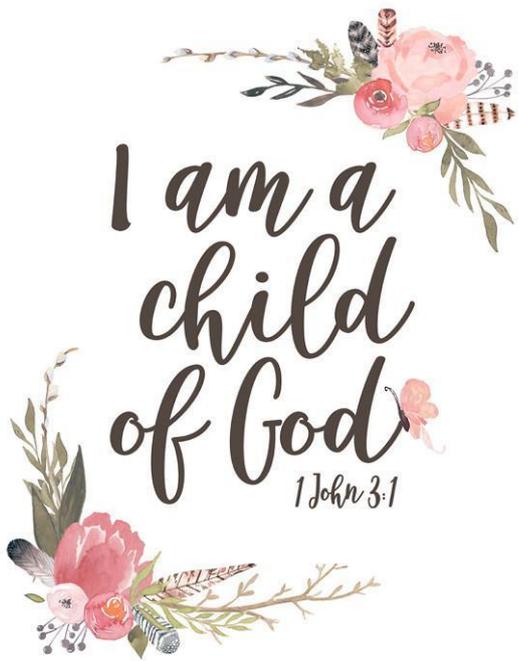# Anti-Bullying Policy

I am a child of God

1 John 3:1

St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

"Guided by God, St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an inspiring and aspirational community where we learn to love, hope, dream and achieve."

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy has been adopted from the Halton Local Authority.

The teaching and learning of   Anti-Bullying is informed and reflective of Catholic thought and practice.

CONTEXT

Why do we at school have an Anti-Bullying Policy?

We have a responsibility to safeguard all pupils. The aim of this document is to ensure a unified approach is practiced across our school when dealing with bullying behaviour within our setting.

Linked Documents

Child Protection & Safeguarding
Behaviour
E-Safety

What is in the Anti-Bullying Policy?

Our policy sets out the rights of all stakeholders in relation to bullying.

It contains definitions of bullying and signs and signals for staff, pupils and other stakeholders to be vigilant of signs that may indicate that a person has been, or is being bullied. It also contains information on how to communicate concerns, procedures to deal with allegations and proactive and reactive strategies to combatting bullying.

Our policy takes into consideration consultation with stakeholders, as well as guidance that exists, (it is important to note that guidance will change over time and the latest guidance should always be taken into consideration), data available and training undertaken. Please refer to Appendix 1 for information on the latest guidance as of September 2012. The policy will be subject to regular review to ensure it conforms to the latest guidance.

It reflects current practice within the school. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff and stakeholders. This policy is supported by and links closely to other policies such as the School's Behaviour Policy, E-Safety Acceptable User Policy, and Curriculum Policy, all of which safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

Supporting Information

The goal is the creation of a secure, safe, happy, caring environment that provides opportunity for personal growth and in which children receive their entitlement – a quality education.

In this context, with a co-operative and restorative ethos, bullying is less likely to emerge. We recognise that proactive preventive strategies are better than reactive. However, there is a need to have in place clear strategies for both.

We as a school recognise that Halton Children's Trust promotes the following principles in relation to anti-bullying:

♦ We will not tolerate bullying under any circumstances and all members will challenge any bullying, prejudice and discrimination at all times recognising and respecting the difference and diversity of our community
♦ We expect good behaviour from all and expect staff to model good behaviour
♦ We value education and the right of each individual to learn and work in a safe environment
♦ We expect each individual to take responsibility for their actions, understanding how our actions affect others.

Halton Children's Trust recommends that schools have and review their Anti-Bullying Policy, Procedure and Practice regularly. This should be updated to meet the latest guidance. We as a school do this.

We as a school are aware that some instances of bullying and harassment will constitute a criminal offence. These instances may involve a hate crime or hate incident. More details on this can be found within this policy. If the incident does constitute a criminal offence, individuals are advised to contact the Police by the school.

Our policy takes into account and will interface with the 'Halton Safeguarding Children Board Pan-Cheshire Safeguarding Children Procedures, as well as the Halton Children's Trust Anti-Bullying Strategy 2011-14 and the Halton Children's Trust Charter Mark accreditation.

Types of Bullying

Bullying is defined as:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

(DfE Preventing & Tackling Bullying (May 2012) anyone can practice bullying behaviours/be a bully.

Some people know that they are bullying others and they mean to bully, i.e. there is intent. However, some people bully others without recognising the impact of their actions. Similarly, a victim of bullying might not recognise what is happening to them and that bullying behaviour has a very insidious effect that affects a person's self-esteem, confidence and well-being.

A one-off incident tends not to comprise bullying. A characteristic of bullying is that in its different forms/behaviours it happens again and again over a period of time.

