; immediately, talk to the Class Teacher and if still concerned the Headteacher. Bullying is not a necessary part of growing up.**

**Don't encourage your child to hit back, as he or she may lay themselves open to counter accusations if they do.**

4. Boost your child's morale. Help him or her to realise that it is not he or she but the bully who should feel ashamed.
5. Inform the class teacher of any circumstances at home that may affect your child's behaviour.

### **IF YOUR CHILD IS THE BULLY**

It can be difficult for any parent to accept or acknowledge that their child may be bullying other children.

1. Remain calm. Talk things over and try to discover why they are bullying others. The bully, like the victim, needs help and support.
2. Share your concern with the school and **ASK FOR HELP.**
3. Help you child to accept responsibility for his/her actions.
4. Be aware of the signs of repeat behaviour in the future.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL IS DOING**

Each class is represented by members on the School Council. Class issues are brought to the Council meeting which is held at least twice a month.

At the beginning of the school year, classes will discuss the class rules and display them in the classroom.

Class teachers will make children aware of the above on a regular basis as part of their English work, drama, circle time, SRE lessons and through weekly themes in the Statements to Live By taught in all classes.

Statements to Live By are shared and taught throughout the school. They are changed weekly and children are taught, through assemblies and circle times, how to treat each other appropriately.

Class teachers will address the importance of friendship in PSHCE particularly with regard to the development of the emotional and social competence of pupils. The process will include how to make friends and how to cope with friendship breakdowns and reinforce the importance of class identity.

All staff are trained to recognise the signs of bullying and know the procedure to follow to address issues of bullying.

Use of Anti-bullying Week to raise the profile of identifying bullying and the procedures to be followed for both pupils and adults.

The school records all incidents of bullying and the action taken to deal with the incident/issue on Cpoms.

The school has a consistent reward system to encourage good behaviour and to promote anti-bullying strategies (see Good Behaviour Policy).

### **Role of Playground Activities and Lunchtime Supervisors**

Whenever possible, unless the weather is very unsuitable, a variety of playground equipment is available for children to keep them active and valuably occupied to prevent opportunities for bullying occurring. Lunchtime Supervisors are encouraged to be vigilant and to react sensibly to any possible bullying situations and issues. Lunchtime Supervisors are advised to inform the Key Stage Co-ordinator, in the first place, to deal with the issue. If necessary the Headteacher is informed if it is felt the issue is more serious or has been continuing, despite action being taken.

At least once a year the School Council or representatives from each class lead an assembly for the whole school dealing with a wide range of issues on the subject of bullying.

If felt necessary, a Key Stage or School Assembly will be arranged to reinforce the code.

Resources are available from the STLB, Circle Times and in the RE cupboard filed under PSHCE and assemblies. Information including the telephone numbers of CHILDLINE is displayed on the community noticeboard.

### **WHAT THE STAFF ARE DOING AT SCHOOL**

1. By word and example showing that everyone is equally important.
2. The school has established a School Council and Buddy System with representatives from each class. Problems, issues and concerns of the pupils are discussed openly and, wherever possible, solutions are found.
3. All complaints are investigated. If found necessary, generally in more serious incidents, parents of victims and bullies are contacted as soon as practically possible by telephone and then by letter to officially record the incident and meeting. Sometimes it may be necessary to arrange a meeting with both sets of parents to discuss the issues. Children are taught strategies of how to deal with bullying through their work in the Circle Times, PSHCE lessons, Religious Education lessons and 'Statements to Live By'.
4. Bullying is an open subject, it is discussed at assemblies and in class and children are encouraged to discuss any problems.
5. Children are encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions. Children are told that hurting people, whether physically or emotionally, is wrong.
6. Each child is encouraged to recognise his/her own self-worth through play, writing and discussion (e.g. circle time).

- 7 Emphasis is placed on caring and kindness to counteract bullying behaviour. Language such as 'Why have you chosen to ...?' is used to encourage the child/children to think through their actions.
- 8 Every effort is being made to develop a positive attitude in all the children whereby tolerance of others and respect for individual differences are seen as being of paramount importance in relationships with others.
- 9 Each class will also have a 'Concerns/Worries Etc.' box. Children will be encouraged to write down their problems and they will be discussed during circle time or privately with the child. Children are also able to write down their worry/concern on a piece of paper with the name and place it in a box outside the Headteacher's room. The Headteacher will deal sensitively with each concern.
- 10 Openness and honesty about fears and feelings is encouraged so that opportunities arise for identifying bullying e.g. writing stories, games, discussions and role play.

