



Hoole St. Michael Church of England Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Member of staff responsible: J Price
Date policy approved: September 2024
Date to be reviewed: September 2025

Vision Statement

Christ's love is in everything we do at Hoole St Michael. Our creative and high-attaining Church of England Primary School is safe, loving and supportive. We encourage the building of good relationships and friendship through respect, tolerance and understanding. Within our Christian family, where parents are our partners in all aspects of school life, we aim to inspire a love for learning within each and every child.

I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME. PHILIPPIANS 4.13

School statement on bullying

We believe that all people are made in the image of God and are unconditionally loved by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to flourish in a loving and hospitable community.

Aims and purpose of the policy

- To ensure a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment, discrimination or any type of bullying behaviour.
- To create an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect and where all members of the school community understand that bullying is not acceptable.
- To ensure a consistent approach to preventing, challenging and responding to incidents of bullying that occur.
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership this helps to maintain a bullying-free environment.
- To outline our commitment to continuously improving our approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring and reviewing the impact of our preventative measures.

Rationale

Everyone at Hoole St Michael Church of England Primary School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos. Our approach is to build the children's self-esteem and confidence and for our approach to be consistent across the school. We intend that the policy is clearly understood and shared by all, children, staff and parents. The anti bullying policy takes its place within the general aims of the school. It has close links to Child Protection, Behaviour, Anti-racism and PSHE policies.

Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of name-calling, violence, threatened violence, isolation, ridicule or indirect action such as spreading unpleasant stories about someone.

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply “falling out”.

Purposes

1. Bullying can affect and damage both the school and the individuals within it.
2. Pupils have a right to know that they will be protected from bullies at school and on the way to and from school.
3. Pupils and parents need to know that positive action will be taken and that the matter will be handled discreetly and sensitively.
4. Bullying, in its many forms, must be recognised and acted upon.
5. Both bullies and victims need help and advice.
6. Early intervention is needed to prevent and amend this type of behaviour.

Guidelines

1. Bullying, whether physical or verbal, should be stopped immediately and appropriate action taken.
2. Incidents of bullying should be recorded in the appropriate incident book.
3. The parents of identified bullies or victims should be notified and involved in any action plans decided upon.
4. All playgrounds, toilets or any isolated corners of the building must be regularly supervised.
5. All staff, including non-teaching staff, should be involved in the implementation of anti-bullying policies.
6. All pupils should be made aware of what they should do if they are being bullied.
7. All pupils should be encouraged to report bullying.
8. Victims of bullying need their self-esteem raised by support from teachers, fellow pupils and parents.

Actions to Tackle Bullying

Our first aim is to create an environment in which bullying cannot thrive - prevention is better than cure, so at Hoole St Michael we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour.

Pupils are told that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff.

Children who are being bullied in school are not always prepared to tell those in authority (ie teachers). We therefore, encourage all pupils – ‘To Tell Someone’.

If bullying is suspected, we will:

- deal with the issue immediately.
- complete a bullying incident form (completed by teacher – given to HT to keep within bullying file)
- record all suspected bullying in a bullying log; **this is a confidential document which can only be accessed by the headteacher (or deputy headteacher)**; governors receive and discuss an anonymised record of bullying incidents in order to investigate patterns.
- investigate suspected bullying; after investigation, state whether this is agreed bullying or an isolated incident of poor behaviour; isolated incidents of poor behaviour are still dealt with in line with our behaviour policy.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of incidents. The Class teacher of the victim will be responsible for this and will be required to give a copy of report and the action taken to the Head teacher. Older pupils may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate co-ordinated action, all proven incidences of bullying should be reported to the Head teacher. If bullying includes racist abuse then it should be reported to the Head teacher to be recorded through racial monitoring procedures.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

If it is agreed that bullying has taken place, we will:

- deal with the issue immediately.
- record further information in bullying log; note actions taken and monitoring strategies
- inform parents of harmed and harmer
- move directly to Stage 3 sanctions (see Page 5) for harmer
 - Consistently use Restorative Conference procedures with harmed and harmer
 - Use think sheets

- provide counselling and support for the victim of the bullying (harmed); talk to the harmed child; explain why the action of the harmer was wrong
- endeavour to help the harmer change their behaviour in future.