Instances of bullying tends to have the following common characteristics:

♦ Repetitive and persistent. Bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.
♦ Intentionally harmful. The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.
♦ Involves an imbalance of power. Bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some case an imbalance of power may mean that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse requiring implementation of safeguarding procedures (refer to the school safeguarding procedures

We recognise that there are levels of bullying. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

♦ physical (for example, hitting, kicking, theft);
♦ verbal (for example, racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling); and
♦ emotional (for example, isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group)

♦ cyber – mobile phone calls, text messages, pictures or video clips, emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking websites.

The Signs of Bullying

There is no certain way of spotting that a person is being bullied. Staff should be vigilant in order to identify any of these physical or behavioural changes in a person as soon as possible.

The following physical and behavioral signs have been identified by a number of agencies who have undertaken research around bullying (including Kidscape, BullyonLine, NHS Choices, Anti-bullying Alliance) as indicators that bullying has or is taking place:

♦ Significant changes in normal behaviour or attitude
♦ Challenging behaviours
♦ Appearing upset
♦ Anger
♦ Being withdrawn
♦ Quietness
♦ Depression
♦ Appearing frightened or subdued, possibly in the presence of particular people
♦ Flinching at actual or anticipated physical contact
♦ Asking not to be hurt
♦ Refusal to eat
♦ Refusal to participate
♦ Unwillingness to travel on public transport
♦ Not wanting to go to a certain venue
♦ Starting to bully others
♦ Incontinence
♦ Vomiting
♦ Unexplained illness
♦ Claims of feeling unwell with no apparent signs or symptoms
♦ Bruising or other physical marks
♦ Torn clothing
♦ Unexplained loss of money or possessions
♦ Sleepless nights
♦ Repeating words the perpetrator has said to them, e.g. "shut up or I'll hit you".

We also recognise the role of pupils and other stakeholders in reporting incidents and not taking on a role of bystander if they witness an incident of bullying. We aim to promote a positive, caring ethos within our school.

We as a school are taking proactive steps to support our vulnerable pupils by supporting individuals and small groups. There are designated staff roles. We are aware of our individual pupil's needs, have school intervention programmes and work in partnership with external support agencies.

Victims are more likely to have the following vulnerability characteristics:

♦ Lack of assertiveness, anxious or fearful and unlikely to fight back.
♦ Loners with few friends.
♦ Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.
♦ Appearance
♦ Ability
♦ Health issues, including mental health, diet, etc
♦ Home circumstances
♦ Social class
♦ Ethnicity
♦ Gypsy/Roma and Traveller Children
♦ Looked After Children
♦ Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual or Transgender children

♦ Young carers.

In order to support all pupils within the school, we focus on each individual pupil. Evidence of this is recorded as appropriate through different methods, which can involve regular tracking and monitoring of absence and attendance rates, Team around the Family and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) meetings, pupil voice and other plus targeted support for pupils.

Procedure

We as a school recognise the need for a prompt response to an incident that appears to be bullying. The following list of actions might be used by staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the incident:

♦ Remain calm
♦ Discuss and log incident with victim using patience or understanding. Consider the antecedent and environment that might make the victim more vulnerable.
♦ Listen carefully. Allow the victim or reporter of the incident to tell their story. They may wish to have another person present, such as a friend.
♦ Record events using exact wording at every stage, including actions agreed/taken.
♦ Try to establish what type of bullying is taking place and where, how often the bullying is occurring, who is carrying out the bullying and how the victim is responding to the bullying
♦ Advise the victim not to hit out at the bully or bullies as they themselves may end up being accused of bullying.
♦ Discuss options to resolve the situation, agree actions advise the victim of what happens next.
♦ Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible.
♦ Arrange to speak with the alleged perpetrator, to be able to define the experience from each person's view.
♦ If it appears to be bullying, make the unacceptable nature of the behavior clear to the bully, ensuring the act is separate to the person.
♦ Try to enable the bully to see things from the victim's position.
♦ Explain clearly the reparation.
♦ Inform the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher who will have overall responsibility for overseeing the records, reports and the effectiveness of interventions of the incident.
♦ Complete the School Bullying Incident Report Form (guidance for this is attached in Appendix 2)
♦ Arrange to meet the parents/carers of all of those involved in the incident(s).
♦ Think ahead about supporting both victim and bully.
♦ Discuss relevant documentation and resulting action with parents/carers and what they can do to reinforce and support the school action.
♦ Arrange follow up discussions within an agreed timetable.

The types, rates and patterns of bullying, and the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to SEND, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment or disability are taken into account.