**PLEASE REMEMBER WE ARE A LISTENING SCHOOL,  
COME AND TELL US IF THERE IS A PROBLEM**

#### **THE SCHOOL POLICY:**

##### **The school will:**

- **Take all bullying problems seriously.**
- **Investigate all incidents thoroughly.**
- **Keep a written record of the incident, investigation and outcome.**
- **Inform parents of both bully and bullied if the incident is found to be one of bullying.**
- **Provide support for both victim and bully.**

#### **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS**

Minor incidents will be reported to the pupil's class teacher who should investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and inform the Headteacher and appropriate staff using CPOMS.

The procedure outlined below will be adopted by all staff in serious incidents:

##### **Interviews**

The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are interviewed separately.

If appropriate and/or necessary, ask all parties (alleged bully, victim and witnesses) to write down details of the incident. This may need prompting with questions to obtain a full picture.

All accounts are listened to and taken seriously.

Once the incident has been fully investigated, it may be appropriate to bring all parties together to resolve the incident adopting a 'problem-solving' approach, reconciliation and a genuine apology from the bully. This can be in writing to the victim or face to face (with victim's consent).

Conventional sanctions such as break and lunchtime detentions may be pursued and further sanctions if the bullying continues.

### **WHAT WILL THE SCHOOL DO FOR THE VICTIM?**

#### **The school will:**

- Reassure the victim that the bullying will stop and that telling does not rebound on the victim.
- Support the victim by listening and by encouraging them to talk about their experience.
- Tell the victim how the bully is feeling.
- Ask the victim to accept the bully's apology.
- Tell the victim who to turn to should any further problems arise.

### **CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT THAT THEY MUST ASK FOR HELP IF THEY NEED IT**

### **WHAT WILL THE SCHOOL DO FOR THE BULLY?**

#### **The school will:**

- Talk to the bully/bullies and get the bullying stopped.
- Try to find out why the bullying is happening.
- Try to solve the problem between the bully/bullies and the victim.
- Tell the bully how the victim is feeling.
- Help the bully to accept responsibility for his/her actions.
- Help the bully to change his/her behaviour by keeping in contact with them.
- Do everything it can to help a bully who admits he/she has a problem.
- Bring the victim and bully together, with an adult present, for the bully to apologise to the victim.
- Monitor future actions of the bully to ensure bullying does not continue.
- In the event that serious bullying persists, assertive discipline procedures will be followed. (See Good Behaviour Policy).

### **RECORDING INCIDENTS**

Where bullying continues the Headteacher will deal with the issue, again keeping detailed records of the incidents and interviews with victims, perpetrators and, where necessary, parents.

The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for monitoring any bullying incidents and ensuring they are dealt with appropriately and efficiently. Responses to the incident may vary depending on the type of bullying.

The record of bullying incidents will be assessed and analysed on a termly basis and the Policy reviewed, in light of this, annually. Specific questions in pupil, parents/carers and staff surveys will be used to pinpoint any issues.

## APPENDIX A

### **TACKLING CYBERBULLYING**

Mobile, Internet and wireless technologies have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide; but their popularity provides increasing opportunities for misuse through 'cyberbullying'. School staff, young people and parents have to be constantly vigilant and work together to prevent this form of bullying and tackle it whenever it occurs.

#### **What is cyberbullying?**

Research commissioned by the Anti-Bullying Alliance from Goldsmiths College, University of London, identifies the following categories of cyberbullying:

- Text message bullying
- Picture/video clip bullying
- Phone call bullying
- Email bullying
- Bullying through instant messaging e.g. facebook, twitter
- Bullying via websites

#### **Who is most vulnerable?**

Because of the anonymity that new communications technologies offer, anyone with a mobile phone or internet connection can be a target for cyberbullying. What's more, bullies can reach much larger numbers within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying, for example, vindictive comments posted on a website can be seen by a large number, as can video clips sent by mobile phone.

#### **School Policy**

We have a Code of Practice which promotes safe internet etiquette; this is agreed and signed by all parents/carers.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 who walk home from school can seek written permission to bring a mobile phone.

Where special permission has been granted for a child to carry a mobile phone to and from school then the mobile phone **MUST** be left at the school office first thing in the morning and collected after school.

Pupils at Saint Thomas More School are not allowed to bring into school or take a mobile phone with them on a school trip.

As part of the ICT curriculum pupils will be taught about safe internet etiquette and the risks of new communication technologies, the consequences of their misuse and how to use them safely.

All e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored.

We advise our pupils never to give out personal contact details online or post photographs of themselves on sites.

We advise our pupils that they should not respond to abusive emails, text messages or phone calls and should always tell an adult.

Security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside the school.

We will work with other outside agencies to manage cyberbullying.

We will take action if a pupil is being cyberbullied or is bullying someone else.

We have established good links between our school and counselling organisations and will seek advice and support if and when necessary.

If cyber bullying happens out of school the school will investigate and deal with the parties involved. (Please refer to the school's e-Safeguarding Policy.)

**Advice for Parents (websites)**

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