If the incidents persist and are causing a health and safety/safeguarding issue we will:

- Consider contacting external support agencies such as the social services where these initial discussions have proven ineffective
- Consider instigating exclusion procedures (STAGE 4)

There are various strategies that can be applied if more than one pupil is involved in bullying another. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time. If held regularly, this can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just within the affected group to confront bullying that already exists.

Victims who are worried about openly discussing an incident when the aggressors are present (eg taunting during a lesson) can be encouraged to go to the teacher with a piece of work, using this as a reason to speak to the teacher. Victims need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour, and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying.

The role of governors

The governing body supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately. The governing body monitors patterns of bullying in order to ensure that policy and practice are effective. The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors about the effectiveness of school's anti-bullying policy. The confidentiality of records are maintained and names of pupils are not shared directly with governors.

If parent is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident, they should follow the school complaints procedure by initially contacting the class teacher. If the concern remains, they should contact the headteacher. If they are still concerned, they should contact the Governing Body by writing to the Chair person. *Refer to the complaints policy for further detail.*

The role of the Head Teacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school Anti-bullying Policy, and to ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports any incidents of bullying to the governing body via the termly headteacher report; the headteacher reports about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request. The headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is unacceptable behaviour. The headteacher ensures that all staff, including midday supervisors, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The headteacher leads the school in making our mission statement a reality, where we encourage the building of good relationships and friendship

through respect, tolerance and understanding.

The role of all staff

All forms of bullying are taken seriously, and proactive measures are taken to prevent it from taking place. Teachers are responsible for the recording of all incidents of bullying that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If a child is being bullied or is bullying others, the class teacher will inform the headteacher who will inform their parents. The school also records incidents that occur near the school, or on the children's way between school and home, that we are aware of. All adults who witness an act of bullying report this to the headteacher who will record this. When any bullying taking place between members of a class, the teacher and headteacher will deal with the issue immediately. All adults must follow up what they have said e.g. keeping an eye, follow up discussion etc. All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management. A range of methods are used to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all.

Parental Involvement

The parents of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. (Persistent bullies may be excluded from school). A monitoring tool may also be used, usually incorporating a reward for achieving desired behaviours.

Parents are reminded regularly through letters and newsletters to inform their children that they must tell someone should they ever be bullied. Keeping information from the school, or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer. Whilst there is little history of bullying at Hoole St Michael, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we have and will call on outside resources such as the Lancashire Inclusion Service to support our action.

It is the right of every pupil in the school to receive an education free from humiliation and abuse. It is the responsibility of all staff and pupils to help create an atmosphere which is caring and protective and does not tolerate the victimisation of one person by another.

The role of parents

Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in your children – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school or feel ill regularly.
- Always take an active role in your child's education.
- Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously.

- **If a child has bullied your child, please do not approach that child or their parents or involve an older child to deal with the bully. Inform school immediately who will deal with it following school policy.**
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
- Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school's policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you know your child is involved in bullying, please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with appropriately.
- Remember incidents are confidential, do not discuss them with other parents on the playground. Speak to school staff if you have concerns.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.
- If you are dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident, you should follow the school complaints procedure by initially contacting the class teacher. If the concern remains, you should contact the headteacher. If you are still concerned, you should contact the Governing Body via the Chair of Governors (Mr Gerallt Evans-Hughes) or through another known governor.

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The role of children

What Can Children Do If They Are Being Bullied?

Each term or when incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce the following strategies

- Remember that your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.
- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong. Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset or scared. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone's fear.
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be strong inside – say “No!” Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
- If you are getting emails, texts or messages that make you feel uncomfortable please save them and show them to an adult. Do not respond to them.
- Fighting back may make things worse – don't do it.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
- Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.

What do you do if you Know Someone Is Being Bullied?

- Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- Tell an adult immediately – they are here to listen and help.
- Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble.
- Do not take direct action yourself.

Bullying outside of school

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during school holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber bullying in particular means that it can impact on pupils' wellbeing beyond the school day. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities outlined in this policy.

Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded, monitored and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for pupils and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language using informal mechanisms such as a classroom log.