We as a school are aware that the school has a responsibility to safeguard pupils outside school and it is our responsibility to safeguard and take action, providing evidence that we have done so. We are teaching our pupils about staying safe online and internet safety and the consequences of inappropriate actions.

The school aims to analyse incident logs, behaviour in and out of lessons, complaints, pupil/parent and other stakeholder voice, rewards and sanctions and to respond to these appropriately.

We as a school continually monitor and measure the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy and practice and will make changes to bring further improvements to the

procedure as appropriate. The safety and wellbeing of pupils and all stakeholders is the basis for this policy and work on anti-bullying conducted by the school.

Preventative Tactics
The Curriculum
We ensure that in all aspects of school life there is an emphasis on the importance of relationships, emotional well-being and a community ethos.
Individuals in the community:
- Value one another publicly
- Give frequent praise, encouragement and support
- Celebrate success and share problems

Furthermore, the school is utilising the resources from the book, "No Outsiders in Our School: Teaching the Equality Act in Primary Schools" by Andrew Moffat. This book focuses on celebrating diversity in a holistic manner, through the use of story books and well-selected texts. This allows our children to ask questions and to gain a better understanding of a range of social issues and the world around them; therefore, encouraging them to become more respectful, mindful and responsible global citizens. This has been further supplemented by additional resources by Andrew Moffat, which has been approved and recommended by the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

Proactive strategies for the school can involve:
- Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)
- PSHE lessons supporting pupils in understanding what bullying is and how to combat it, encouraging pupils to problem solve. Through PSHE, children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and things that are worrying them.
- Circle time activities that could involve valuing diversity and the role of the bystander.
- Peer support, buddy systems, structured playground games and Circle of Friends.
- Restorative practice approaches
- Anti-Bullying week each year in November
- Resilience building, nurture group, emotional literacy groups
- Involving parents and professionals in being proactive.
- Any child considered to be at risk is counseled individually and the class teacher and child work towards a resolution.
- Bullying is talked about openly.
- Fact and fiction books on bullying raise awareness and deepen understanding.
- Problem solving activities are employed effectively in many areas of the curriculum and children work together.
- Assembly time
- Useful information in the form of posters placed at child-friendly heights (ChildLine)
- Our School also implements the "Kid Safe" program and part of this
- School Council used as a voice of the child.

At all times, our anti-bullying strategies are informed by, and reflective of, Catholic thought and practice. We encourage children to be loving, caring, respectful and considerate of others through the use of appropriate scripture during Collective Worship and Religious Education lessons, and across the broader curriculum.

Supervision
We ensure that key areas of the school are adequately supervised and staff are vigilant. Children are given opportunities to take responsibilities and demonstrate initiative (peer mentors, school council). The school aim regularly asks pupils via a

map of the school and vicinity where vulnerable places might be and act upon this appropriately.

Training
We as a school recognise and ensure that staff and Governors receive the latest appropriate training and guidance on behaviour and anti-bullying legislation, responsibilities and strategies. In addition, case studies with a particular focus on vulnerable groups are available and used to support the training of staff and Governors.

Communication
We as a school are aware of the need for open communication between stakeholders. All sections of the school organisation must understand its role and responsibilities. We understand the need to ensure this policy is a living document, known and understood by all.

Parents/carers are made aware of the school's policy at the induction meeting and through documentation, including this Policy.

Our Home/School agreement seeks to establish an active partnership between parents, staff and governors. Parents know that the School acts to prevent bullying and not just deal with bullying incidents. The views of parents, carers and other stakeholders are regularly recorded and taken into consideration in the rollout of school strategies.

New intakes are reassured that bullying is not permitted and it is a warning to potential bullies that such behaviour is unacceptable from the outset.

Our staff do not wait for bullying to be proved before it is acted against. A positive, caring ethos demands a Prevention of Bullying Policy in operation throughout the school.
We as a school recognise the importance of NOT:
♦ Keeping concerns, allegations, disclosures or your own worries to yourself.
♦ Speculating
♦ Asking leading questions
♦ Stopping someone who is freely recalling a significant event
♦ Making promises you can't keep (e.g. "This won't happen again.")
♦ Passing on information (confidentiality)

If the person is in immediate danger we as a school will follow the safeguarding procedures. If any bullying incidents occur these are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis through the headteacher's report. The safeguarding and behaviour reporting system 'CPOMS' is used by all staff to report incidents immediately.

