

## St. Aldhelm's VA Church Primary School



### Anti-Bullying Policy

#### Rationale

Everyone at St. Aldhelm's Church 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 bullying and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

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.

This document outlines how we make this possible at St. Aldhelm's Church Primary School.

#### Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated, typically 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.

This school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out".

#### Actions to Prevent and Tackle Bullying

Prevention is better than cure, so at St. Aldhelm's 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 distinct Christian values and ethos of the school that help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour. Our School Council has the responsibility to lead anti-bullying work during Anti-bullying week, to ensure all children, parents and carers know how bullying is prevented and tackled at St Aldhelm's.

There are various strategies that the teachers in school use to develop children's understanding of what bullying is, how it can be prevented and what to do if they are bullied. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used, as well as Circle Time. These are effective ways of sharing information and providing a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. Buddy systems, or peer counselling using pupils who already hold a position of responsibility, such as School Council members, can also be beneficial for children who may be vulnerable.

Children who are worried about openly discussing an incident when the aggressors are present are encouraged to go to the teacher at a time that is comfortable for the child, e.g at the end of a lesson, or in a break time. Children are told that it is okay to walk away or to stand firm: both can be effective ways of dealing with bullying. All children in our school know that bullying is not tolerated and that they have a responsibility to themselves and others to speak out to make sure it doesn't happen.

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.

### **What is the process when a bullying allegation is made?**

All reported incidents of bullying are investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record is kept of all incidents (held centrally in the Head's Office). When an allegation of bullying is made, or an incident of alleged bullying occurs, we discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident. These discussions take into account their age and level of understanding. The adult remains neutral and asks questions that allow the child to explain and describe what has happened and how they have felt. Each pupil is given an opportunity to talk and the discussion remains focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring. In the event that bullying has occurred, a log of key points is made, and all relevant parties are informed. There is always a sanction for children who have bullied, but all children know that they can make amends and will be given the chance to make better choices in the future.

## Steps:

1. All allegations of bullying are brought to the Head's (Deputy's) attention as soon as the teacher is aware. Eg. Where a child makes the allegation during the school day, or where a parent/carer contacts the teacher with a bullying concern.
2. **In the first instance**, the class teacher of the alleged victim will be responsible for investigating the allegation, by talking to the children concerned to establish what has taken place. Key details, concerns and any actions taken are logged by the teacher on the Allegation of Bullying Log Sheet. Older pupils may be asked to write a report themselves, which will be retained alongside the log sheet.
3. A copy of this log sheet is passed to the Headteacher (or Deputy in the Head's absence) on the same day, and discussed, to allow any further action to be implemented as necessary. The Head (or Deputy in the Head's absence) will review the log, and determine whether further action is required.
4. Where the incident falls into the 'falling out' or 'unkind/careless/unthinking' behavior categories, and is not bullying, the incident log sheet is stored/ the incident is recorded in the Behaviour Incident book held in the Head's Office. The children involved are brought together to consider: their actions/responses; the better choices that should have been made; the consequences that need to follow; the way in which they are going to 'repair the damage/put things right'. No child behaves perfectly all the time and we believe all children should have the chance to make amends through a restorative justice approach.
5. Where bullying is confirmed, the Headteacher will phone the parents/carers of each child concerned to arrange a meeting at the earliest opportunity. Outline information may be given over the phone. At the arranged meeting, the Headteacher will provide the parents/carers with 'full picture information' gathered from talking to the children concerned and other parties, as relevant. The chosen sanctions and the reasons for these will be shared with parents/carers. Depending on the extent and severity of the bullying, these sanctions may include use of exclusion.
6. If bullying includes racist abuse then this will also be recorded on the Racial Incident record sheet.

## Parental Involvement

The parents of bullies and their victims are always be informed of an incident, the action that has taken place, and are asked to support strategies proposed to

tackle the problem. The bully is also reminded of the possible consequences of bullying, with the sanctions for repeated incidents clearly explained to him/her. Persistent bullies may be excluded from school. Children who have bullied will be monitored closely by teaching staff/the Head, and a reward for achieving desired behaviours may be used.

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 St. Aldhelm's, we believe that one case is one case too many. We believe it is essential to review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we will call on outside resources such as the Behaviour Support Service. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour Policy.

### Monitoring

The Headteacher reports on a termly basis to the Governing Body as follows:

- Frequency of significant behaviour incidents by class
- Any bullying that has occurred
- Actions that have been taken as a result of incidents, including incidents of bullying
- Any preventative work being undertaken on behaviour issues

Reviewed and agreed by the Full Governing Body: October 2015

Chair: .....

Signed: .....

Review October 2018

**Allegation of Bullying: Incident Report Form**

**Date:**

**Names of Pupils concerned**

**Year Group**

**Details of incident:**

**Incident investigated by:**

**Action(s) taken:**

**Signed by:**

**Pupil(s)**

**Class teacher**