Prejudice based incidents

A prejudice based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the headteacher regularly reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

School strategies to prevent bullying

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

- Our school vision is at the heart of everything we do and ensures that all members of the school community are revered and respected as members of a community where all are known and loved by God.
- The PSHE programme of study includes opportunities for pupils to understand about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond and prevent bullying. It also includes opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves, value others and appreciate and respect difference.
- Collective worship explores the importance of inclusivity, dignity and respect as well as other themes that play a part in challenging bullying.
- Through a variety of planned activities and time across the curriculum pupils are given the opportunity to gain self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions.
- Check in provides regular opportunities to discuss issues that may arise in class and for teachers to target specific interventions.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and pupils across the school.
- Working with parents and carers, and in partnership with community organisations to tackle bullying where appropriate.
- Annual Anti bullying week.

- Children are made aware of the strategies to deal with low level issues and what to do in different situations including situations of cyberbullying.
- Children participate in role play work in class as part of PSHE
- Making use of curriculum opportunities to raise pupil awareness e.g. through RE, cross curricula themes, drama, story writing and literature.
- Our whole school reward system.
- Good quality role models.
- Adult modelling of appropriate response to a wide range of scenarios.
- Children have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities.
- E-safety frequently discussed and taught (see e-safety policy)
- Use of Play Leaders, special friends etc.
- Adults to deal with a situation, even if minor. Talking to the children may prevent the situation escalating.

RESTORATIVE CONFERENCES

When agreed bullying has been observed or reported the following steps will be taken:

Step 1 Meet with the victim

Where bullying has occurred the victim will be asked what has happened and the feelings of the person concerned. The names of those involved need to be disclosed.

Step 2 Hold a meeting with those involved

A meeting will take place with those involved who will include some bystanders or colluders and even friends of the victim who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. A group of 6 to 8 usually works best.

Step 3 Explain the problem

The children are told about the way that the victim is feeling and a piece of writing or drawing might be used to emphasise their distress. The details of an incident are not discussed and blame is not allocated.

Step 4 Share responsibility

Blame is not attributed but the group are told that they are responsible and that they can do something about it.

Step 5 Ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. Positive responses are given but promises of improved behaviour are not extracted.

Step 6 Leave it up to them

The meeting is ended with responsibility being passed over to the group to solve the problem. Agreement is reached about meeting again to see how things are going.

At some point between steps 1 and 6 a decision will be taken to inform parents and this will vary according to the nature of the problem.

Step 7 Meet again

About 1 week later each person is asked again how things are going. This allows the situation to be monitored and keeps the pupils involved in the process. This may continue as required. This is noted in the victim and bully's behaviour log.

Training

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that all school staff (including teaching assistants, chaplains, church school workers and midday supervisors) receive regular training on all aspects of the anti-bullying policy.

Monitoring the policy

The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher is responsible for monitoring and analysing the recorded data on bullying. Any trends should be noted and reported.

Evaluating and reviewing

The headteacher is responsible for reporting to the governing body on how the policy is being enforced and upheld, via the termly report. The governors are in turn responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy via the termly report and by in-school monitoring such as learning walks and focus groups with pupils. If further improvements are required the school policies and anti-bullying strategies should be reviewed.

The policy is reviewed every 12 months, in consultation with the whole school community including staff, pupils, parents, carers and governors.

Glossary

Bully (Harmer) *a person or group behaving in a way which might meet the needs for excitement, status, material gain or group process and does not recognise or meet the needs and rights of the other people/person who are harmed by this behaviour.*

Victim (Harmed) *a person or group that is harmed by the behaviour of others and who does not have the resources, status, skill, or ability to counteract or stop the harmful behaviour.*

The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Schools are now required to comply with the new Equality Duty.

The Act also makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Safeguarding children and young people

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child doing the bullying.

Criminal Law:

It is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. For example, under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they may elect to seek assistance from the Police, but any reference to the Police should only be undertaken with the agreement of the Headteacher.

Parents will be informed of the expectations that the school has for the behaviour of their children and the positive ways in which good behaviour is encouraged. They will also be informed of the possible consequences if these expectations are not met.

Reviewed _____ (date)

Signed _____ (Chair of SEC)