Hate Crime
A hate crime is any incident that constitutes a criminal offence that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate. It could involve physical attack, threat of attack or verbal abuse or insult around issues such as race, faith, gender, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, social-economic class, age or disability.
A hate incident may or may not constitute a criminal offence but is perceived by the victim, or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate.
If an incident appears to be a hate crime or incident, we as a school recognise the need for this to be reported to the police if appropriate or contact made with one of Halton's reporting centres.

Appendix 1 – Useful Information

We as a school follow the latest information, advice, legislation and guidance in all our work around bullying. As of October 2012 this includes:

A. Legislation

♦ Education Act 2002 ('Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare')
♦ Education and Inspections ('measures to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils')
♦ Equality Act 2010 - Covers 9 protected characteristics as follows:
♦ Age
♦ Disability
♦ Gender reassignment
♦ Marriage and civil partnership
♦ Pregnancy and maternity
♦ Race
♦ Religion or belief
♦ Sex
♦ Sexual orientation
♦ Schools as public bodies have a duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations)

B. Advice and Guidance

♦ Department for Education (DfE) 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for School Leaders, Staff and Governing Bodies'
♦ DfE 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance'
♦ DfE 'Research Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools'
♦ DfE 'Reducing Bullying Amongst the Worst Affected'
♦ Halton Local Authority anti-bullying documentation
♦ Ofsted Survey of Pupils' Experiences of Bullying
♦ Ofsted Good Practice Examples – Homophobic Bullying
♦ Anti-Bullying Alliance
♦ Website - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
♦ Self-Assessment Toolkit
♦ Tackling Bullying in Schools: Mapping Approaches Literature Review
♦ NSPCC School Anti-Bullying Checklist
♦ Key Ofsted Documents
♦ Framework for School Inspection
♦ Evaluation schedule for inspection of maintained schools and academies
♦ Conducting school inspections
♦ Grade descriptors for judgements
♦ Guidance grade descriptors and supplementary subject-specific guidance
♦ Sample self-evaluation form based on 2012 Framework
♦ Ofsted judgements related to bullying
♦ Behaviour and safety of pupils at the school
♦ Quality of leadership and management of the school

Appendix 2 - School Incident Report Form
The School Incident Report Form should include details of:

♦ Nature of incident(s) – outline of what happened, where, when, type
♦ Name of those involved – those bullying, those being bullied, bystanders
♦ Analysis of seriousness – severity of impact, frequency, duration, intent, imbalance of power, empathy (remorse)
♦ Action(s) taken
♦ Monitoring – feedback from those involved

- The reporting system should be part of, or compatible with, the Pupil Behaviour Management System, and be capable of interrogation. This data will provide evidence for the School Self-Evaluation Form, National Healthy Schools Status and Enhancement, and Accreditation.
- Bullying Incident Records can be used to:
- Manage bullying incidents including ability to reference previous behaviour and monitor effectiveness of actions taken.
- Analyse for patterns, e.g. identifying people/groups, places and times.
- Monitor effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies
- Address complaints made.
- Identify 'vulnerable pupils' and provide information to help determine nature of support needed, including engagement of external support agencies.
- Provide reports to governors, staff, parents/carers, pupils and local authorities.

Appendix 3 – Advice and Guidance for Parents relating to Bullying Behaviour

- Watch for signs of distress in your child, e.g.
- unwillingness to attend school
- pattern of headaches or stomach aches
- equipment that has gone missing
- request for extra pocket money
- damaged clothing
- bruising
- Take an active interest in your child's social life – discuss friendships, how playtime is spent and the journey to and from school.
- If you think your child is being bullied in School inform staff immediately and ask for a meeting with your child's class teacher.
- When discussing the problem with your son or daughter follow the advice given for victims.
- Keep a written record if the bullying persists. It will be painful but it will provide supportive evidence regarding Who, What, Where and When.
- With the class teacher, devise strategies that will help your child and provide him/her with support.
- If you require further assistance, make arrangements to meet with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's nature and contrary to the ethos of the school.
- If you are still not satisfied, arrange for a meeting with the Chair of Governors.

Appendix 4 – Advice for Children relating to Bullying Behaviour

- If you think or feel that you are being bullied by another person tell an adult that you can trust, perhaps your parent or teacher. In school everything is handled sensitively and discreetly.
- If someone else is being bullied or distressed, take action. Watching and doing nothing can suggest support for the bullying. Tell an adult.
- Never try to 'buy the bully off' with sweets or other 'presents', and do not give them money. Say "No" to the bully.
- Work out a plan of action with an adult that you trust.

IF YOU THINK OR FEEL THAT YOU ARE BEING BULLIED, TELL SOMEONE THAT YOU CAN TRUST, KEEP TELLING UNTIL SOMEONE